**EU Code of Conduct on responsible FOOD business   
and marketing practices**

**I. Preamble**

* 1. **Introduction**

In light of the European Green Deal[[1]](#footnote-1), including the Commission Communication on a Farm to Fork Strategy[[2]](#footnote-2), and various other important policy initiatives at EU and international level[[3]](#footnote-3) to address the challenges posed by climate change, environmental degradation, biodiversity loss, the burden of malnutrition and noncommunicable diseases and more, the associations and companies listed in Annex 1 ("Signatories") of this Code of Conduct for responsible food business and marketing practices (the "Code") are ready to play their part in contributing to transforming the food systems they are operating in within their sphere of influence.

Whereas many European food business operators are actively engaged in the sustainability transition and have already made tangible progress to date in their individual capacity as well as in partnership with other economic and societal actors, it is thought that a shift to sustainable food systems could bring further environmental, health and social benefits, offer economic gains and ensure that the recovery from the COVID-19 crisis puts citizens and operators onto a sustainable path. This shift cannot take place without all major actors in the food system, including – but not limited to – the middle part of the European food supply chain, assuming a key responsibility and engaging in meaningful action in this process.

It is in this spirit that the Signatories have drafted – in close consultation with other stakeholders, including international organisations, NGOs and trade associations, and in concertation with the European Commission services – the present voluntary Code and hereby support the relevant aspirations set out therein towards sustainable food systems.

* 1. **Purpose and structure**

The purpose of this Code is to unite behind a common aspirational path towards sustainable food systems[[4]](#footnote-4) by inviting businesses of all sizes active in production, trade, processing, promotion, distribution and serving of food, as well as any other food system stakeholders, to align with this common agenda and to contribute with tangible actions to help achieve the objectives set out therein.

For this Code to be a success, it should demonstrate a contribution to environmental, health and social sustainability of food systems, while ensuring economic sustainability of the European food value chain. As such, this Code is not only a contribution to the objectives of the EU Farm to Fork Strategy, but also to other initiatives of the European Green Deal (including the Biodiversity Strategy, the EU Industrial Strategy) as well as international sustainability objectives, such as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and those of the Paris Climate Agreement.

Based on Guiding Principles (**Chapter II**), this Code consists of two main components for engagement (**Chapter III**):

1. **For all actors, a framework of common aspirations (objectives and targets), supported by a range of indicative, individual actions that food business operators (companies), from very small to very large, can take to contribute in the transition towards sustainable food systems.** Commonly agreed aspirational objectives and targets – where possible quantitative – have been identified, which will be tracked against overall progress made. These aspirations set a common vision, with indicative actions that operators can take – beyond legal obligations in force at the time of signing – to help contribute to the needed transition of food systems. They can be found in section 3.1.
2. **For food business operators (companies) and/or other actors (e.g. associations) with frontrunner ambition, a framework for ambitious commitments with measurable outcomes.** Individual companies and/or other actors (e.g. associations) who are able to show leadership are invited to make tangible, relevant and measurable commitments, which will be monitored in terms of progress made, in contribution to the common aspirations set out in this Code. See section 3.2 for more information.

It is recognised that actions taken solely by operators in the middle part of the food chain cannot be sufficient for a transformation of food systems by themselves. Besides actions from other actors in – or related to – the food system (public authorities, civil society, other food chain operators and related suppliers, consumers), increased collaboration along the value chain and between private and public actors is essential to attain the aspirational objectives set out in the Code. In this regard, the Farm to Fork Strategy acknowledges the importance of enabling conditions to support, implement, facilitate and accelerate actions by all actors in food systems to become sustainable. More on this can be found in section 3.3.

* 1. **Scope**

This Code applies to its Signatories, which may be EU associations, food business operators and other actors in – or related to – food systems which can meaningfully support and/or contribute to the aspirational objectives set out in the Code. The Code is applicable to all activities relating to the production, trade, processing, promotion, distribution and consumption of food.

