

Position paper

Sustainable Development Goals



Introduction

In September 2015, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted by the United Nations. The 17 goals and 169 accompanying targets determine the international development agenda and the goals of the global community to be reached by 2030.¹ These include ending extreme poverty and hunger, ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns, tackling gender inequality, combating climate change and ensuring decent work for all.

The SDGs are an important diplomatic step towards a sustainable future. The ambitious agenda provides an opportunity for the world to step up their efforts for sustainable development and a framework for governments, business and civil society to work together towards a more equitable, fairer and safer world.

UTZ recognizes the broad support for the SDGs by business, governments and civil society as a significant achievement, whilst recognizing the challenge ahead in translating this diplomatic agreement into action and impact. Our mission, to make sustainable farming the norm, means much of our work is already closely aligned with the ambitions of the SDGs. This position paper explores how the SDGs are a stimulus for our mission and how UTZ contributes to the SDGs.

Why are the SDGs important?

The SDGs are a rallying cry to take better care of our planet and its inhabitants, in a way that does not compromise the needs of future generations. There are several reasons why the SDGs provide a global opportunity.

First, they acknowledge that sustainability needs to be approached holistically. The SDGs aim to balance the dimensions of sustainability – economic, environmental and social – and recognize their interconnectivity. This gives us the chance to reconsider global supply chains and pursue a world in which the “economy serves society, so that it evolves within the safe operating space of the planet.”² This transformation is a prerequisite for sustainable agriculture.

In addition, the SDGs recognize that the 2030 agenda requires a local, regional and global scope. UTZ appreciates this approach, as we have experienced that making supply chains sustainable requires a multi-level approach. Every effort towards sustainable development

has a role to play, whether it is one farmer applying good agricultural practices or an international plan to eliminate child labor.

Lastly, they emphasize the power of partnerships. Whereas its predecessors, the Millennium Development Goals, resulted from a science-based exercise by experts, the SDGs emerged from an extensive consultation process with not only states through the UN, but also with civil society, labor unions and the private sector. In this way, the SDGs can benefit from the power of collaborative advantage, in which different players strengthen each other’s efforts.

In short, the SDGs are a global call to action, which recognizes the need for a holistic and collaborative approach. It provides an opportunity to step up sustainability efforts.

What is UTZ’s position towards the SDGs?

The SDGs provide a unique momentum to collectively work towards sustainable development, however, it needs to be acknowledged that bringing diplomatic action

¹ See the 2015 [UN Resolution](#) “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”

² [Stockholm Resilience Centre](#). 2016. How food connects all the SDGs.



to impact on the ground will remain a challenge. Specific and concrete measures on both global and local level are required to translate the SDGs into impact.

A joint report by WWF and ISEAL Alliance³ illustrates how sustainability standards, as instruments for business, can help accelerate progress on many of the SDGs, while delivering direct benefits for companies and small-scale producers. UTZ has a unique position in the sector to contribute to the achievement of the SDGs. The combination of field interventions that stimulate Good Agricultural Practices and leveraging market demand for sustainable products is a proven model that works towards sustainable sector transformation with mutual benefit. In this way, UTZ and other sustainability standards enable business to contribute to the SDGs.

UTZ's contribution to the SDGs

There are several ways in which UTZ contributes to the SDGs:

Within the UTZ approach we are already working directly on tackling some of the key goals outlined in the SDGs. Ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns (SDG 12) is directly aligned with our mission to make supply chains more sustainable. We work with major buyers in the cocoa, coffee, tea and hazelnut sector

including large and transnational companies to ensure they adopt sustainable practices. In addition, through various control points in our Code of Conduct and complementary projects regarding sustainable water management (SDG 6), climate change mitigation and adaptation (SDG 13), gender equality (SDG 5), decent working conditions (SDG 8) and more, the SDGs are at the heart of our approach. In figure 1, an overview of UTZ's contribution to the SDGs can be found.

In addition, UTZ functions as an enabler for business to contribute to the SDGs. Our rigorous assurance model and traceability system provide transparency in supply chains, providing insights that business need to take action.

Lastly, UTZ's multi-stakeholder approach has been key to our growth and to its efforts to facilitate sector transformation. This is in line with SDG 17 on partnerships. We work with governments, companies, civil society organizations, other sustainability programs and farmers alike in working towards a sustainable future. In 2016, UTZ entered into a strategic partnership with the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs - Sector Partnerships: Building Capacities for Change – which allows us to work with a wider group of civil society stakeholders, to lobby and advocate for sector wide change on issues such as child labor, living wages, climate change and productivity.

