LAND TECHNICAL GUIDANCE

STEP

3

MEASURE, SET, & DISCLOSE



SCIENCE BASED TARGETS NETWORK

Version 2.0
October 2026

Acknowledgments

This guidance was developed by the Science Based Targets Network's Land Hub as a contribution to the Science Based Targets Network (SBTN), which exists to transform economic systems and protect the global commons—our air, water, land, biodiversity, and ocean. SBTN unites more than 80 non-governmental organizations (NGOs), business associations, and consultancies to collectively define what is necessary to do "enough" to stay within Earth's limits and meet society's needs.

In partnership with SBTN, the Land Hub is a collaboration between World Wildlife Fund (Craig Beatty co-lead, Cristóbal Loyola), Conservation International (Jordan Rogan co-lead), The Nature Conservancy (Lyndsey Dowell), World Resources Institute (Elise Mazur), and the Food and Land Use Coalition/Systemiq (Scarlett Benson, Brian Shaw), with overall method development leadership in collaboration with Marco Daldoss Pirri. The objective of the SBTN Land Hub is to develop and promote a methodology that enables companies to set, track, and measure progress toward quantifiable targets representative of the progress required in land systems to sustain nature and people. The Land Hub is responsible for developing the technical content of these targets as part of SBTN's multi-stakeholder, multi-year initiative to provide companies with comprehensive science-based targets for nature.

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ATTRIBUTION

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1. The scope of these guidelines is confined to SBTN Step 3: Measure, Set, & Disclose of the five-step SBTN Framework. Step 4 guidance will be released alongside the V2 methods to be followed later by collaborative Step 5 guidance to monitor target progress.

2. These guidelines are intended to direct voluntary corporate actions in line with company commitments to science-based targets for nature and do not represent a regulatory framework.

3. The guidelines are written in technical language; the primary audience of this document should have the technical knowledge necessary to engage with this content.

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"Science-based targets for land provide companies with the most trusted and meaningful framework to assess, prioritize, and set targets associated with their material impacts on land."

Executive summary

Land use and land use change continue to be one of the most persistent threats to nature and climate. Degraded and converted land can undermine its contributions to people, business, economies, and societies. SBTN's Step 3 Land technical guidance V2.0 builds on and extends the scientific depth of its preceding version (1.0) released in mid-2024. This revised guidance will enable companies to set science-based targets for land and to align their commitments to nature with the necessary speed and scale of action as determined by science.

The targets set forth here are an evolution of existing methods, expanding their applicability and improving their usability (see the About this guidance section for further details on method updates in this version). This guidance is a further step in voluntary corporate accountability for impacts and dependencies on land, representing the SBTN collaborative partnership, which spans business, industry associations, academia, research institutes, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, and the diverse views and perspectives of these groups.

The three land targets work together to achieve the following outcomes:

- Avoiding the loss of nature in land systems by addressing natural ecosystem conversion (including semi-natural land under productive use), the main driver of biodiversity loss on land.
- Regenerating and restoring productivity in agricultural areas and other working lands where expansion and ongoing impact have exceeded the resilient capacity of the natural ecosystems on which these human systems rely. And critically, to reduce impacts across key measures: soil organic carbon loss, soil erosion, and terrestrial acidification.
- Casting company actions into landscape contexts that will improve the ecological and social conditions of the landscapes in which companies operate and/or from where they source.



The land targets are applicable to any company that determines it has material impacts on the main land-related pressures on nature through its operations or supply chain. Within land systems, the targets operationalize and define a consistent path for companies that will align their commitments and actions with what nature needs:

- **Target 1: No Conversion of Natural Ecosystems** avoids the primary driver of biodiversity loss on land and a major source of greenhouse gas emissions. This includes a dedicated pathway for companies in the Mining, Infrastructure, Construction, and Extractives (MICE) sectors, recognizing that sector-specific constraints may prevent the full avoidance of conversion and providing a distinct mechanism for target adoption and progress. The target also provides justification pathways within the MICE pathway and enhanced flexibility in target dates, enabling them to commit to a sector-relevant target date within a defined window, and includes remediation/restoration requirements or recommendations for post-cutoff conversion aligned with sector best practices.

- **Target 2: Working Land Regeneration and Restoration** helps companies reduce their land-related pressures and improve ecological integrity and resilience across landscapes. It consists of two components: Land Area targets and Land Quality targets. Under the Land Area component, companies may set a Natural Land Cover target, which requires maintaining or increasing natural ecosystems within production units to a minimum threshold, and/or a Land Footprint Reduction target. Land Quality targets ask companies to set targets for soil organic carbon, soil erosion, and/or terrestrial acidification, based on ecoregion-level ecological thresholds.

- **Target 3: Landscape Engagement** puts company action and effort within the context of stakeholder collaboration at the landscape scale to regenerate working lands, restore degraded or converted ecosystems, and transform how a company acts in and sources from its material landscapes.

Nature does not yet have a recognized and functional global assessment framework, such as the Greenhouse Gas Protocol. Assessing company impacts on land and determining quantifiable targets for land systems and biodiversity remain relatively new and dynamic scientific pursuits. The SBTN Land Hub seeks to leverage the latest science on what land may need to support nature. Central to this effort is the introduction of spatially explicit thresholds that quantify ecological limits for key land system indicators at the ecoregion level. The underpinning methodology of these ecoregion thresholds was developed in collaboration with members of the Crowther Lab at ETH Zürich and the Complutense University of Madrid, with modeling support from the University of Washington. Complementing these thresholds, Land Environmental Assessment Factors (LEAFs) have been derived to assess the effect of corporate responses to their targets in terrestrial land systems, enabling companies to compare their impacts against what nature needs at a more local level. The methods are accompanied by the Accounting Guidelines for Impacts on Land Use and the Environment (AGILE), a first standardized framework to help companies calculate their environmental footprints and establish credible, science-based goals for protecting natural ecosystems.

In developing the current targets, the organizations that represent the SBTN Land Hub (World Wildlife Fund, Conservation International, World Resources Institute, The Nature Conservancy, and the Food and Land Use Coalition) have struck a balance. They factor in the ambition of science-based targets for nature, the availability of science to support Land targets, and the feasibility of companies to comply with target requirements across all sectors.

This has relied on several ongoing corporate sustainability initiatives, including the long-standing work on deforestation and conversion-free commodities through the Accountability Framework Initiative, as well as corporate commitments to emissions reductions under the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi) for Climate, and the Greenhouse Gas Protocol. Companies working through any of these initiatives will find clear, recognizable pathways in this target guidance to leverage and incorporate this existing work. Land targets, as a voluntary corporate

pursuit, are a necessary complement to corporate climate targets as they elevate nature to align with the urgency of corporate climate objectives and unite and broaden company actions across multiple landscapes, communities, and natural realms.

Setting land targets

In assessing their pressures on land as part of Step 1: Assess, companies for which land pressures are material must set Land targets. The 'area of land use' pressure category used in Step 1: Assess is defined in alignment with ENCORE and covers the pressures from land use change, land use, and soil pollution; in this document, 'land pressures' refers to this category. Companies are required to simultaneously work on all targets for which they are responsible, though target dates may differ between (or within) each of the three targets.

Wherever land pressures are material in Step 1, the Landscape Engagement target will apply. The company will need to follow the target guidance for engaging with and contributing to materially relevant landscape initiatives.

The Working Land Regeneration and Restoration target (Target 2) has been broadened beyond a land footprint reduction target, which previously only applied to large agricultural companies. SBTN's Land targets now bring more industry sectors into scope and provide more data and flexibility for companies to engage in the land that generates their material commodities. It combines area-based targets to reduce land footprints and/or increase natural land cover, alongside land-quality targets to address impacts from the loss of soil organic carbon, soil erosion, and acidification. Land-quality targets are informed by ecoregion-level thresholds for each land quality indicator, enabling companies to focus on improvement where ecological limits have been exceeded. For upstream supply chains where place-based target setting is not yet feasible, the Supplier Engagement Approach (Section 2.2.5) provides an alternative pathway.



SBTN STEPS 2 AND 3

STEP 2A	DEFINE TARGET BOUNDARIES
STEP 2B	INTERPRET AND RANK Calculate pressure-specific index values. Evaluate state of nature.
STEP 2C	PRIORITIZE
STEP 3	MEASURE, SET, & DISCLOSE TARGETS

SBTN LAND TARGETS OVERVIEW

	1 NO CONVERSION OF NATURAL ECOSYSTEMS	2 WORKING LAND REGENERATION & RESTORATION	3 LANDSCAPE ENGAGEMENT
APPLIES TO	Companies associated with high levels of conversion of natural ecosystems and GHG emissions in land systems	All companies with material pressures on land	All companies with material pressures on land
TARGET RESULT	Conservation of natural ecosystems	Reduction in pressures and impacts on land from companies	Engagement in materially relevant, cooperative landscape initiatives to improve ecological and social condition
SCOPE OF LANDS	Natural ecosystems	Working lands, including productive portion of production units and natural and semi-natural habitats retained	Natural ecosystems and working lands

Figure 1: Setting land targets.

