

Indicators for social sustainability in value chains for feed.

A memo for use in the project Social feed.



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Some overall reflections

- Several certification schemes for feed products do not include social sustainability
- Certification of a product is important to enhance or ensure access to a certain market, and not always a part of legal requirements
- The requirements for sustainability report and what is required within different certification schemes are changing.
- We find examples of cases where the sustainability report of a parent company is sufficient and covers the reporting for smaller companies where the parent company owns more than 51 % of the smaller company's stocks.
- Social sustainability is often both a normative value and important for economic sustainability within a company or value chain
- We are aware of a practice with the use of what some companies name 'gate keepers'. If a supplier to a company in a value chain for feed or feed ingredients is not certified with a certain certification scheme, this company can have the role as a gate keeper for this supplier company.

Aim of this memo

In the value chains for feed, different certification schemes exist. We run a desk study to get an overview of different certification schemes and what categories and/or indicators they use for social sustainability. In addition, we have talked to some feed companies to get some insight in how this certification schemes are used. In this memo we present the result from the desk study. We include in this memo certification schemes which have themes we understand as part of social sustainability.

For an assessment of good and services within the context of sustainable development, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) suggests guidelines for social life-cycle assessment of products (UNEP, 2020). This guideline includes social impact categories linked to key stakeholder groups such as workers, local community, society, consumers and value chain actors.

UNEP bases these guidelines on methodological principles for Life-Cycle Assessment (LCA)¹ and UNs sustainability goals. In LCA, the impacts of products life cycle are assessed, and where both sustainable production and consumptions are important.

The aim of this memo is twofold. First, we present in detail the different topics of social sustainability in the different certification schemes. More details about indicators are available

¹ In line with ISO14040 and 14044. More information from the European Commission: <https://eplca.jrc.ec.europa.eu/lifecycleassessment.html> (accessed 5. Marsch 2026).

through the URL of the web page for the different certification schemes. For the ease of communication in this memo, we focus on the broader topics.

Second, we give an overview of the main indicators or topic suggested in the guidelines by UNEP (IBID), and how these are covered by the certification schemes. We do not include an assessment of or do methodological considerations of how elements of LCA are used or can be used, included how the data collected can be used to assess the results for every phase of a products' life cycle.

Indicators for social sustainability in certification schemes for feed products

Table 1: Overview of the certification scheme ISCC Plus for Food and Feed

Certification scheme:	ISCC Plus for Food and Feed (covers agricultural crops)
URL of the web page	https://www.iscc-system.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/ISCC-PLUS_v3.4.2.pdf#page=108&zoom=100,92,380
Indicators/categories for social sustainability:	Safety working conditions. Ensuring safe working conditions on farm level, including health, safety and hygiene policies, and the use of protective clothing and procedures in case of accidents
	Compliance with human and labour rights and responsible community relations. Coverage of requirements for rural and social development, the rights of workers and local communities, based on but not limited to the core labour standards, defined by the International Labour Organization.
Sector:	Green sector

Table 2: Overview of the certification scheme KSL

Certification scheme:	KSL – Kvalitetssystem i landbruket (grain farmers)
URL of the web page:	https://www.norskmat.no/content/uploads/sites/5/2025/12/Tilleggskrav-FSA-Gull-2025.13-nb-no.pdf
Indicators/categories for social sustainability:	Safety working and living conditions at the farm level: Proper use and storage of pesticides, reduce the risk for accidents, and reduce the level of occupational exposure of noise, dust, chemicals and gasses. Ensure safety for family members living at the farm
Sector:	Green sector

Table 3: Overview of the certification scheme GMP+ Feed Certification

Certification scheme:	GMP+ Feed Certification
URL of the web page:	https://www.gmpplus.org/feed-certification-scheme/scheme-documents/fsa-requirements/r10/
Indicators/categories for social sustainability:	<p>Personnel responsible for operating and maintaining an effective for operating and maintaining an effective Food Safety Management System (FSMS) are competent. This competence must be kept as documented information.</p> <p>When external personnel are hired to perform activities related to the FSMS, the GMP+ certified company must keep documented information about the agreements or contracts that define their competency, responsibility and authority.</p> <p>Work environment: The GMP+ certified company must provide resources for a work environment necessary to comply with the requirements of the FSMS. Suitable work environment is affected by human and physical elements, for example, hygiene, temperature, humidity, natural light, air conditions and noise.</p>
Sector:	Green and blue sector