Adherence to this Code is voluntary and is complementary to compliance with existing legal obligations at EU and national level.

* 1. **Roles and responsibilities**

**With their signature:**

1. **European associations** pledge to:

* endorse the aspirational objectives set out in this Code (where applicable)
* promote and disseminate this Code with(in) their constituency/ies
* encourage their members to align their sustainability actions and/or business practices to the aspirational objectives and targets of the Code and invite them, on a voluntary basis, to adhere to this Code, as appropriate
* explore the possibility of developing sector-specific tools and resources in support of this Code
* provide, on an annual basis, a report of their activities in support of this Code and its aspirations set out therein, which will be published on the European Commission’s website
* continue to engage in dialogue with other food chain/systems actors and EU and international policy-makers to forge (new) relationships, exchange best practices and discuss challenges encountered, learn from each other (studies, projects) and create better mutual understanding, and identify opportunities for collaboration and potential partnership

European Associations that have signed this Code cannot enter into any obligations on behalf of their members.

1. **Companies** (or any associations/other actors wishing to contribute beyond point 1)pledge to:

* endorse the aspirational objectives set out in this Code (where applicable)
* put forward at least one (1) ambitious, tangible and measurable commitment, which contributes to at least one (1) of the aspirational objectives set out in this Code, in line with the criteria set out in [section 3.2] and, where possible, basing themselves on an internal materiality assessment (SMEs and associations/other actors are encouraged – but would not be expected – to do such an assessment)
* provide a progress report, which will be published/referenced on the European Commission’s website (lighter monitoring reporting approach for SMEs and associations)

The following general principles apply to all Signatories:

* Given the breadth of the commitments outlined in this voluntary Code and the heterogeneous range of stakeholders involved, Signatories will sign up only to areas where they can meaningfully contribute within their mandates, capacities, business operations or strategies.
* Companies commit to undertake actions, such as those indicatively provided for by this Code, in a manner that ensures full compliance with EU and national competition law. By way of example, Signatories must not discuss, communicate or exchange any commercially sensitive information. This includes non-public information on: prices; marketing and advertising strategy; costs and revenues; trading terms and conditions with third parties (including purchasing strategy); terms of supply; trade programmes or distribution strategy.

**II. GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

This Code and the Signatories thereof abide by the following guiding principles:

1. **Legal compliance**

All signatories to – and persons involved in – the execution of initiatives under this Code shall fully respect and enact all applicable laws and regulations, in particular EU and national competition rules.

This Code and its subsequent commitments act to confirm the voluntary intention of the Signatories in supporting the aspirations set out therein, contributing to the overall objectives of the Farm to Fork Strategy and the European Green Deal. This voluntary commitment is not legally binding and does not now nor in the future create any contractual or precontractual obligations under any law or legal system. Nothing in this voluntary commitment shall be construed as creating any liability, rights, waiver of any rights or obligations for any parties or as releasing any parties from their legal obligations. This voluntary commitment shall not be construed in any way as replacing, extending or interpreting the existing legal framework. This voluntary commitment is not to be used as, or form part of, evidence in any legal proceedings.

1. **Positive collaboration**

This Code and its signatories work with positive values, including open-mindedness, tolerance and respect. The Code supports a holistic approach by ensuring multi-stakeholder dialogue, bringing together different actors. This will help to identify, share and contribute to the broad variety of (inter)national, regional or local initiatives that support food sustainability. It is in the common interest of the Signatories to work together in order to deliver the collective commitment of this Code and identify the common challenges and opportunities.

1. **Good faith and collegiality**

All Signatories in this Code shall act in good faith. In the implementation of this Code, they shall engage with each other in a mutually respectful and fair manner.

1. **Inclusiveness**

All Signatories have the possibility to contribute actively to the work and express their views. Given that co-operation among food systems actors is key for a successful transition towards sustainable food systems, this Code is open to any new signatories with a view to having all the relevant actors in food systems involved in the work.