How to use this document

This guidance first outlines the conditions and data requirements for the Land targets. It focuses on the details most relevant to companies seeking to quickly understand the target requirements, data needs, and key exceptions. Readers should familiarize themselves with the details and rationale for the targets and can find this necessary information and guidance in the target-specific annexes, associated technical documents, and supplementary materials listed throughout this guidance.

A key development in this updated version of the Land target-setting guidance is the **Accounting Guidelines for Impacts on Land Use and the Environment (AGILE)**, which should be read in parallel with this document. These guidelines provide corporate-level accounting methods for land-based impacts associated with companies' direct operations and value chain activities. AGILE will assist companies in developing a robust, consistent approach to calculating their impacts on land associated with land use change and land management activities, and will be a necessary reference during target setting. It provides the first detailed guidelines and methods for corporates to calculate their baselines and footprints to set science-based targets for land, including guidance on how corporate activity data can be translated into land quality impacts using LEAFs and compared against ecoregion-level thresholds.

Science-based targets for Land provide companies with the most trusted and meaningful framework to assess, prioritize, and set targets associated with their material impacts on land. Furthermore, this guidance provides the most comprehensive and science-based treatment of the role that changes in commodity production practices can play in generating nature-positive outcomes for land. This places company actions in support of improving nature within the context of decisions over which they have influence and control, using data and information that are directly relevant to supporting supply chain resilience and sustainability. Science-based targets for Land demonstrate a company's ambition to address its impacts on nature, provide flexible pathways to articulate these ambitions, and offer a framework to unite and include existing corporate sustainability action on climate with actions that credibly support nature.



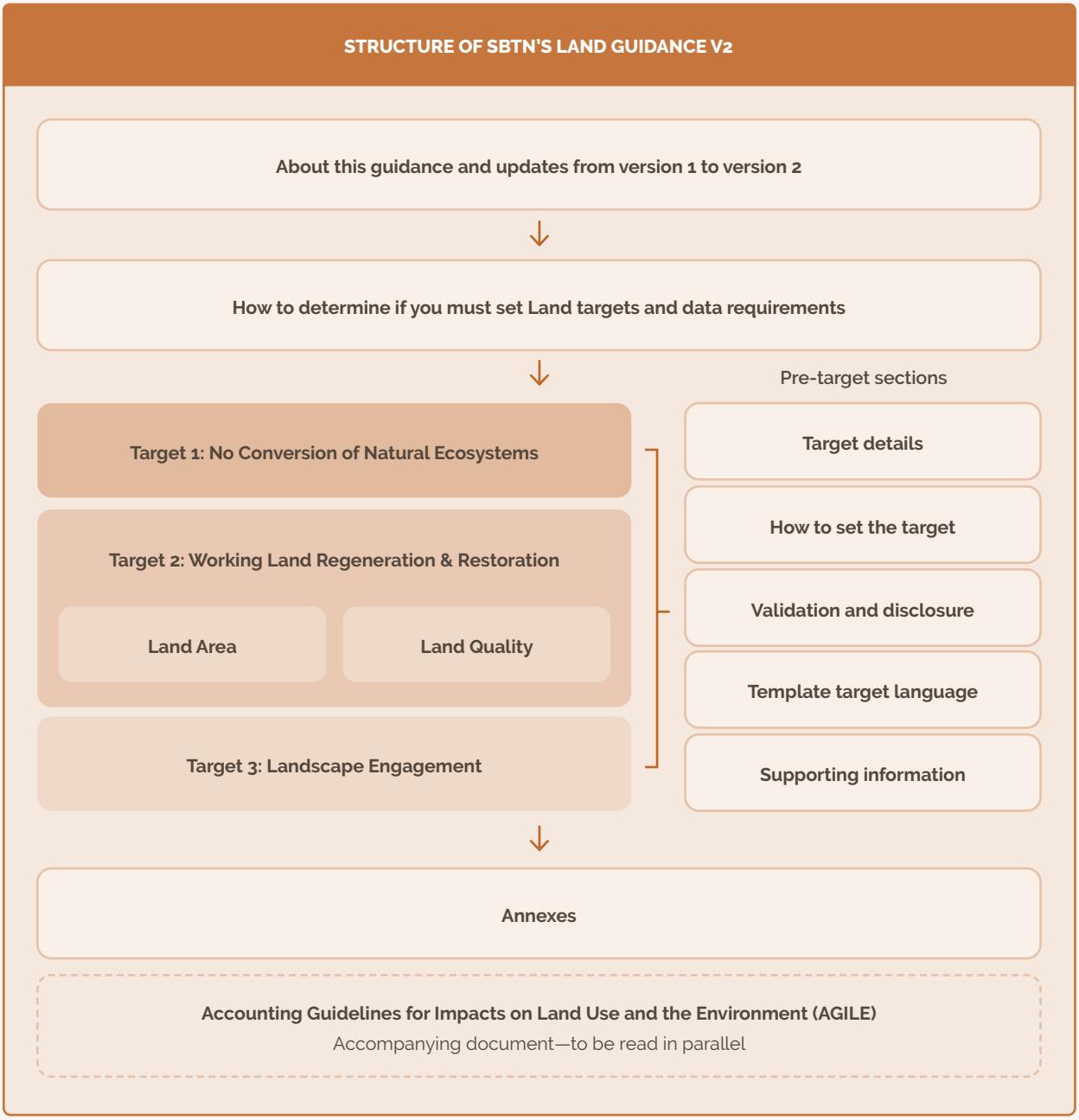


Figure 2: Structure of SBTN's Land guidance V2.

About this guidance

This guidance document represents the contribution of the individuals and representative organizations focused on land systems within the SBTN Land Hub.[1]

This document covers:

- Specific updates in this new version of SBTN's *Step 3: Land Technical Guidance*
- Target approach and alignment with existing initiatives
- The process for setting Land targets
- Guidance on each Land target.

Updates to Land methods in this version

SBTN released Land science-based targets in July 2024 after extensive development, piloting, and consultation. These target-setting methods were the first science-based targets for companies related to land and were based on the science and data then available. In October 2024, SBTN saw the first companies publish validated targets (including Land) and has continued to work with companies across sectors and geographies to set science-based targets for nature. Further validated targets have been publicly disclosed since this initial release.

Over the last several years, the SBTN Land Hub has worked on a comprehensive target-setting methodology included here, which builds on the core intent of the first Land science-based targets but uses novel developments in land science to enable more effective corporate target setting that responds to what nature needs at a place-based level while also covering a broader range of material land indicators.

Key to this development was defining science-based targets based on ecoregional thresholds in land systems science, which was not yet developed as of 2024. The "thresholds" concept is similar to aligning climate targets with 1.5°C, which is the safer upper limit of climate change, beyond which the science points to increasingly catastrophic impacts on nature and people. However, unlike climate targets, SBTN Land targets must be place-based, spatially explicit, and relevant to the landscapes where companies operate or source conversion-driving commodities. This requires an understanding of spatially explicit thresholds to define what nature needs to maintain stability in a given location, both in terms of avoiding further ecosystem degradation and loss, as well as the regenerative and restorative actions that would provide the necessary support to maintain stable and properly functioning ecosystems.

SBTN Land targets now include terrestrial ecoregion thresholds that quantify ecological limits in response to human modification and use of land systems across four key land indicators (natural land cover, soil organic carbon, soil erosion, and terrestrial acidification). These indicators were selected based on a thorough evaluation of ecosystem attributes that represent terrestrial ecosystem health and degradation, as well as their relevance and feasibility for corporate target setting and action.

They are thus useful for measuring extent of pressure and degradation at the ecoregion level and were selected based on an extensive literature review, and on their prevalence in major conventions of global importance, including the UN Convention to Combat Desertification: Land Degradation Neutrality (UNCCD LDN), the UN Convention on Biological Diversity's Global Biodiversity

1 SBTN Land Hub is led by World Wildlife Fund (WWF-US) and Conservation International (CI) and includes representatives from The Nature Conservancy (TNC), World Resources Institute (WRI), and the Food and Land Use Coalition (FOLU) through Systemiq.

Framework, and the Intergovernmental Science Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) 2019 special report. Please refer to Annexes 3 and 4 for further details on this work and to Rogan et al. (in review).

