

The Accountability Framework initiative (AFi)

Terms of Reference for AFi Supporting Partners

January 2020

Organizations outside of the AFi Steering Group may become AFi Supporting Partners in order to formalize their status as contributors to the AFi. This designation enables organizations to:

- Advance their objectives related to forest and ecosystem conservation, human rights, climate change mitigation, and ethical supply chains by associating with an effective consortium working toward these same ends
- Indicate their support for the AFi and interest to promote the consensus-based good practices for ethical supply chains specified in the Accountability Framework
- Engage regularly with the AFi, request and receive support as needed, and have the opportunity to contribute to the further development of the AFi, as outlined below

Supporting Partners will enable the AFi to broaden its coalition in order to:

- Increase capacity and reach to support adoption of the Accountability Framework by companies and other key user groups
- Strengthen support for the Framework from key stakeholders
- Better communicate the value and use cases for the Accountability Framework

Supporting Partners will carry out specific activities to help promote and support awareness and use of the Accountability Framework, or otherwise to contribute to the AFi. Such activities will be tailored to each Partner's mission, capacity, and interest. Each Supporting Partner will have a designated liaison person from the AFi Backbone Team or Steering Group to help facilitate effective implementation of the mutually agreed activities. These activities will be documented at the outset in a Partnership Plan. The follow table provides Terms of Reference (TOR) for AFi Supporting Partners.

AFi Supporting Partner Terms of Reference	
Eligible organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Supporting Partners may include NGOs; service providers; industry associations; other sustainability initiatives or platforms; governmental bodies, platforms, or programs; and initiatives for monitoring, reporting, or assessment related to responsible supply chains.• While this TOR does not apply to individual companies (except for those functioning as service providers or consultants on sustainability matters), companies are invited to participate in the AFi in other ways, such as by applying the Framework, providing feedback on the Framework and its application to help improve future versions, and raising awareness and promoting the Framework's use by the company's suppliers, business partners, and peers.
Criteria for inclusion	<p>Prospective Supporting Partners must fulfill the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The entity's mission and objectives support and are aligned with the AFi's vision and the Core Principles of the Accountability Framework.

AFi Supporting Partner Terms of Reference

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The organization is not promoting positions or engaging in activities that are contrary to the AFi's vision and the Core Principles of the Accountability Framework. • There is no conflict of interest. • The organization has interest and capacity to engage with the AFi on topics of mutual interest and benefit. • The organization is interested and able to engage with specific target audiences to help drive awareness and uptake of the Accountability Framework.
<p>Nomination and approval process</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizations interested in becoming Supporting Partners may contact the AFi to indicate their interest and request consideration. Prospective Supporting Partners may also be nominated by members of the AFi Steering Group, Backbone Team, or Regional Teams. • Prospective Supporting Partners are invited to work with representatives of the AFi to develop a Partnership Plan that outlines the envisioned activities and other details. This plan may also include training or other support to be provided by the AFi to help members of the Supporting Partner organization or network to effectively carry out the proposed activities. A Partnership Plan template is provided below. • Organizations become Supporting Partners upon approval of the Partnership Plan by the AFi Steering Group.
<p>Roles and activities of Supporting Partners</p>	<p>Supporting Partners contribute to the AFi through at least one activity that is aligned with the AFi's Phase 2 Strategy. Typically, these activities will be among the following.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote and support adoption of the Accountability Framework: Supporting Partners help drive adoption of the consensus-based good practices for ethical supply chains specified in the Accountability Framework. This may be done in various ways, for instance service providers working with their clients; local NGOs advocating adoption in the context of plantation establishment and management, local land-use plans, or government policy; or industry associations developing common guidelines for their members that are aligned with the Framework. The specific focus of the proposed uptake activities should be specified in the Partnership Plan. • Raise awareness about the Accountability Framework: Supporting Partners help increase awareness of and interest in the Framework, for instance by featuring it as part of webinars, events, or other engagement activities with companies and other stakeholders. In some cases, this may be done jointly with the organization's own programs (e.g., joint webinars for companies on good practice in sustainability reporting), in which case this intention should be specified in the Partnership Plan. • Collaborate on or coordinate communications: Related to the previous activity area, Supporting Partners may collaborate to coordinate and