The Signatories recognise that because the various Signatories operate differently, with different sizes and nature of business models, portfolios and customer audiences, the Code allows for different approaches to contribute to the aspirations therein.

As over 99% of actors in the food supply chain are SMEs, in line with the Think Small First principle, their specific needs need to be identified and taken into consideration in this Code and further actions.

1. **Science -and evidence-base**

Companies shall aim to base their actions towards the objectives of this Code on robust scientific evidence, where available.

1. **Transparency and accountability**

Signatories shall report, within the limits of their mandates, remits and capacities, on their activities towards the objectives of this Code in a transparent way, contributing to periodic assessment of the Code’s progress and effectiveness. The Signatories seek to share knowledge, expertise and best practices along the value chain.

All Signatories have access to all the information related to the work of this Code (including agendas, working documents and minutes).

1. **Active participation**

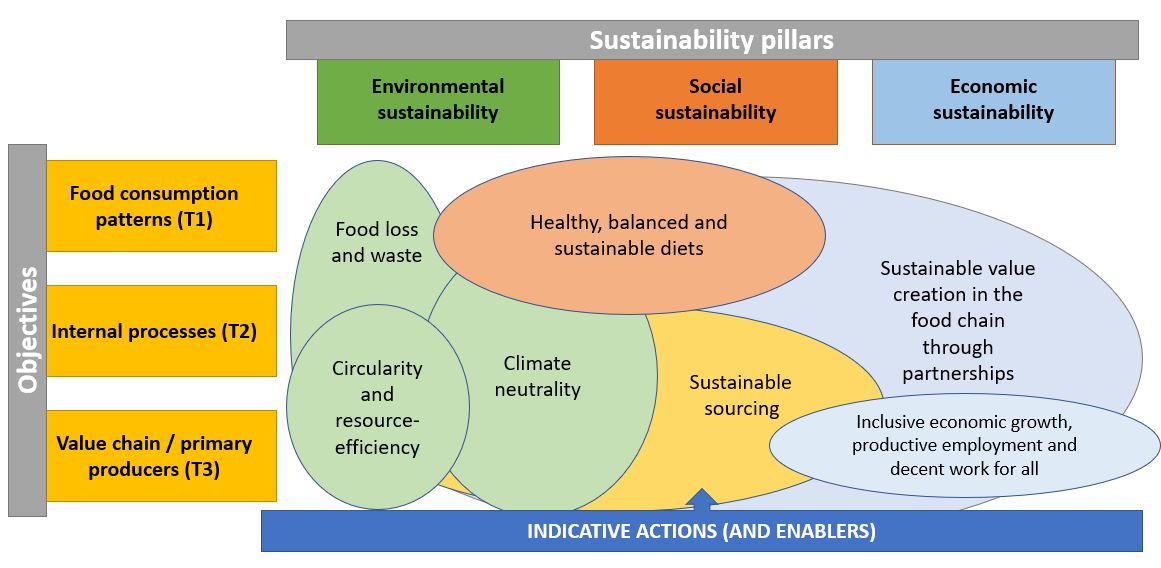
All signatories provide inputs and contribute to the Code within their remit and area of expertise. Signatories try to ensure continuous participation in – and contribution to – reaching the objectives of the Code.

1. **FRAMEWORK FOR ENGAGEMENT ON FOOD SUSTAINABILITY: COMMON ASPIRATIONS AND INDICATIVE ACTIONS** 
   1. **Common aspirations and indicative actions**

This Code seeks to improve sustainability on three levels:

1. In relation to food consumption patterns for healthy and sustainable diets
2. Within internal processes, operations and organisation at the level of the actors in the middle part of the food chain
3. Throughout the supply chain, in liaison with primary producers and other actors

For each level, common aspirations (expressed in objectives and targets) and indicative actions have been set, which altogether cover the three pillars of sustainability. This has resulted in the following **conceptual framework**:



All actors wishing to contribute to this Code are invited to align to the common aspirations set out hereafter. In addition, food business operators (companies) may take inspiration from the list of indicative actions in pursuance of the objectives and targets.