At the same time, the Land Hub derived Land Environmental Assessment Factors (LEAFs) to help assess the baseline and effect of commodity-based practice changes in terrestrial land systems. LEAFs are derived from traditional Lifecycle Assessment Characterization Factors (LCA CFs) and impact assessment methods, but have been adapted here to be directly comparable to ecoregion thresholds (see Annex 4 for further information; Loyola et al., in review). The underlying methods were selected with the help of LCA experts from the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU), reflecting the latest available science applicable to corporate sustainability footprinting and target setting. A detailed explanation can be found in Chapter 5 of AGILE.

What's changed in this version of science based targets for Land?

This version retains three headline targets and all the same foundational objectives and science-based target-setting methods. Target 2: Working Land Regeneration and Restoration (solely Land Footprint Reduction in the first version) contains the most significant modifications and expands its scope to include Natural Land Cover and Land Quality targets based on ecoregional thresholds for land quality indicators. Target 1: No Conversion of Natural Ecosystems introduces a dedicated mining, infrastructure, construction, and extractives (MICE) pathway and greater flexibility in target dates. Target 3: Landscape Engagement introduces a structured self-assessment framework for landscape initiative readiness. Another significant update is the publication of an accompanying *Accounting Guidelines for Impacts on Land Use and the Environment (AGILE)*, which provides the first detailed guidelines and methods for corporations to calculate their baselines and footprints for setting science-based targets for Land. Here, science-based targets for Land also include a consolidated framework of numbered requirements and recommendations across all three targets, providing companies and validators with a single normative reference (see Annex 8).

A summary of the material changes across the three Land targets is provided in the following table.



Table 1: Summary of material changes between versions of the Land methods.

SBT for Land 2024	SBT for Land 2026	Summary of material updates
Target 1 No Conversion of Natural Ecosystems	**Target 1** No Conversion of Natural Ecosystems *Moderate updates*	• The core target objective and methods remain unchanged from Version 1. • Updated and simplified guidance on **target dates**: Companies that have not met a no-conversion deadline of 2025 may now identify and commit to a later target date within a defined window. • Preliminary guidance on **reporting and disclosure** on progress toward no-conversion target dates, including an illustrative reporting template. • Integration of the **pathway for MICE sectors** (Mining, Infrastructure, Construction, Extractives), recognizing that sector-specific constraints prevent full avoidance of conversion and providing a distinct mechanism to achieve no conversion. • Recommended **remediation** for post-cutoff conversion, with conceptual guidance on remediation approaches. Remediation required for MICE. • Updated **SBTN Natural Lands Map** (v1.1) with improved classification of non-natural tree cover and regional data sources.
Target 2 Land Footprint Reduction	**Target 2** Working Land Regeneration & Restoration *Significant updates*	• Target 2 has been **significantly expanded and restructured**. It now comprises **Land Area targets** and **Land Quality targets**, allowing all companies and sectors to set this target. • **Land Area targets:** Large agricultural companies can set a **Land Footprint Reduction** target, a **Natural Land Cover** target, or both. All other companies may set a Natural Land Cover (NLC) target. The NLC target requires maintenance or increase of natural or semi-natural ecosystems to a minimum threshold of 25% cover per km^2. • **Land Quality targets**: Companies may prioritize targets for **Soil Organic Carbon**, **Soil Erosion**, or **Terrestrial Acidification**, or may set targets across all three. Targets are anchored by **ecoregion-level ecological thresholds**. • Introduction of **Land Environmental Assessment Factors (LEAFs)** as a quantification bridge between corporate activity data and ecoregion thresholds, enabling companies to assess their land quality impacts against ecological limits. • New Supplier Engagement Approach (see Step 2: Interpret & Prioritize guidance), which provides an alternative pathway for companies that do not have sufficient traceability and data to follow the place-based approach for upstream impacts. • Publication of accompanying Accounting Guidelines for Impacts on Land Use and the Environment (AGILE), providing the first detailed corporate-level accounting methods for land-based impacts.
Target 3 Landscape Engagement	**Target 3** Landscape Engagement *Minor updates*	• The core target objective and methods remain unchanged from Version 1. • New recommendation to incorporate information from **ecoregion-level ecological thresholds** as part of consideration criteria for landscape and initiative selection, enabling companies to prioritize landscapes where threshold exceedance is most relevant. • Other minor updates to language to reflect developments since V1, including alignment with the expanded scope of Target 2.

This technical guidance should be read in conjunction with the new *Accounting Guidelines for Impacts on Land Use and the Environment (AGILE)*, which provides detailed guidelines on calculating baselines and footprints.



"As a collective, the three land targets incentivize the most important actions required by companies to achieve nature goals in land systems."

Introduction

i. Introducing Land targets

Science-based targets for Land comprise three distinct targets (Table 2). Companies should adopt these targets when land pressures are material in Step 1: Assess (see Section ii, "How to determine if your company must set Land targets"). Final validation of Land targets requires companies to set all Land targets identified as material in Step 1: Assess. To align with the AR3T mitigation hierarchy, companies may not omit a Land target from their commitment to science-based targets if it is identified as material.

Table 2: Science-based targets for Land V2.

Science-based targets for Land*	
Target 1	No Conversion of Natural Ecosystems
Target 2	Working Land Regeneration and Restoration
Target 3	Landscape Engagement

*The SBTN Land Hub has complemented the three Land targets with a requirement for Forest, Land, and Agriculture (FLAG) companies to set a sister target on land greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions following the SBTi FLAG methodology requirements (note: for companies required to set climate targets as per FLAG's guidance).

As a collective, the Land targets incentivize the most important actions required by companies to achieve nature goals in land systems:

- Halting conversion of natural ecosystems (Target 1);
- Regenerating and restoring working lands and the natural lands that support them (Target 2); and
- Improving the ecological and social condition of landscapes to enhance ecosystem structure, composition, or function, and the social systems that depend on such landscapes (Target 3).

The three Land targets have been developed according to their capacity to address the following criteria:

- Maximum coverage of pressures that drive most companies' impacts on land.
- Availability of quantifiable, measurable metrics that can respond to company activities to make progress against the target.
- Alignment with active and relevant corporate sustainability standards and initiatives.
- Ability to incentivize action across SBTN's AR3T mitigation hierarchy.

The targets are based on currently available information and data. They allow companies to set targets today that will enable quantifiable contributions at the company and landscape levels. Land targets complement science-based targets for climate by addressing many of the impacts that climate targets cannot, incentivizing actions related to wider, non-GHG impacts on land. The broader set of actions these methods incentivize includes reducing and treating pollution and effluents, controlling erosion, and other actions that promote biodiversity and ecosystem integrity, which may not be captured by corporate actions that prioritize carbon sequestration.

Critically, this guidance expands on existing deforestation-free commitments and actions to include all natural, terrestrial ecosystems (e.g., grasslands, wetlands, shrublands), especially in relation to the working lands (e.g., cropland, rangeland, pasture, managed forest) that facilitate the production of many goods used by companies and consumers.

Moreover, while firmly rooted in directing companies to assess, avoid, or mitigate their impacts on nature, Land targets go further by incentivizing companies to deliver on regenerative, restorative, and transformative actions in collaboration with multiple stakeholders within their operations and value chains. This applies at the landscape scale, adjacent to their value chains, and throughout entire sectoral systems—including actions that underpin broader issues of sustainable development and align with a nature-positive future.

Requirement L.1

Material Land targets and simultaneous target setting

Companies must set all Land targets identified as material in Step 1: Assess. Companies may not omit any of the three headline Land targets from their commitment to SBTN if it is identified as material. Final validation of Land targets requires that companies set all Land targets identified as material in Step 1: Assess.

Companies must work on all targets for which they are responsible simultaneously, though target dates may differ across or within the three targets.

Specific provision for Target 2—Working Land Regeneration and Restoration Target: Supplier Engagement

Where Target 2 is material for the upstream value chain segment, and the company does not have location data sufficient to set Target 2, the company must set a Supplier Engagement target. The Supplier Engagement target is mandatory in this case to ensure coverage of the upstream target boundary under Target 2; it is set in accordance with the procedure in Step 2: Interpret & Prioritize (see also Section 2.2.5 of this document).

Box 1: Addressing biodiversity through Land targets.

The three Land targets cover a wide range of impacts that companies have on terrestrial ecosystems and biodiversity, addressing the two biggest drivers of terrestrial biodiversity loss: land conversion and land management. Target 1 tackles direct, commodity-driven conversion of natural ecosystems, while Targets 2 and 3 mandate the regeneration and restoration of working lands and natural landscapes, address and revert major land management impacts, and incentivize ecosystem restoration through more holistic interventions. Specifically, SBTN Land targets support the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) through its targets 1, 2, 3, 8, 10, 11, 15, 16, 19, 20, 21, 22, and 23 (see supplementary material).



ii. How to determine if your company must set Land targets

Setting Land targets is part of the five-step process for setting science-based targets for nature. Before using the Step 3: Measure, Set, & Disclose (for Land) methods, companies must complete Step 1: Assess *and* Step 2: Interpret & Prioritize. These steps enable companies to determine which pressures on nature they must address with targets, and which parts and locations of their business may be the highest-priority starting points.