Table 4: Overview of the certification scheme FSSC 22000 Food Safety System Certification

Certification scheme:	FSSC 22000 Food Safety System Certification (based on a combination of ISO 22000 and additional scheme requirements). For processing of feed and animal food: ISO 22000:2018, ISO/TS 22002-6:2016
URL of the web page:	https://www.fssc.com/fssc-22000/
Indicators/categories for social sustainability:	<p>Human resources within the company (internal issues). The right people with the necessary skills/attributes in appropriate roles. A work environment suitable for work efficiency (Adequate heat, light, airflow, hygiene, noise levels etc, all contribute to an effective working environment). Employee wellbeing, stress-reduction, clear lines of reporting, employee appraisals, rewards systems.</p> <p>External issues that can affect the capability of the management system to get the intended results: social, cultural and political trends, legal changes, technology advancements, etc. that can influence the achievement of the established food safety objectives.</p>
Sector	Green and blue sector

Table 5: Overview of the certification scheme Global G.A.P Compound Feed Manufacturing

Certification scheme:	Global G.A.P Compound Feed Manufacturing
URL of the web page:	https://documents.globalgap.org/documents/-240924_GG_CFM_CPCCs_v3_1_Sep23_en.pdf
Indicators/categories for social sustainability:	Workers’ competence (training, etc), workers’ health, safety, and welfare (risk assessment and plans, hazardous substances, first aid, protective clothing, recording of safety violations), workplace facilities (access to water and dining areas), transparent contracts, children and young employee, local communities (impact on and engagement with the local community), excessive contracts.
Sector:	Green and blue sector

Table 6: Overview of the certification scheme FAMI-QS (Specialty Feed Ingredients)

Certification scheme:	FAMI-QS (Specialty Feed Ingredients)
URL of the web page:	https://fami-qs.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/FAMI-QS_Code_of_Practice_V6_Rev4.pdf
Indicators/categories for social sustainability:	Feed Safety Hazard (Biological, chemical or physical agent in feed, with the potential to cause an adverse health effect in animals and/or humans) and Hazard (Any biological, chemical (including radiological) or physical agent that has the potential to cause illness or injury in humans or animals)
Sector:	Green and blue sector

Table 7: Overview of the certification scheme ProTerra

Certification scheme:	ProTerra
URL of the web page:	https://www.proterrafoundation.org/
Indicators/categories for social sustainability:	Discrimination, excessive working hours, transparent contracts, wages in line with national legislation and/or sector agreements, freedom to form or join Union, health and safety for workers, protective clothing, children and young people.
Sector:	Green and blue sector

Table 8: Overview of the certification scheme Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD)

Certification scheme:	Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD)
URL of the web page:	https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32022L2464
Indicators/categories for social sustainability:	The reporting requires businesses to report on their own workforce, including working conditions, gender pay gap, training, health and safety, work-life balance and collective bargaining. In addition to your own workforce, also required to report on workers in the value chain covering human rights, forced labour and working conditions. Other reporting demands includes affected communities, i.e. economic, social and cultural rights, as well as end-users/consumers' health and safety and privacy.
Sector:	Green and blue sector

Table 9: Overview of the certification scheme The FAIRR initiative (FAIRR)

Certification scheme:	The FAIRR initiative (FAIRR)
URL of the web page:	https://www.fairr.org/tools/protein-producer-index/methodology
Indicators/categories for social sustainability:	Social requirements include the companies' working conditions, health and safety, human rights, worker voice and representation (unionizing), supply chain management to assess how connected companies cope with social risks, and community relations i.e. air pollution.
Sector:	Green and blue sector

Table 10: Overview of the certification scheme United Nations Global compact (UN Global Compact)