In order to identify, map, prioritise and support measures to address adverse environmental, social and economic impacts at each level of the supply chain, companies are advised to apply risk-based due diligence processes. Various established and internationally recognised guidelines, principles, standards and frameworks on due diligence and responsible business conduct/corporate social responsibility exist. Existing pre-competitive collaboration initiatives on due diligence, e.g. sectoral sourcing guidelines and joint risk identification, also merit to be consulted. A non-exhaustive list of guidelines and initiatives can be found here [ADD LINK TO EUROPEAN COMMISSION DEDICATED WEBSITE].

* + 1. **Promoting food consumption patterns (for healthy and sustainable diets)**

**Aspirational objective 1:**

**Healthy[[5]](#footnote-5), balanced and sustainable diets for all European consumers,**

**thereby contributing to:**

**1) Reversing malnutrition and diet-related noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) in the EU**

**2) Reducing the environmental footprint of food consumption by 2030**

The above **aspirational objective** is inspired by and – directly and indirectly – linked to international goals as formulated by the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) number 2 (hunger), 3 (good health and wellbeing), 4 (quality education), 12 (sustainable production and consumption), 13 (climate action), 14 (marine protection), 15 (biodiversity), and the Paris Climate Agreement, amongst others.

At the EU level, the aspiration links to various policy initiatives, such as the European Green Deal (including the EU Farm to Fork Strategy, the EU Climate Law, the Circular Economy Action Plan) as well as Europe’s Beating Cancer Plan, the EU Action Plan on Childhood Obesity 2014-2020, the EU Framework on National Initiatives on Selected Nutrients, the Joint Action “Best Re-Map”, and others.

The following **aspirational targets** have been set:

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| **a) Improved food consumption patterns in the EU**  **b) A food environment that makes it easier to choose healthy and sustainable diets** |

To this end, the following **indicative actions**[[6]](#footnote-6) have been identified:

1. Improved food consumption patterns in the EU

* *Encourage increased consumption of fruits and vegetables, wholegrain cereals, fibre, nuts and pulses, including locally-produced varieties (e.g. by increasing the availability thereof and/or access thereto)*
* *Provide/promote more sustainably-produced food products/meals (e.g. sustainably-produced organic food; higher animal welfare standards; sustainable fisheries, aquaculture and algae products)*
* *Improve, where feasible, the nutritional composition and environmental footprint of food products/meals, e.g. through product reformulation and new product development/innovation*
* *Review and/or offer a range of portion and serving sizes aimed at sustainable food consumption*
* *Promote consumer awareness of healthy, balanced and sustainable diets, including sustainable food consumption, as part of healthy & sustainable lifestyles*

1. A food environment that makes it easier to choose healthy and sustainable diets

* *Provide transparent, voluntary product information to consumers, e.g. through digital means*
* *Apply responsible food marketing and advertising practices, e.g. by adhering to self- and co-regulatory initiatives and standards*
* *Promote healthy and sustainable food service practices*
* *Integrate sustainable practices and health in the workplace*
* *Support local actions to improve diet-related health in deprived communities*

**CROSS-CUTTING Aspirational objective 2:**

**Prevention and reduction of food loss and waste**

*(at consumer level, within internal operations, and across value chains)*

The above cross-cutting **aspirational objective** is inspired by and – directly and indirectly – linked to international goals as formulated by the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) number 6 (clean water and sanitation), 7 (affordable and clean energy), 9 (9 (industry, innovation and infrastructure), 12 (sustainable production and consumption), 13 (climate action), 14 (marine protection), 15 (biodiversity), 17 (partnerships), and the Paris Climate Agreement, amongst others.