Companies will be required to commit to the three Land targets when land pressures are material in Step 1: Assess.

Companies that meet the materiality thresholds for land pressures in SBTN Step 1: Assess can determine which Land targets are required, recommended, not required, or not applicable based on their ISIC sector(s). For cross-referencing the major sector classification systems, please refer to the crosswalk sector classification guidance in the supplementary material.

To have Land targets validated, companies will need to meet the requirements for each target they are responsible for. Companies that are unable to meet these requirements will be unable to validate or make claims about science-based targets for land or nature.

Target boundary

The target boundary defines the corporate scope of each Land target and must align with the outcomes of Step 1: Assess and Step 2: Interpret & Prioritize. During Step 1, companies screen their portfolio of economic activities for materiality (Step 1a: Materiality Screening) and estimate their contributions to key pressures through a value chain assessment (Step 1b: Value Chain Assessment). As part of the Step 1b value chain assessment, companies are offered the opportunity to focus on specific parts of their activities and impacts to progress more quickly to setting targets through accelerated pathways that focus on specific business units, realms or value chain segments. This narrowed scope is reflected in the Step 2 target boundary and all further method application and claims. During Step 2, companies define target boundaries for each pressure category and prioritize the parts and locations of their business that represent the highest-priority starting point for target setting.

Within their target boundary, companies must include any activities within their organizational scope (upstream and direct operations) for which land pressures are material in Step 1a (materiality screening). This includes all land holdings and all raw materials in the Step 1 high-impact commodity list (listed as “conversion-driving commodities”).

Please note that because the tools used for the Step 1a materiality screening are based on global sectoral performance, some companies may find that for certain activities they have lower contributions to pressures than would require them to set science-based targets for land. In these cases, companies will be required to submit a rationale to SBTN to justify excluding activities from the scope of their targets.

Table 3: Pressure categories covered by science-based targets for nature, from SBTN Step 1: Assess.

IPBES pressure category	SBTN environmental pressures
Ecosystem use or change	**Land use or land use change***
	Freshwater ecosystem use or change
	Marine ecosystem use or change
Resource exploitation	Water use
	Other resource use (minerals, fish, other animals, etc.)
Climate change	**GHG emissions***
Pollution	Non-GHG air pollutants
	Water pollutants
	Soil pollutants*

Pressures in bold and marked with a * are those covered in the science-based targets for land methods. Companies that have material contributions to these, as identified in Step 1: Assess, will be required to set and validate targets to make claims about science-based targets for land. IPBES stands for the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services.

Requirement L.2

Target boundary scope and alignment with Steps 1 and 2

Companies must define a target boundary that aligns with the outcomes of Step 1: Assess and Step 2: Interpret & Prioritize. The target boundary must include any activities within the company's organizational scope (upstream and direct operations) for which land pressures are material in Step 1a (materiality screening).

This includes all land holdings, and all raw materials included in the Step 1 high-impact commodity list. In Step 2, all the activities that qualified as material in Step 1a must be defined as the target boundaries for land pressures.

Specific provision for Target 1—Upstream coverage of conversion-driving commodities

Where Target 1: No Conversion of Natural Ecosystems includes the upstream value chain segment, the target boundary shall cover **at least 90% of sourced volumes of conversion-driving commodities** listed in the High-Impact Commodity List (Step 1: Assess), measured for the representative year disclosed at validation, **and 100% of volumes of commodities subject to the EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR)**. Coverage shall be calculated per commodity and aggregated across the upstream segment, consistent with the Step 1 Value Chain Assessment scope (Step 1 Requirement 11). Volumes outside this 90% upstream target boundary shall be disclosed at validation, including the rationale for exclusion and a time-bound plan to progressively bring them into scope.

Alignment with climate targets

It is necessary that climate and nature goals be achieved holistically. Climate targets that prioritize only carbon sequestration solutions may do so at the expense of nature, but companies that set both climate and nature targets will achieve both emissions reductions and improvements to supply chain resilience. For this reason, SBTN recommends that companies setting Land targets complement them with SBTi Climate Targets, and specifically target for land-based GHG emissions and removals, in line with the SBTi forest, land, and agriculture (FLAG) methodology requirements (see SBTi FLAG).

Recommendation L.1

Climate target alignment
SBTN recommends that companies setting Land targets complement those targets with a target for land-based GHG emissions and removals, in line with the SBTi forest, land, and agriculture (FLAG) methodology requirements.

Recommendation L.2

Reciprocal FLAG alignment
Companies required by SBTi to set FLAG climate targets are recommended by SBTN to set all three SBTN Land targets.

Box 2: SBTi requirements for setting a FLAG target.

Companies that meet these requirements are recommended to also set Land targets under SBTN:

i. Companies from the following SBTi-designated sectors: (a) Forest and paper products; (b) Food production (agricultural production); (c) Food production (animal source); (d) Food and beverage processing; (e) Food and staples retailing; (f) Tobacco.

ii. Companies in any other sector with FLAG-related emissions that total more than 20% of overall emissions across scopes. The 20% threshold should be accounted for as gross emissions, not net (gross minus removals).



a. How to determine if your company must set Target 1: No Conversion of Natural Ecosystems

The No Conversion of Natural Ecosystems target is consistent with existing zero-deforestation commitments in companies' soft-commodity supply chains, and also with the Accountability Framework initiative (AFi) guidance.

Requirement L.3

Target 1 applicability
Companies are required to set a No Conversion of Natural Ecosystems target if:

1. Land pressures are material in Step 1: Assess; or
2. 20% or more of their GHG emissions come from a sector with land sector activities, e.g., agriculture, forestry, and other land use (AFOLU) emissions.

For specific sectors, including mining, infrastructure, construction, and extractives (MICE), the No Conversion target is required but applies only to Core Natural Lands. (See glossary.)

b. How to determine if your company must set Target 2: Working Land Regeneration and Restoration

Requirement L.4

Target 2 applicability
A company is required to set a Working Land Regeneration and Restoration target when land pressures are material in Step 1a (materiality screening).
This requirement is met by setting at least one Land Area target or at least one Land Quality target (see Requirement T2.2).

c. How to determine if your company must set Target 3: Landscape Engagement

Requirement L.5

Target 3 applicability
A company is required to set a Landscape Engagement target when land pressures are material in Step 1a (materiality screening). under Step 1a materiality screening.

Recommendation L.3

Beyond Value Chain voluntary Landscape Engagement
Companies for which land pressures are not material in Step 1 may validate Landscape Engagement targets and align with science-based targets for Land. Engaging in landscape initiatives will be a positive contribution to the transformation needed in our economic systems and in how these interact with the people and places where they operate, while generating benefits for the company. Such companies may set a Landscape Engagement target without setting Target 1 or Target 2.

SECTORS THAT MUST FOLLOW THE MICE PATHWAY FOR TARGET 1: NO CONVERSION OF NATURAL ECOSYSTEMS

These sectors set a No Conversion target scoped to Critical Habitat, High Conservation Value areas (IFC PS6), or Core Natural Lands (KBAs, Protected Areas via IBAT).

MINING	• Manufacture of basic metals • Manufacture of fabricated metal products, non-machinery • Manufacture of computer, electronic, and optical products • Manufacture of other non-metallic mineral products
INFRASTRUCTURE	• Electricity, gas, steam, and air conditioning supply • Manufacturing, other
CONSTRUCTION	• Construction • Civil engineering
EXTRACTIVES	• Mining of coal and lignite • Extraction of crude petroleum and natural gas • Mining of metal ores • Other mining and quarrying • Manufacture of coke and refined petroleum products

What this means: These sectors follow the alternative No Conversion MICE pathway. The target applies to Critical Habitat and High Conservation Value areas via IFC PS6, or to Core Natural Lands identified through IBAT and the UNEP-WCMC Critical Habitat screening layer—not to all natural ecosystems. In addition, companies that must set an Upstream No Conversion target, but for which land pressures are not material in direct operations must still ensure that their operations do not lead to the conversion of areas in scope under the MICE pathway.

Figure 3: Sectors included as part of the mining, infrastructure, construction, and extractives (MICE) pathway for the No Conversion of Natural Ecosystems Target.

iii. AGILE and data requirements to set Land targets

SBTN's z Accounting Guidelines for Impacts on Land Use and the Environment (AGILE) is integral to this target-setting guidance as it provides the detailed methodology and associated data requirements for each target. AGILE provides guidance on preparing and submitting targets for validation, while this document outlines the requirements and recommendations for target setting.