Conclusion

The SDGs represent a diplomatic milestone towards a sustainable future. The ambitious agenda provides an opportunity for the world to step up and move towards sustainable development. UTZ applauds that the goals have a holistic approach towards sustainability and emphasize that working together is essential for their achievement. UTZ has a unique position regarding the SDGs, as we enable different actors throughout the supply chain to take action. Standards and certification systems can be a tool for companies to contribute to the SDGs. Achieving more sustainable agricultural supply chains will only happen when producers, private sector actors, governments and sustainability programs work together in a multi-stakeholder collaboration.

³ [WWF \(2017\)](#). SDGs mean business: How credible standards can help companies deliver the 2030 agenda.



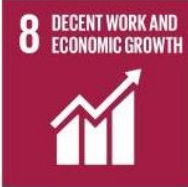


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Figure 1: UTZ's contribution to the SDGs

| SDG | UTZ Code of Conduct requirements | Other UTZ efforts |
|--|---|---|
|  <p>12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION</p> | <p>Responsible production lies at the heart of UTZ's Code of Conduct. It focuses on good agricultural practices, enabling farmers to strengthen their productivity – producing a higher yield of a better quality, more efficiently. At the same time, social and environmental requirements contribute to better lives for farmers, their families and workers, and the protection of the earth's natural resources. In other words, the Code of Conduct is about all aspects of responsible production.</p> | |
|  <p>17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS</p> | | <p>We work with governments, companies, civil society organizations, other sustainability programs and farmers alike in working towards a sustainable future. Through the sector partnership, funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, UTZ promotes more sustainable farming practices by cooperating with civil society, governments and companies to improve policy and regulation, and to strengthen sector wide services for smallholders and female farmers. Also, we support the development of a thriving civil society that can drive change.</p> |
|  <p>8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH</p> | <p>The code requires farmers to ensure worker's rights on freedom of association, working hours, wages, and respectful treatment, and healthy and safe working conditions for workers. This includes record keeping and evaluation on these topics.</p> <p>UTZ is dedicated to the full eradication of forced and child labor and invests in measures to prevent, detect, remediate and ultimately eradicate child labor on all UTZ certified farms. The code requires groups to appoint a child labor liaison.</p> <p>UTZ requires individual farms to work towards a living wage for workers.</p> | <p>Living wage and child labor are core themes in the Strategic Partnership with the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs.</p> |



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|---|--|--|
|  <p>13 CLIMATE ACTION</p> | <p>The code requires measures on both climate change adaptation and mitigation.</p> <p>Certificate holders should assist farmers in adapting to important climate change impacts, increase energy efficiency, reduce air contamination and manage waste responsibly.</p> | <p>Climate and water is a core theme in the Strategic Partnership with the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs.</p> |
|  <p>15 LIFE ON LAND</p> | <p>The code requires the protection of natural habitats, natural resources and biodiversity, for example through preservation activities and forest management plans. The requirement includes record keeping and evaluation on these topics.</p> <p>In addition, the code does not allow deforestation or degradation of primary forest and requires the careful management of other types of forest.</p> | |
|  <p>5 GENDER EQUALITY</p> | <p>The Code of Conduct promotes equal rights and opportunities for men and women, such as equal pay and no discrimination. It also requires measures to ensure equal opportunities for women to participate in training and awareness raising sessions.</p> | <p>Gender is a core theme in the Strategic Partnership with the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs.</p> |
|  <p>2 ZERO HUNGER</p> | <p>A key part of the UTZ approach is working with farmers and producer groups to help them to improve their productivity and incomes.</p> <p>An UTZ certified farm or group is required to have an Internal Management System (IMS) that ensures access to input and training and materials on good agricultural practices.</p> | <p>The approaches we have used within the coffee, cocoa and tea sector are now being shared more broadly, and in the case of sustainable food crops, our most important new partnership is with the Sustainable Rice Platform.</p> |
|  <p>6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION</p> | <p>Sustainable and responsible use of water in production and processing, e. g. good wastewater management, are included in the code.</p> <p>Responsible irrigation methods, e. g. efficient water use, extraction from sustainable sources and avoidance of water contamination are also promoted</p> | <p>Climate and water is a core theme in the Strategic Partnership with the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs.</p> |
|  <p>3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING</p> | <p>Safe and healthy working conditions and access to health care for workers and their families. Training and awareness raising activities for workers and their family on health, safety and hygiene, are required.</p> | |



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|  <p>1 NO POVERTY</p> | <p>Better farming practices, including the diversification of production to support economic resilience, are important to ensure farmers can earn a living income.</p> | <p>UTZ leverages the market to demand and reward sustainable products, creating opportunities for farmers.</p> |
|  <p>10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES</p> | <p>The Code requires equal access to training and awareness raising activities, without discrimination.</p> | |