At the EU level, the aspiration links to various policy initiatives, such as the European Green Deal (including the EU Climate Law, the EU Biodiversity Strategy, the Farm to Fork Strategy, the Circular Economy Action Plan), as well as the EU Platform on Food Losses and Waste.

The following **aspirational target** has been set:

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| **A 50% reduction of per capita food waste at the retail and consumer level by 2030 and reduced food losses along the food production and supply chains in the EU** |

To this end, the following **indicative actions** have been identified:

1. Supporting improved food management at household level

* *Take actions to empower consumers to adopt more food waste reducing/preventing behaviours, e.g. by:*
  + *promoting more mindful buying*
  + *providing a range of portion, serving and packaging sizes to cater to different lifestyles and household needs*
* *Support, promote or undertake initiatives to inform or raise awareness of consumers in order to help them to prevent and reduce food waste (e.g. storage instructions, meal planning, date marking, recipes for leftovers)*
* *Optimise and develop innovative solutions (e.g. in relation to packaging, ingredients) to prevent food waste during transportation, distribution, home storage and use*
* *Develop and/or implement digital solutions and (other) innovative communication means to improve consumer information on food waste*

1. Minimising waste and reducing losses in operations and across value chains

* *Identify and implement measures to improve the material efficiency of processes, e.g. explore the causes and potential for preventing and reducing (food) waste and losses*
* *Implement guidelines on food waste prevention and reduction (incl. measurement), e.g. recommendations of the EU Platform for Food Losses and Waste*
* *Prioritise redistribution of food surpluses to people in need, when relevant*
* *Optimise the use of raw materials through valorisation*
* *Avoid or reduce the generation of hazardous and non-hazardous waste, substituting or reducing use of toxic substances and ensure productive use and safe disposal of waste*
* *Raise awareness and mobilising resources, including on circular- and bio-economy, and investing in skills and staff training*
* *Improve collaboration along the food supply chain to minimise food losses and waste by strengthening capacity for innovation, e.g. new product development from co-products or discarded products*
  + 1. **Improving the sustainability of food processing, retail, food service and hospitality sector’s internal processes**

**Aspirational objective 3:**

**A climate neutral food chain in Europe by 2050**

The above **aspirational objective** is inspired by and – directly and indirectly – linked to international goals as formulated by the Paris Climate Agreement and United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) number 6 (clean water and sanitation), 7 (affordable and clean energy), 12 (sustainable production and consumption), 13 (climate action), 14 (marine protection), 15 (biodiversity), 17 (partnerships) , amongst others.

At the EU level, the aspiration is consistent with the Climate Law objectives of -55% net greenhouse gas emissions in 2030 and climate neutrality in 2050 and links to various other policy initiatives under the European Green Deal (including the EU Biodiversity Strategy, the Farm to Fork Strategy, the Circular Economy Action Plan) and the Commission Recommendation on the use of Environmental Footprint Methods, amongst others.

For this aspirational objective, the following **aspirational target** has been set:

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| **Reducing net emissions from own operations, contributing to a 55% GHG emission reduction target in the EU food chain by 2030** *(following a science-based approach)* |

Consequently, the following **indicative actions** have been identified:

1. Reducing net emissions from own operations

* *Analyse current emissions, identify hotspots, and implement actions/pathways to reduce emissions in own operations, e.g.:* 
  + *Reduce energy use and improve energy efficiency for production through the use of less energy-intensive and low-carbon technologies (e.g. electrification, use of renewable energy, heating and cooling)*
  + *Increase the use of renewable energy sources (e.g. solar, wind, sustainable biomass, co-products)*
  + *Improve the efficiency of logistics (e.g. promoting smart logistics, local supply chains/sourcing)*
  + *Apply sustainable bio(-economy)-based solutions while contributing to a circular economy*

**Aspirational objective 4:**

**An optimised circular and resource-efficient food chain in Europe**

The above **aspirational objective** is inspired by and – directly and indirectly – linked to international goals as formulated by the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) number 6 (clean water and sanitation), 7 (affordable and clean energy), 9 (9 (industry, innovation and infrastructure), 12 (sustainable production and consumption), 13 (climate action), 14 (marine protection), 15 (biodiversity), 17 (partnerships), amongst others.