AGILE § 1.0

Important references to AGILE are indicated throughout the document by this symbol with an associated section.

AGILE provides corporate-level accounting methods for land-based impacts associated with companies' direct operations and value chain activities. It provides a robust and consistent approach to calculate corporate impacts on land associated with land use change and land management activities included in these targets. This includes developing baselines and measuring footprints for each target, and it incentivizes action at the scale and speed determined by science to protect, manage, and restore terrestrial ecosystems.

Specifically, AGILE provides methods for companies to measure the following categories:

- Land use change
- Land footprint
- Natural land cover
- Soil organic carbon
- Soil erosion
- Terrestrial acidification
- Landscape engagement

Requirement L.6

Use of AGILE

Companies setting Land targets must use the SBTN Accounting Guidelines for Impacts on Land Use and the Environment (AGILE) alongside this technical guidance to calculate baselines, footprints, and to prepare targets for third-party validation.



Table 4: SBTN Land Target data requirements.

Target		Stage of the value chain relevant to requirement	Data type	Unit	Spatial data requirements
NO CONVERSION OF NATURAL ECOSYSTEMS		Producers and site owners/operators	Location of all sites where conversion-driving commodities are produced	Hectares	Required
		Producers and site owners/operators	Areas converted after cutoff date	Hectares	Required
		Sourcing	Sourcing area and volumes of conversion-driving commodities purchased (traced at least to sub-national level)	Hectares and metric tons or equivalent from each area	Recommended
WORKING LAND REGENERATION & RESTORATION	**LAND AREA** • Land Footprint Reduction • Natural Land Cover	Producers and site owners/operators	Volumes of agricultural commodities produced by production location (primary or statistical data)	Metric tons	Recommended
		Producers and site owners/operators	Data on operational sites where commodities are produced (spatial or statistical)	Hectares	Recommended
		Producers and site owners/operators	Location of all production units	Hectares	Required
		Sourcing	Volumes of agricultural commodities purchased (primary or statistical data, differentiated to the extent possible by sourcing location)	Metric tons	Not required
		Sourcing	Yield of each product purchased (statistical data, matched to the extent possible with the sourcing locations linked to the purchasing volume data above (e.g., national or subnational yield data)	Metric tons per hectare per year	Not required
	LAND QUALITY • Soil Organic Carbon • Soil Erosion • Terrestrial Acidification	Producers and site owners/operators	Location of all production units	Hectares	Recommended
		Producers and site owners/operators	Identified land use types within each production unit	N/A	N/A
		Producers and site owners/operators	Time period of land use per land use type	Years	N/A
		Producers and site owners/operators	Sources of ammonia, nitrogen oxides, and sulfur dioxide emissions	Kilograms	N/A
LANDSCAPE ENGAGEMENT		Producers and site owners/operators	Location of all operational sites (at ecosystem level) prioritized in Step 2	Hectares	Required
		Sourcing	Sourcing area and volumes of high-impact commodities purchased	Hectares and metric tons or equivalent from each area (supplementary)	Recommended

Target 1:
No Conversion of Natural Ecosystems





"The No Conversion of Natural Ecosystems target avoids the primary driver of biodiversity loss on land and a major source of greenhouse gas emissions."

This chapter sets out:

- What a No Conversion of Natural Ecosystems target is and why it is required.
- How to set, validate, and communicate the No Conversion target.
- The applicable requirements for both the standard and the MICE pathways.

1.1 What is a No Conversion of Natural Ecosystems target?

The No Conversion of Natural Ecosystems target is designed to avoid the wholesale change of a natural ecosystem to another land use, or a profound change in a natural ecosystem's species composition, structure, or function. For this method, conversion includes both severe degradation and the introduction of management practices that result in substantial and sustained change in the ecosystem's former composition, structure, or function, or within the species that inhabit it. Changes to natural ecosystems that meet these criteria are considered conversion within the scope of these methods, regardless of whether the conversion itself is legal.

Companies with material land pressures in Step 1 will commit to No Conversion of Natural Ecosystems using a cutoff date of 2020 or earlier and by a defined target date (see Box 3 below). Companies commit to removing all future exposure to conversion of natural ecosystems as of the target date and to remain conversion-free thereafter. Companies may also commit to a deforestation-free target with an earlier target year, which can act as a first milestone toward conversion-free status.

The period between target validation and the target date is considered a transition period during which companies are expected to implement changes in procurement practices to eliminate the conversion exposure by the target year. Here, a de minimis exclusion serves as a buffer for residual conversion levels that occur beyond the company's control (see requirements T1.6 and T1.7).

In Step 1b, companies calculated their conversion baseline, which helps to estimate current exposure levels and can inform future actions to remove conversion associated with operations or sourcing. This Step 3: Measure, Set, & Disclose guidance includes additional information to refine this Step 1b baseline, so that the calculations can be used to demonstrate alignment with the target. For example, where they align with SBTN, standards and certificates may be used to show that a sourced commodity has not led to conversion, even when an initial estimation based on secondary data indicates potential ecosystem conversion.

Requirement T1.1

No conversion commitment
Companies must commit to no conversion of natural ecosystems from the cutoff date onward and must achieve full deforestation- and conversion-free (DCF) status within their target boundary by the defined target date.

Requirement T1.2

Cutoff date
Companies must apply a cutoff date no later than 2020 for assessing the conversion of natural ecosystems. Companies that have already applied a cutoff date earlier than 2020 should use that earlier date or provide written justification to SBTN for any change.

Recommendation T1.1

Alignment of cutoff dates
Cutoff dates should be aligned with existing sectoral or regional cutoff dates where they exist. All cutoff dates, including those associated with certification schemes, must be no later than 2020.

Box 3: Defining cutoff dates and target dates.

Cutoff dates: To assess whether land conversion has occurred, land use change events are considered over an assessment period lasting from a cutoff date to the present. The cutoff date provides a baseline for the target; after this date, any conversion of natural ecosystems on a given site renders the materials produced from/on that site non-compliant with a No Conversion target.

Target dates: Target dates are the time by which companies must achieve their Land targets.

Requirement T1.3

Target date commitment and disclosure

Companies must publish the specific date by which they commit to being deforestation- and conversion-free (DCF) for each applicable segment of their value chain (see **Table 5**). Where companies cannot meet the expected target dates, they must:

- Disclose the earliest date by which they will achieve DCF status, with the latest permissible date for upstream sourcing being 2030;
- Disclose the proportion of their direct operations and sourced volumes of conversion-driving commodities that are currently DCF;
- Explain the rationale for the target date, including justification for selecting later dates; and
- Demonstrate the pathway and actions they will take to achieve the target date.

Recommendation T1.2

Annual interim milestones

Companies should publish quantitative annual interim milestones indicating year-on-year progress toward full DCF status. SBTN recommends publishing quantities of non-DCF-compliant commodities as part of this annual disclosure.

Table 5: No Conversion of Natural Ecosystems—target dates and requirements.

Scope	Ecosystems covered	Requirement	Target timeline
Direct operations	All natural ecosystems	No conversion of natural ecosystems	Within two years of target setting
Upstream sourcing	All natural ecosystems (incl. natural forests)	100% no conversion across all conversion-driving commodities (HICL)	No later than 2030
	Natural forests	100% deforestation-free sourcing	No later than the conversion-free target date

Notes: (1) Companies shall apply a cutoff date no later than 2020 for conversion events. (2) For commodities and sourcing volumes subject to the EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR), companies shall ensure that deforestation-free compliance is aligned with the applicable legislative date defined under EUDR. (3) All companies must achieve full compliance with the No Conversion target across upstream sourcing no later than 2030, regardless of the year in which the target is set.

Requirement T1.4

Coverage of direct operations
All direct operations activities for which land pressures are material in Step 1a are in scope for the No Conversion target.

Coverage of conversion-driving commodities
Companies sourcing conversion-driving, high-impact commodities (see HICL) must set upstream targets that address all conversion impacts associated with those commodities within the target boundary (see Step 1: Assess).

Requirement T1.5

Accounting for conversion
Companies must account for land use change (LUC) associated with their operations and sourcing activities, applying one of the two approved conversion assessment methods:

- Production unit assessment; or
- Sourcing area assessment.

Companies will have already conducted an initial accounting for conversion in Step 1b. For direct operations, the accounting must be completed before target validation. For upstream activities, we recommend that companies complete the assessment as soon as possible and well ahead of the defined target date to enable timely action where exposure to conversion is higher. Further guidance on conducting these assessments is provided in AGILE Chapter 4.