Certification scheme:	United Nations Global compact (UN Global Compact)
URL of the web page:	https://unglobalcompact.org/what-is-gc/our-work/social
Indicators/categories for social sustainability:	Human rights in the social dimension of corporate is a cornerstone in the first six UN Global Compact's principles. The work on human rights also focuses on other groups like labour, women's empowerment and gender equality, children, indigenous people, LGBTIQ+ individuals, people with disabilities, as well as people-centered approaches to business impact on poverty and the environment. One is also covering issues affecting such groups, like education and health.
Sector:	Green and blue sector

Table 11: Overview of the certification scheme ASC

Certification scheme:	Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC)
URL of the web page:	https://programme-centre.asc-aqua.org/app/uploads/2025/04/ASC-STD-002-ASC-Feed-Standard-V1.1-May-2025.pdf
Indicators/categories for social sustainability:	Compliance with laws and regulations for the labour market, labour trafficking, children and young employee, discrimination, health and safety in the work situation, insurance for employee in cases of injuries (if not covered by the national social/health system), access to water in the work environment and facilities for cooking and to eat in breaks, suitable areas for breast feeding, Union: e.g. freedom to join and or form workers' organizations, excessive working hours, accommodation facilities, local communities, indigenous and tribal people rights.
Sector:	Blue sector

Table 12: Overview of the certification scheme Best Aquaculture Practices (BAP)

Certification scheme:	Best Aquaculture Practices (BAP)
URL of the web page:	https://www.bapcertification.org/Downloadables/pdf/GSA%20-%20Seafood%20Processing%20Standard%20-%20Enhanced%20Social%20Module%20-%20Issue%201.0%20-%2005-November-2025.pdf
Indicators/categories for social sustainability:	Wage in compliance with legislation and or agreements, transparent contracts, excessive working hours, children and young employee, discrimination, union, accommodation, health and safety, chemical and biological hazards in the work environment.
Sector:	Blue sector

Main indicators or topic suggested in the guidelines by UNEP

Social Life Cycle Assessment (S-LCA) is a methodology to assess the social impact of products and services across their life cycle. According to UNEP (2020), social sustainability is about identifying and managing impacts, both positive and negative, on people (stakeholders). In the guidelines for S-LCA by UNEP (2020), social impacts are classified by stakeholder categories. These are workers, local community, society, consumers and value actors. Linked to these stakeholder categories, are impact categories. These compromise socially significant themes, according to the guidelines. These are human rights, working conditions, health and safety, cultural heritage, governance and socio-economic repercussions (table 13).

As presented in table 13, health and safety and working conditions are the indicators most certification scheme include as themes. Six certification schemes include human rights, three include cultural heritage and two include governance. At last, six certification schemes include socio-economic repercussions.

Table 13: Overview of significant certifications and initiatives relevant for the blue and green sector in Norway, and their inclusion of social sustainability indicators in accordance with the UNEP 2020 guidelines.

Sector	Certification/initiative	Impact Indicators					
		Human rights	Working conditions	Health and safety	Cultural heritage	Governance ²	Socio-economic repercussions ³
Green	ISCC Plus	X	X	X		X	X
Green	KSL		X	X			
Green/blue	GMP+		X	X			
Green/blue	FSSC 22000		X	X	X	X	
Green/blue	Global GAP		X	X			X
Green/blue	FAMI-QS			X			
Green/blue	ProTerra		X	X			
Blue	ASC	X	X	X	X		X
Blue	BAP	X	X	X			
Green/blue	CSRD	X	X	X	X		X
Green/blue	FAIRR	X	X	X			X
Green/blue	UN Global compact	X	X				X

References

UNEP (2020). Guidelines for Social Life Cycle Assessment of Products and Organizations 2020. Benoit Norris, C., Traverso, M., Neugebauer, S., Ekener, E., Schaubroeck, T., Russo Garrido, S., Berger, M., Valdiva, S., Lehman, A., Finkbeiner, M., Arcese, G. (eds.). United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

² Governance refers to or focus on responsible, transparent and ethical governance by a company or institution

³ Socio-economic repercussions refer to e.g. fair distribution, local value creation, income distribution and equity