At the EU level, the aspiration links to various policy initiatives, such as the European Green Deal (including the Circular Economy Action Plan, the EU Climate Law, the EU Biodiversity Strategy, the Farm to Fork Strategy) and the Commission Recommendation on the use of Environmental Footprint Methods, amongst others.

For this aspirational objective, the following **aspirational targets** have been set:

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| 1. **Improved resource-efficiency within own operations, contributing to sustainable, efficient use and management of energy and natural resources in operations by 2030** 2. **Improved sustainability of food and drink packaging, striving for all packaging towards circularity by 2030** |

Consequently, the following **indicative actions** have been identified:

1. Improving resource-efficiency within own operations

* *Consider the use of environmental footprint or other Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) methodologies for products and/or companies to measure impacts*
* *Identify and implement measures to:*
  + *Improve energy performance [CROSS-REFERENCE CLIMATE NEUTRALITY]*
  + *Improve water efficiency (e.g. water management practices, waste water quality, water recovery and re-use)*
  + *Reduce food losses and waste [CROSS-REFERENCE FOOD LOSSES AND WASTE]*

1. Improving the sustainability of food and drink packaging

* *Identify, develop and/or foster the uptake of more sustainable packaging solutions , e.g. those aimed at:*
  + *increased efficiency of packaging/packaging materials use (e.g. through (the development of) re-use and re-fill solutions)*
  + *greater recyclability of food packaging*
  + *increased content of recycled and/or renewable materials in food packaging*
  + *increased collection of food packaging waste*
* Support, promote or undertake initiatives to inform or raise awareness of consumers in order to help them to avoid littering and ensure that food packaging waste is properly disposed of

**Aspirational objective 5:**

**Sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all**

The above **aspirational objective** is inspired by and – directly and indirectly – linked to international goals as formulated by the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) number 4 (quality education), 5 (gender equality), 6 (clean water and sanitation), 7 (affordable and clean energy), 8 (decent work and economic growth), 9 (industry, innovation and infrastructure), 10 (reduced inequalities), 12 (sustainable production and consumption), 13 (climate action), 14 (marine protection), 15 (biodiversity), 17 (partnerships), and the Paris Climate Agreement, amongst others.

At the EU level, the aspiration links to various policy initiatives, such as the European Green Deal (including the Farm to Fork Strategy, the EU Industrial Strategy), the EU Social Acquis, the European Skills Agenda (EU Pact for Skills), amongst others, as well as the European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform.

For this aspirational objective, the following **aspirational targets** have been set:

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| 1. **Quality jobs, skilled workforce and safe and inclusive workplaces for all** 2. **Improved resilience and competitiveness of companies operating at any point along the food value chain by 2030** |

Consequently, the following **indicative actions** have been identified:

1. Supporting a skilled workforce and providing safe and inclusive workplaces for all

* *Support training, upskilling and/or reskilling of workers*
* *Strengthen diversity, equity and inclusion in the workplace*
* *Strive to continuously improve working conditions, e.g. by investing in health and safety /ergonomics to make safer workplaces for all*

1. Improving business resilience and competitiveness

* *Gear new business development/models towards food sustainability*
* *Engage in research and innovation programmes on food sustainability*  
  + 1. **Improving the sustainability of the food value chain – in relation to primary producers and other actors**

**Aspirational objective 6:**

**Sustainable value creation in the European food supply chain through partnership**

The above **aspirational objective** is inspired by and – directly and indirectly – linked to international goals as formulated by the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) number 4 (quality education), 7 (affordable and clean energy), 8 (decent work and economic growth), 9 (industry, innovation and infrastructure), 10 (reduced inequalities), 12 (sustainable production and consumption), 13 (climate action), 14 (marine protection), 15 (biodiversity), 17 (partnerships), and the Paris Climate Agreement, amongst others.