AGILE § 4.5

Recommendation T1.3

Annual monitoring of conversion
SBTN recommends that companies account for conversion yearly to demonstrate compliance with target requirements or to understand exposure to conversion risk associated with sourcing from a given area. Companies should not allocate conversion for a year for which they do not yet have supply chain data. Further guidance on accounting for conversion is provided in Section 4.6 of AGILE.

AGILE § 4.6

DE MINIMIS CONVERSION THRESHOLDS

In recognition of the practical realities of land management and supply chain oversight, SBTN applies the following de minimis thresholds for assessing compliance with the No Conversion target. These thresholds do not constitute a license to convert natural land; they provide a proportionate basis for determining compliance where marginal and unavoidable land use changes occur. The de minimis thresholds apply only when assessing compliance with the target: all conversion is accounted for in the baseline, and the thresholds cover residual, unforeseen conversion events (for example, small-scale clearing by an individual producer) once deforestation- and conversion-free status has been achieved.

Requirement T1.6

De minimis conversion: For producers and site operators
For producers, site owners, and site operators, clearing of less than 5% of the total production unit size, or 20 hectares—whichever is stricter—is not considered conversion for this target. This threshold does not apply if local law is stricter; in such cases, local law takes precedence. Conversion must be assessed cumulatively over time: Multiple small instances of conversion that in aggregate exceed the threshold are considered non-compliant.

Requirement T1.7

De minimis conversion: For downstream companies
Although downstream companies do not have direct control over individual production units, they may remain in compliance with the No Conversion target as long as 95% or more of their purchased commodity volume in a given year is sourced from areas that demonstrate no conversion. The remaining 5% tolerance does not exempt companies from due diligence obligations; companies must continue working toward full supply chain compliance within the target boundary and timeline.

Recommendation T1.4

Remediation and restoration of converted natural land

As companies assess and track conversion in their value chains, SBTN strongly recommends that they remediate and restore converted natural ecosystems resulting from their operations or supply chain.[2] Options include working with suppliers that own or manage land, or contributing to restoration efforts through collective action in landscape initiatives. SBTN recommends companies follow AFi's Operational Guidance on Environmental Restoration and Compensation. For remediation of Core Natural Lands in the MICE pathway, please see Requirement T1.15.

Please see the Box "Assessing Compliance with the No Conversion Target Requirements" from the Step 4: Act guidelines for more information on guidance to support the achievement of this target.



Recommendation T1.5

When setting No Conversion targets, companies should consider local rights

Companies setting science-based targets for nature should ensure that they have upheld and respected the rights of Indigenous People and local communities, particularly the right of Indigenous Peoples to self-determination through Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC). This is particularly critical when implementing the No Conversion target, as comprehensive guidance for companies on where to avoid converting natural ecosystems is incomplete without consideration of those that have cultural or social importance to people. When implementing the framework of FPIC, companies should ensure that they have engaged in collaborative land use planning processes with local stakeholders and provided an opportunity for Indigenous Peoples, and potentially other affected stakeholders, to decide whether and under what conditions activities impacting their lands and resources can occur. This ensures that consideration of human rights both when considering the impacts of production and sourcing as well as in the actions taken to ensure conversion-free outcomes.

Companies should also assess the potential adverse impacts of conversion on the human and land rights of affected stakeholders as part of a landscape initiative, direct operations or upstream sourcing, including as part of their Landscape Engagement targets (although this applies to company action across all science- based targets). Companies are encouraged to follow SBTN Stakeholder Engagement Guidance as well as other resources to support FPIC implementation in DCF commitments (e.g., ISEAL's publication on Advancing Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) in deforestation- and conversion-free supply chains. Additional guidance is available through the United Nations General comment No. 26 (2022) on Land and Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

2 Remediation is required for MICE sectors.

1.2 How to set a No Conversion of Natural Ecosystems target

The procedure for setting a No Conversion of Natural Ecosystems target varies by sector. Companies in the mining, infrastructure, construction, and extractives (MICE) sectors must follow the dedicated MICE pathway outlined in Section 1.2.2, which reflects the specific nature of their land interactions. All other companies required to set a No Conversion target must follow the standard pathway detailed in Section 1.2.1

1.2.1 Standard pathway

This section applies to all companies required to set a No Conversion of Natural Ecosystems target that do not fall within the MICE sectors listed in Figure 3. Companies must follow the procedure below to identify target requirements and prepare all required materials for submission to SBTN for target validation. Target dates and requirements differ by value chain segment, the types of commodities sourced, and their origins.

Note on Step 2—Interpret & Prioritize

All locations and activities within the target boundaries must be included to avoid leakage between locations. Companies may follow the prioritization approach in Step 2 to determine where to begin implementation, but all locations must be included within the Target 1 scope when targets are first set.

KEY REQUIREMENTS FOR BASELINE DATA PREPARATION

Direct operations:

> #### Requirement T1.8
>
> **Use of the SBTN Natural Lands Map and production unit mapping**
> Companies following the standard pathway must use the SBTN Natural Lands Map to identify natural land associated with operations or commodity sourcing, estimate its conversion since the cutoff date, and operationalize the 2020 cutoff for no-conversion calculations. Companies will map all production units and other operational areas and compare them against the SBTN Natural Lands Map.

Details on how to access and use the Natural Lands Map are provided in Chapter 4 of AGILE. During the target-setting process, if it becomes clear that the representation of natural or non-natural land indicated by the SBTN Natural Lands Map is inconsistent with local reality, SBTN will accept petitions for categorical exemptions on a case-by-case basis. The guidelines for submitting such exemptions are available in this document's supplementary information.

AGILE § 4.4

1.2.1.1 Conversion hotspots and core natural lands

Companies that wish to prioritize where to take action first can advance action on eliminating deforestation and conversion within conversion hotspots. These jurisdictions are listed in the supplementary materials of this guidance and refer[3] to areas with a high historical prevalence of conversion from natural land classes to non-natural land classes between 2000 and 2020. Based on this historical conversion pattern, these areas require more urgent action to prevent further conversion driven by commodity production and sourcing.

Conversion hotspot prioritization helps address the impacts from the sourcing of conversion-driving commodities identified during Step 1a. For companies sourcing any of these commodities, a Conversion Hotspot prioritization may be applied to the No Conversion of Natural Ecosystems target to determine where to start addressing conversion. Of direct relevance is the inclusion of all natural forests, since many companies have existing deforestation-free commitments. Conversion of natural forest to plantation forest is considered a conversion for the purpose of this guidance, aligning with the GHG Protocol Land Sector and Removals Standard.

Requirement T1.9

Baseline land cover comparison
Identify any conversion of natural ecosystems at the production unit level that occurred after the cutoff date, using land cover change data from the cutoff year to the target-setting date (Year 0) to determine the baseline area of conversion. If the cutoff date is 2020, consult the Natural Lands Map as a baseline to assess whether any conversion of natural lands occurred after 2020.

UPSTREAM SOURCING OF COMMODITIES:

Requirement T1.10

Traceability and sourcing area mapping
Map the value chain and identify the origin of all material conversion-driving commodity volumes (see the High-Impact Commodities List) for each production unit or sourcing area (see traceability requirements in Step 2: Interpret & Prioritize). See Section 4.5.3 (Land use change—at the sourcing area level) in AGILE for guidance on how to allocate conversion to known subnational jurisdiction sourcing areas. This mapping is the basis for the accounting for conversion required under Requirement T1.5.

AGILE § 4.5

Requirement T1.11

Upstream sourcing from MICE sectors
Companies sourcing commodities extracted and/or produced by MICE sector companies (see Section 1.2.2) must ensure no Core Natural Land areas are converted by 2030, or the earliest date possible post-2025.

1.2.2 MICE pathway: No Conversion target for Mining, Infrastructure, Construction, and Extractives sectors

Companies in the MICE sectors listed in Figure 3, and other associated sectors, are required to set a No Conversion target but to follow a unique pathway that reflects the specific nature of their land interactions.

Rather than applying no-conversion requirements across all natural lands as identified by the SBTN Natural Lands Map, MICE sector companies (Figure 3) must commit to no conversion specifically in areas of critical ecological importance. These "Core Natural Lands" are defined as either of the following areas.

- Areas identified through the IFC PS6 environmental assessment process as "Critical Habitat" or "High Conservation Value" areas.
- Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) and Protected Areas (all classes) as found in the Integrated

3 Kan, S., Meng, J., Persson, U.M. et al. Identifying global hotspots of agricultural expansion into non-forest ecosystems. Nat Commun 16, 10739 (2025). https://doi.org/10.1038/s41467-025-65769-x

Biodiversity Assessment Tool (IBAT), and areas identified as "likely" Critical Habitat in the UNEP-WCMC (2017) Global Critical Habitat Screening Layer.