AFi Supporting Partner Terms of Reference

	<p>cross-promote messages and communications collateral related to the Framework and, more broadly, to the rationale for and practical ways to implement responsible supply chains. Supporting Partners may also help develop and disseminate editorial content in support of the Framework and its component elements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate elements of the Framework into relevant standards, guidelines, metrics, methods, or tools: Organizations or initiatives that develop and manage standards/guidelines/tools/etc. may contribute as Supporting Partners by working to align these with the Framework or to integrate relevant elements of the Framework into new or revised versions of such standards/ guidelines/tools/etc. This modality is also relevant for organizations and initiatives involved in reporting, assessment, and accountability related to responsible supply chains. • Develop or contribute to user tools, case examples, or other supporting materials: Supporting Partners may collaborate to develop various kinds of supporting materials that help target users to put the Framework into action. Such materials do not necessarily need to be branded or published by the AFi. The Partnership Plan should summarize the types of materials that are envisioned and how they will be disseminated and promoted to target users. • Contribute to the development or revision of elements of the Accountability Framework: Over time, the AFi may decide to revise or further elaborate the Framework’s Core Principles, Definitions, or Operational Guidance to reflect user feedback and the evolving context for ethical supply chains. Supporting Partners may participate in selected Framework development or revision processes, as appropriate to their expertise and interest. This may include by participating in topical working groups or otherwise helping to develop and review draft content. • Provide feedback to accelerate uptake and increase positive impact: Via their liaison, Supporting Partners are requested to share feedback to the AFi Steering Group and Backbone Team about how their organization and/or other Framework users and stakeholders are using and perceiving the Framework. This feedback will be used to consider adjustments to the Framework, uptake strategies, communications, and other aspects of the AFi to further improve the AFi’s value proposition to its target users and to accelerate uptake of the Framework and effectiveness of the AFi overall. <p>Supporting Partners may also propose activities that are not listed above, in which case these should be detailed in the Partnership Plan.</p>
<p>Roles and responsibilities of the AFi liaison</p>	<p>One member of the AFi Steering Group or Backbone Team will be designated as the liaison for each the Supporting Partner. This liaison will play the following roles:</p>

AFi Supporting Partner Terms of Reference

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain regular contact with the Supporting Partner on implementation of the agreed activities and address any challenges or opportunities that arise • Provide training or other forms of support, as priorities dictate and capacity permits, to help members of the Supporting Partner organization or network to effectively carry out the activities specified in the Partnership Plan • Keep the Supporting Partner up to date on AFi events, announcements, or new materials • Invite the Supporting Partner to participate in AFi learning and information-sharing opportunities • Share materials that the AFi is developing and that are relevant to the Supporting Partner's interests and scope of collaboration (such as proposed Framework revisions/additions, user tools, communications collateral, or updates to the uptake strategy) to invite input and consultation; as appropriate, invite the Supporting Partner to participate in processes to refine existing Framework sections or develop new ones • Support any needed adjustments to the Partnership Plan
<p>Logos and recognition</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each Supporting Partner's logo will be included on the AFi website and may be included in other AFi communications that present the set of organizations involved in the AFi. In places where the logo appears, it will be made clear that the entity is an AFi Supporting Partner and that this designation is distinct from the AFi Steering Group. • Supporting Partners may publicize their relationship with AFi via their website or other communications. However, the AFi logo may not be used without prior approval from the AFi Steering Group. Such approval may be requested through the designated liaison.
<p>Termination of partnership</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting Partners may resign at any time by informing their AFi liaison. Prior to resigning, the AFi requests that the Supporting Partner discuss any concerns with the liaison to see if there is a way to resolve them to sustain the partnership. If the Supporting Partner takes the decision to resign, it is requested that the Partner inform the liaison of the reason for the resignation. • The AFi Steering Group or Backbone Team may require a Supporting Partner's resignation at any time if either of these entities judge that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the Partner has behaved or is behaving in a way that undermines the vision, objectives, strategy, or integrity of the AFi; or ○ the Partner has consistently failed to fulfill the expectations set out in their Partnership Plan and has not taken action to develop a revised Partnership Plan that better reflects the partner's current interests, capabilities, and intentions. • By mutual agreement, the Partner and their AFi liaison may choose to develop a joint statement on the reason for the resignation.

Suggested Partnership Plan Template for AFi Supporting Partners

Partnership plans should contain at least the following information:

Supporting Partner organization:

Representative(s) of Supporting Partner organization:

AFi liaison person:

Rationale and objectives for the organization to become a Supporting Partner:

Activities to be carried out by the Supporting Partner organization:

Support and coordination to be provided by the AFi (via its liaison):

Any stipulations regarding permissions for use of Supporting Partner logo*:

Effective dates of the partnership plan:

Stipulations regarding information sharing and confidentiality, if applicable:

* The default arrangement is that the logo of each approved Supporting Partner will be included on the AFi website (in the list of Supporting Partners) and may be included in other AFi communications (such as brochures and slide presentations) that present the set of organizations involved in the AFi. The AFi will not use the Supporting Partner's logo in other ways without the advance written permission of the partner. Any deviations from this default approach should be stated in the Partnership Plan.