At the EU level, the aspiration links to various policy initiatives, such as the European Green Deal (including the Farm to Fork Strategy, the EU Industrial Strategy), the European Skills Agenda (EU Pact for Skills), amongst others, as well as the European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform.

The following **aspirational targets** have been set:

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| 1. **Improved resilience and competitiveness of companies operating at any point along the food value chain by 2030** 2. **Continued progress towards sustainable production, contributing to sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources by 2030 and improved animal welfare** |

To this end, the following **indicative actions** have been identified:

1. Supporting improved resilience and competitiveness of the supply chain

* *Strengthen supply chain relations and create shared value with partners/suppliers across the chain by identifying synergies and opportunities for collaboration, e.g. in relation to:* 
  + *Promoting technology and knowledge transfer (e.g. integrated farming techniques)*
  + *Engaging in joint pre-competitive research and innovation (e.g. co-innovation product/process/technology)*
  + *Engaging in capacity-building, training, advice and skills development*
  + *Boosting the uptake of digital solutions and modern technologies*
  + *Developing common methodologies and data sharing practices to measure supply chain impacts*

1. Stimulating sustainable production

* *Promote and support increased use of sustainable agricultural, aquaculture and fisheries practices[[7]](#footnote-7) in partnership with farmers/fishers, in particular aimed at:* 
  + *climate change mitigation (e.g. reducing emissions and nutrient losses)*
  + *improving biodiversity*
  + *enhancing circularity and resource-efficiency*
  + *climate adaptation while contributing to improvement of farmers' livelihoods (e.g. crop diversification)*
  + *improving animal welfare and human/animal health (e.g. promoting responsible use of medicines in animals; One Health)*
  + *sustainable management of natural resources (such as land, soils and fish stocks)*
* *Support sustainable use of pesticides and fertilizers whilst contributing to maintaining food security and resilience*

**Aspirational objective 7:**

**Sustainable sourcing in food supply chains**

The above **aspirational objective** is inspired by and – directly and indirectly – linked to international goals as formulated by the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) number 1 (poverty), 2 (zero hunger), 4 (quality education), 7 (affordable and clean energy), 8 (decent work and economic growth), 10 (reduced inequalities), 12 (sustainable production and consumption), 13 (climate action), 14 (marine protection), 15 (biodiversity), 17 (partnerships), and the Paris Climate Agreement, amongst others.

At the EU level, the aspiration links to various policy initiatives, such as the European Green Deal (including the Farm to Fork Strategy, the Biodiversity Strategy, the EU Industrial Strategy), amongst others.

The following **aspirational targets** have been set:

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| 1. **Transformed commodity supply chains which do not contribute to deforestation, forest degradation and destruction of natural habitat in by 2030 and which preserve and protect high value ecosystems and biodiversity** 2. **Improved social performance in (global) food supply chains** |

To this end, the following **indicative actions** have been identified:

1. **Transforming commodity supply chains**

* *Promote sustainable sourcing of materials in relation with (direct) suppliers, inside or outside of the EU (e.g. through sourcing of certified products)*
* *Encourage the uptake of scientifically-robust sustainability certification schemes for food*
* *Identify and contribute to appropriate solutions and strategies towards:*
  + *supporting, conserving or protecting natural habitats and biodiversity*
  + *preventing, reducing or remedying negative impacts of operations on air, land, soil, water, forests*
  + *deforestation-/conversion-free food supply chains*
  + *afforestation*
  + *sustainable land use*

1. **Improving social performance in (global) food supply chains**

* *Identify and address the most significant shortcomings in social sustainability across the food value chain affecting the most vulnerable groups*
* *Promote decent working conditions, occupational health and safety with suppliers*
* *Encourage the uptake of scientifically-robust sustainability certification schemes for food in relation to social performance*
  1. **Ambitious commitments by companies and other actors**

Individual companies and any other food systems actors are invited to make specific, tangible and measurable commitments contributing to the aspirational objectives set out in section 3.1 of this Code. The framework for submitting these commitments can be found below.