Recommendation T1.6

MICE pathway: Strategic environmental assessment
It is recommended that companies following the MICE pathway conduct a strategic environmental assessment prior to target setting. Companies that have completed such an assessment will be better placed to significantly avoid and reduce impacts on natural ecosystems. As part of the assessment, companies may identify and provide justification for any conversion of natural land, in addition to core natural land, associated with their operations.

Requirement T1.12

MICE pathway: No Conversion in critical areas
Companies following the MICE pathway must commit to no conversion in Core Natural Lands.

Requirement T1.13

MICE pathway: Target date and disclosure
MICE sector companies must achieve no conversion in Core Natural Lands within a company-defined planning horizon based on the extent of current concessional and operational commitments. In this disclosure, the company must:

- Disclose the earliest possible date by which the No Conversion of Core Natural Lands target can be achieved (not surpassing 2050);
- Disaggregate and disclose all material or operational exceptions to the no conversion target and provide justification and evidence for the criticality/irreplaceability of material or conversion needs within identified core natural lands; and
- Justify any target dates extending beyond 2040 and the actions that will be put in place to achieve the chosen target date.

Requirement T1.14

MICE pathway: Demonstration of no viable alternatives
For any conversion in areas identified as Core Natural Lands (see Section 1.2.2), MICE sector companies must clearly demonstrate that viable alternatives to conversion have been exhausted before any conversion occurs. For conversion associated with materials or processes critical to the safe and just transformation of energy and infrastructure to a sustainable future, companies may include justification for converting natural land and core natural land, supported by a clear rationale for such events.

Requirement T1.15

MICE pathway: Remediation and restoration associated with post-cutoff-date conversion
SBTN requires that MICE sector companies remediate and/or compensate for any conversion of core natural lands that occurred between 2030 and the achievement of the no conversion target. 2030 is used because MICE sector companies are given a longer time frame within which to define their target date due to the operational realities of these sectors; requiring remediation of conversion from 2030 onward balances this flexibility, as remediation is recommended but not required for companies following the standard pathway.

Recommendation T1.7

MICE maximizing biodiversity potential
SBTN recommends that companies utilizing the MICE pathway utilize and report on:

1. Progressive rehabilitation of biodiversity through the operational life of production units;
2. Creation and management of temporary habitats; and
3. Biological establishment following disturbance and population dynamics of species associated with biodiversity and ecological succession in and adjacent to production units.

Please see the Box "Implementation of remediation and restoration actions" from the Step 4: Act guidelines for more information on guidance to support the achievement of this target.

1.3 Target validation requirements

To begin the target validation process, companies must submit to SBTN the required data and documentation:

Requirement T1.16

Target validation submission
Submission must include:

- ISIC sector classification(s) describing their direct operations and upstream activities;
- Data required in Section ii, "Data requirements to set Land targets";
- List of conversion-driving commodities that the company sources;
- Deforestation- and conversion-free target dates, including rationale and explanation for target dates;
- Cutoff date used to calculate no conversion (no later than 2020);
- If available, percentage of volumes conversion-free in conversion hotspots;
- If available, percentage of volumes deforestation-free (outside EUDR); and
- For any volume claimed to be DCF, methods used to demonstrate conformance with DCF status (e.g., spatial data and data source; sourcing from a DCF jurisdiction; certifications).

Recommendation T1.8

Annual progress reporting
In the interim period prior to additional guidance on targets monitoring, SBTN recommends that companies publish annual reports on progress toward achieving no conversion by the designated target date. Recommended additional disclosures include:

- Volume (tonnage) of non-DCF compliant commodities;
- Traceability (volumes disaggregated by the share of volumes with traceability at target boundary A and target boundary B volumes). For all volumes originating in the 22 subnational locations defined as conversion hotspots (found in the supplementary materials of this guidance), the volumes (tonnage) of sourced commodities known to be DCF;
- Rationale and explanation for data gaps and actions to close them.

SBTN will work to define appropriate Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification (MRV) approaches (SBTN Step 5: Track) in collaboration with the Accountability Accelerator (the independent validation body for SBTN targets) and other system actors.

1.4 Template statement for No Conversion of Natural Ecosystems target

No Conversion of Natural Ecosystems targets will be stated in the format illustrated in Box 4.

Box 4: Template statements for No Conversion of Natural Ecosystems targets

For direct operations:
[Company name] commits to zero conversion of natural ecosystems across all direct operations from [the cutoff date] onward and shall achieve full deforestation- and conversion-free (DCF) status by [earliest post-2025 date, within two years of target setting].

For upstream sourcing:
[Company name] commits to achieving 100% of sourced volumes of conversion-driving commodities from areas verified as deforestation- and conversion-free by [target date, no later than 2030], compared with a 2020 cutoff year.

For MICE sectors (where applicable):
[Company name] commits to halt conversion of Core Natural Lands within its operational footprint by [earliest post-2025 date], compared with a 2020 cutoff year and commits to remediate and restore Core Natural Lands converted after 2030 to generate absolute ecosystem and biodiversity gain.

Note: Companies sourcing EUDR-regulated commodities marketed in the European Union shall ensure compliance with applicable EUDR target dates in parallel with this target.



Target 2:
Working Land Regeneration and Restoration





"The Working Land Regeneration and Restoration target helps companies reduce their land-related pressures and improve ecological integrity and resilience across landscapes."

This chapter sets out:

- What a Working Land Regeneration and Restoration target is and why it is required.
- How to set, validate, and communicate Working Land Regeneration and Restoration targets.
- The applicable requirements for the Land Area targets (Natural Land Cover and Land Footprint Reduction) and the Land Quality targets (Soil Organic Carbon, Soil Erosion, and Terrestrial Acidification).

WORKING LAND REGENERATION & RESTORATION

Target 2 structure

for direct operations and traceable upstream production units

Companies with a **material link to agriculture** (i.e., those that produce or source agricultural products) may choose to set a Natural Land Cover target **and/or** a Land Footprint Reduction target.

LAND AREA

- **Natural Land Cover target** → **Maintain or increase:** Set target to maintain natural land cover at existing level, or increase natural land cover to 25% per km².
- AND/OR
- **Land Footprint Reduction target** → **Absolute:** Reduce absolute agricultural land footprint at a linear rate of 0.35% per year (3.5% by 2030 from a 2020 base year).
- **Land Footprint Reduction target** → **Intensity:** Reduce land footprint per kg of agricultural products at a linear rate of 1% per year.

Other companies (without material links to agriculture) will set a Natural Land Cover target only.

Companies may set one, two, or all three Land Quality targets. Target type (improvement or maintenance) is determined by ecoregion-level thresholds compared against the production unit baseline.

LAND QUALITY

- **Soil Organic Carbon target** → **Maintain or increase:** Maintain SOC stock or increase SOC stock to 10% above the ecoregion threshold.
- AND/OR
- **Soil Erosion target** → **Maintain or decrease:** Maintain soil erosion rate or decrease soil erosion rate to 10% below the ecoregion threshold.
- AND/OR
- **Terrestrial Acidification target** → **Maintain or decrease:** Maintain terrestrial acidification rate or decrease rate to 10% below the ecoregion threshold.

Upstream: For upstream activities, the structure above applies where the company has sufficient production-unit or sourcing-area data (high-traceability supply). Where Target 2 is material for the upstream segment and such data are not available, the company must set a **Supplier Engagement target** as the mandatory alternative upstream Target 2 pathway, per **Requirement L.1** (see Step 2 and section 2.2.5). The Supplier Engagement target brings upstream supply into progressive alignment with ecoregional thresholds for the applicable land quality indicator(s).

Figure 4:
The Structure of Target 2—Working Land Regeneration and Restoration for direct operations and traceable upstream production units.

2.1 What is a Working Land Regeneration and Restoration target?

Target 2: Working Land Regeneration and Restoration helps companies align their operations and commodity value chains with the scale of regeneration and restoration in working lands required for sustainable production. It consists of two main components: Land Area targets and Land Quality targets.

Requirement T2.1

Applicability

A company is required to set a Working Land Regeneration and Restoration target when land pressures are material in Step 1a (materiality screening).

Requirement T2.2

Minimum target components

A company is required to set at least one Land Area target or at least one Land Quality target.

Together, the Land Area and Land Quality targets under Target 2 support companies to:

- **Reduce total land demand** through more efficient use of agricultural land (Land Footprint Reduction target);
- **Integrate nature into working lands** to maintain and increase biodiversity, connectivity between natural or semi-natural lands, and ecosystem services (Natural Land Cover target); and
- **Improve land management practices** to regenerate and restore ecological productivity (Land Quality targets).

