Collaboration and cooperation between sustainability certification systems

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Andreas Feige did study Mechanical Engineering in Aachen and London and spent ten years in leading industry positions. Before he became Managing Director of ISCC Systems he enjoyed a consulting career for more than twenty years in the area of automotive and sustainability.

Andreas Feige is one of the founding members of ISCC (International Sustainability and Carbon Certification) a leading standard for sustainability and greenhouse gas emissions. ISCC certification ensures sustainability and traceability of material in food, feed and bioenergy markets as well as for the chemical industry.
Many users have to use several certification systems due to legal and market demands – adding unnecessary costs, risks and complexity.

Challenges for system users of multiple certification systems

- Systems have different sustainability requirements
- Systems are structured and phrased differently, even regarding identical issues
- Partially different certification bodies
- Hardly anybody has a full understanding of all systems

- Multiple audits, additional costs and time
- Additional training and capacity building
- Increasing complexity and risks

Approach needed to reduce cost, time and complexity for user of sustainability certification systems
Achieving system users* needs for cost, time and complexity reduction at least 4 steps should be taken

Five steps to reduce certification cost, time and complexity

1. Approach which enables growers /smallholders to improve sustainability practices without being challenged by different system terminologies and requirements
2. Agreements between certification systems that the ITC criteria can be accepted as 'Meta Standard'
3. Scorecard tool to facilitate internal and external audits
4. Collaboration and cooperation between different sustainability certification systems regarding a mutually accepted benchmarking against ITC criteria
5. In the mid term harmonisation of system structure, wording, sustainability requirements and governance

* Users of multiple sustainability certification systems
Approach which enables growers to improve sustainability practices without being challenged by different system terminologies and requirements.
Agreements between certification systems that the ITC criteria can be accepted as 'Meta Standard'.

ITC criteria have been used to benchmark 200+ sustainability certification systems, including systems certifying Malaysian palm oil for the world.

Example: system comparison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>ISCC</th>
<th>MPO</th>
<th>*ITC standards map 3/2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biodiversity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sustainable management and use of natural resources</td>
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<tr>
<td>Habitat/eco-system restoration/rehabilitation</td>
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<td>Impact assessment policy for new production</td>
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<td>Requirements for net positive gain in biodiversity</td>
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<td>Requirements for no net loss in biodiversity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Impact assessment for ongoing production/harvesting</td>
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<tr>
<td>WILDLIFE: general principle</td>
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<tr>
<td>Use of wildlife species and resources</td>
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<td>Housing of wildlife living specimens</td>
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<tr>
<td>Impacts on wildlife populations</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Protecting biodiversity zones via set asides</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*ITC standards map 3/2017
Scorecard tool to facilitate internal and external audits – synthesis of assessment categories from ITC Standards Map embodying also ISCC sustainability criteria

Ca. 200 assessment categories  
(Source of categories from: RSPO, SAI, UNILEVER, ISCC, FAIRTRADE)

115 assessment categories

132 assessment categories
Scorecard tool to facilitate internal and external audits – three main sections:
information on system user, mask for input of performances and results overview

- Basic information on system user
- Scorecard - input of smallholder performances
- Results of the Assessment:
  - Graphic
  - Scores of each category

Connection with auditor's Checklist!
Scorecard tool to facilitate internal and external audits – the scorecard is also connected to the auditor’s checklist

certifying Malaysian palm oil for the world
Scorecard tool to facilitate internal and external audits – enables users to identify training needs (gaps) and performance progress.

Training needs after first assessment.

Improved performances after training assessment.

Certifying Malaysian palm oil for the world.
Scorecard tool to facilitate internal and external audits – it highlights the level of compliance with certification systems: example ISCC

**ISCC 202 Checklist**

- EU Cross Compliance Forms
- ILO Labour Conventions ratified in country of interest
- Family farm, no staff employed
- No irrigation
- No storage of IPP material on farm
- No storage of fertilizer
- Subcontractor service facility
- Subcontractor spraying

**Non-Compliant**

- Number of criteria in list to check: 115
- Number of criteria still to check: 115
- Number of non-complies: 75
- Number of major must criteria violated: 50
- Percentage of minor must criteria confirmed: 25%
- Number of minor must N/A

**Compliant**

- Number of criteria in list to check: 115
- Number of criteria still to check: 115
- Number of Non-Complies: 3
- Number of major must criteria violated: 3
- Percentage of minor must criteria confirmed: 100%
- Number of minor must N/A

**Connection between scorecard and checklist!**

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Collaboration / cooperation between different sustainability certification systems is a prerequisite for implementing a mutually accepted benchmarking.

How to achieve a mutually accepted benchmarking between systems?

• Agree on the 'Meta Standard' (see also topic 2)
• Define benchmarking team with specialists representing key areas of each system (do not outsource the benchmarking to external consultants as the benchmarking is part of the process of collaboration and cooperation)
• Assess equivalence between the system criteria, processes and features (e.g. governance issues such as integrity audits)
• Clarify wording and guidance information (already first improvement cycle for each system)
• Agree formally on the benchmarking results
• Provide updated checklist for the scorecard tool
Many thanks for your attention!

Contact

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