[INSERT SECOND COMPONENT FRAMEWORK HERE]

* 1. **Enabling conditions**

The Farm to Fork Strategy recognises that an enabling environment can help to facilitate, more effectively implement and accelerate sustainability actions undertaken by food business operators.

For that reason, and to reflect the spirit of ‘co-creation’ that underpins the development of this Code, an initial set of “enablers” has been identified here [ADD LINK TO EUROPEAN COMMISSION DEDICATED WEBSITE]. It is intended that these enablers may support all categories of actors on the pathway towards achieving the aspirational objectives and targets set out in the Code. Whereas operators consider these enablers to be essential to attain the aspirations set out in this Code, commitments made under the Code cannot be conditional to the identified enablers.

In the process of implementation of this Code, further consideration may be given to additional, more targeted supporting initiatives for achieving the aspirational objectives, targets and actions set out in the Code.

1. **Terms of implementation**
   1. **Governance**

* Collaborative platform: …
* Opt-in clause
* Opt-out/withdrawal clause
* Any changes to this Code must be agreed by all Signatories.
* The Code has an indefinite duration, subject to renewal after 2025 (sunset clause)
  1. **Overall monitoring and evaluation of the Code**

TO BE COMPLETED

* 1. **Entry into force**

This Code becomes effective at the moment of signature by at least one (1) European association of the middle part of the food value chain and at least one (1) company/association in the middle part of the food value chain signing up to the framework for ambitious commitments .

TO BE COMPLETED

Signed in Brussels, on xx June 2021

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**Annex I: Signatories of the Code**

**+**

*European Commission Dedicated Website, including:*

* List of individual commitments by companies (second component)
* (Non-exhaustive) compendium of guidelines, standards, etc. related to food sustainability and responsible business conduct
* Supportive EU programmes/initiatives
* Links to relevant EU and international (policy) initiatives in the area of food sustainability

1. <https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal_en> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <https://ec.europa.eu/food/farm2fork_en> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. [Add link to website 🡪 see annex] [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. The following definition is applicable for the purposes of this Code: *“A sustainable food system is a food system that delivers food security and nutrition for all in such a way that the economic, social and environmental bases to generate food security and nutrition for future generations are not compromised. This means that: i) It is profitable throughout (economic sustainability); ii) It has broad-based benefits for society (social sustainability); and iii) It has a positive or neutral impact on the natural environment (environmental sustainability).”* (Food and Agriculture Organisation, FAO) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. For the purposes of this Code, the following definition of “healthy diets” (taken from the CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition) applies: *“Healthy diets are those diets that are of adequate quantity and quality to achieve optimal growth and development of all individuals and support functioning and physical, mental and social wellbeing at all life stages and physiological needs. Healthy diets are safe, diverse, balanced, and based on nutritious foods. They help to protect against malnutrition in all its forms, including undernutrition, micronutrient deficiencies, overweight and obesity and lower the risk of diet-related non-communicable diseases. The exact make-up of healthy diets varies depending on an individual’s characteristics (e.g. age, gender, lifestyle and degree of physical activity), geographical, demographical, cultural patterns and contexts, food preferences, availability of foods from local, regional and international sources, and dietary customs. […]”* [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Taking into account, where appropriate, food-based dietary guidelines and (other) relevant policies [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. E.g. in relation to regenerative agriculture, organic farming, agro-forestry, agro-ecology, carbon farming, sustainable fisheries, agro-environmental measures, etc. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)