Target 2 provides companies with flexibility to tailor their approach while ensuring that actions are science-based and credible. It also helps ensure that companies manage key trade-offs among commodity production, the condition of landscapes (including biodiversity), and the long-term resilience of those landscapes.

Land Area

Under the Land Area component of Target 2, companies may set a Natural Land Cover target or a Land Footprint Reduction target and are encouraged to set both, where feasible:

A Natural Land Cover target: aims to increase or maintain natural and semi-natural ecosystems[4] within working landscapes at the production unit scale. This reflects a land-sharing approach that integrates biodiversity, Nature's Contributions to People (NCP), ecological processes, and carbon stocks into working lands.

A Land Footprint Reduction target: aims to reduce the total area of agricultural land (e.g., for food, animal feed, fibers, bioenergy feedstocks) associated with a company's value chain by improving efficiency or removing marginal lands from production. Land footprint efficiencies can be achieved through yield improvements, reducing food loss and waste, and, for downstream companies, shifting product portfolios away from land-intensive goods. It aligns with a land sparing approach, which concentrates agricultural production to free up land for restoration or conservation elsewhere. This differs from the approach in the Natural Land Cover target, which is based on known production units.

These two targets represent different but complementary strategies for reconciling production processes in land systems with conservation and restoration. In a land sparing model, production is intensified in some areas to "spare" other land for nature. In land sharing, nature is embedded within farmland or other production units, reducing the separation between production and conservation zones, and enhancing the ecological integrity within production units and across landscapes.

4 An ecosystem that substantially resembles—in terms of species composition, structure, and ecological function—what would be found in a given area in the absence of major human impacts. This includes human-managed ecosystems where much of the natural species composition, structure, and ecological function are present.

Land Quality

SBTN's Land Quality targets complement the land area targets by providing companies with estimates of the impacts of commodity-specific practice changes within working lands. They also provide companies with specific land quality indicators they can use to estimate and track target-relevant progress on land quality in different places where commodities are produced or sourced. These quality targets can also help ensure that land footprint reduction or intensification strategies do not undermine long-term ecosystem function and resilience. There are three Land Quality indicators:

Soil Organic Carbon: This indicator addresses the depletion of soil organic carbon within a company's working land footprint. Carbon stored in soil organic matter serves as a proxy indicator for a variety of ecosystem services and a key indicator of soil quality. Land use change and land management are two key drivers of soil organic carbon loss and of land degradation.

Soil Erosion: The loss of soil through erosion has a range of adverse impacts, including declines in organic matter and nutrient content, the breakdown of soil structure, and severe impacts on species sensitive to freshwater or marine sedimentation. Soil erosion can reduce available soil water storage and increase the risk of flooding and landslides. The focus of this target is to reduce soil erosion caused by unsustainable land management practices in agriculture, grazing, and forestry, among others.

Terrestrial Acidification: This indicator addresses the process by which soil becomes more acidic due to the deposition and dissociation of compounds with acid-base chemistry, such as oxides of sulfur or nitrogen. Terrestrial acidification can reduce soil fertility and significantly impact plant diversity, species richness, and the occurrence of native plant species. The primary pollutants are nitrogen (NH_3 and NO_x) and sulfur (SO_2) emissions from fossil fuel combustion and agricultural and animal raising activities. This target focuses on reducing terrestrial acidification by reducing its key contributing pollutants.

Direct Operations and Upstream activities

Target 2 is most applicable to companies that know their direct operations and the location of upstream suppliers. However, many companies have significant upstream environmental impacts in their supply chains, with limited current traceability. As indicated in Requirement L.1, a company that must set Target 2 for upstream impact, but lacks the data to do so, is required to set a Supplier Engagement target following the Step 2: Interpret & Prioritize guidance (see also Section 2.2.5 of this current document).

Requirement T2.3

Direct Operations target applicability
Companies whose direct operations account for less than 5% of their land footprint and/or material land quality indicators are not required to set Land Area targets for direct operations.

Recommendation T2.1

Upstream incorporation through Landscape Engagement
Companies sourcing products from the ISIC categories listed in **Table 6** may incorporate the land quality indicators into their Landscape Engagement target and address the main drivers of the land quality categories identified as material.



Table 6: The land quality categories that should be a focus for a company depending on the sector(s) relevant to upstream activities. (Note: n.e.c. = not elsewhere classified.)

ISIC Code		Land Quality Indicator Upstream Materiality		
Revision 4	**Revision 3**	**Soil Erosion**	**SOC Depletion**	**Terrestrial Acidification**
A01.11 – Growing of cereals (except rice)	0111 – Growing of cereals	✓	✓	✓
A01.12 – Growing of oil seeds	0115 – Growing of other crops	✓	✓	
A01.13 – Growing of rice	0112 – Growing of rice		✓	
A01.14 – Growing of fiber crops	0115 – Growing of other crops			✓
A01.15 – Growing of sugar cane	0115 – Growing of other crops	✓		
A01.19 – Growing of other non-perennial crops	0115 – Growing of other crops	✓		
A01.2 – Raising of poultry	0126 – Raising of poultry			✓
A01.21 – Growing of vegetables and melons	0113 – Growing of vegetables	✓	✓	
A01.3 – Raising of pigs	0125 – Raising of swine			✓
A01.4 – Raising of cattle and buffaloes	0123 – Raising of other cattle and buffaloes	✓	✓	✓
A01.41 – Raising of dairy cattle	0122 – Raising of dairy cattle	✓	✓	✓
A01.5 – Raising of other animals	0129 – Raising of other animals		✓	✓
A02 – Forestry and logging	0210 – Forestry and logging		✓	
B07.29 – Mining of other non-ferrous metal ores	2720 – Mining of non-ferrous metal ores			✓
C10.1 – Processing and preserving of meat	1511 – Processing and preserving of meat		✓	✓
C10.4 – Manufacture of vegetable and animal oils and fats	1515 – Manufacture of vegetable and animal oils and fats	✓	✓	
C10.5 – Manufacture of dairy products	1516 – Manufacture of dairy products		✓	✓
C10.8 – Manufacture of other food products	1518 – Manufacture of other food products	✓	✓	✓
C11 – Manufacture of beverages	1530 – Manufacture of beverages	✓		
C13 – Manufacture of textiles	1711 – Spinning, weaving and finishing of textiles			✓
C16 – Sawmilling and planing of wood; manufacture of wood products, cork, straw and plaiting materials	2010 – Sawmilling and planing of wood		✓	

ISIC Code		Land Quality Indicator Upstream Materiality		
Revision 4	Revision 3	Soil Erosion	SOC Depletion	Terrestrial Acidification
C17 – Manufacture of paper and paper products	2100 – Manufacture of pulp, paper, and paperboard		✓	✓
C19.2 – Manufacture of refined petroleum products	2320 – Manufacture of refined petroleum products			✓
C20.59 – Manufacture of other chemical products n.e.c.	2419 – Manufacture of other chemical products n.e.c.	✓	✓	✓
C22 – Manufacture of rubber and plastics products	2520 – Manufacture of plastics products	✓	✓	✓
C23.51 – Manufacture of cement, lime and plaster	2691 – Manufacture of cement, lime and plaster			✓
C24.10 – Manufacture of basic iron and steel	2711 – Manufacture of basic iron and steel			✓
C25.7 – Manufacture of fabricated metal products, except machinery and equipment	2819 – Manufacture of other fabricated metal products			✓
C27.90 – Manufacture of other electrical equipment	3119 – Manufacture of electrical machinery and apparatus n.e.c.			✓
C28.9 – Manufacture of other machinery and equipment n.e.c.	2910 – Manufacture of machinery and equipment n.e.c.			✓
C29.1 – Manufacture of motor vehicles	3410 – Manufacture of motor vehicles and trailers			✓
D35.1 – Electric power generation, transmission, and distribution	4010 – Production, collection, and distribution of electricity			✓
D35.3 – Steam and air conditioning supply	4030 – Steam and hot water supply			✓
F45 – Construction	45 – Construction	✓	✓	✓
H50.2 – Sea and coastal water transport	6110 – Sea and coastal water transport			✓
I55–56 – Accommodation and food service activities	5510 – Hotels and restaurants	✓	✓	✓
M69–M75 – Professional, scientific, and technical activities	7490 – Other business activities n.e.c.			
O84 – Public administration and defense; compulsory social security	75 – Public administration and defense; compulsory social security		✓	✓
Q86–Q88 – Human health activities; residential care; social work without accommodation	85 – Health and social work	✓	✓	✓

2.2 How to set Working Land Regeneration and Restoration targets

The approaches to setting the Working Land Regeneration and Restoration targets for direct operations and upstream (where sufficient traceability exists) are outlined below. For upstream activities where sufficient traceability does not yet exist, see Section 2.1, Section 2.2.5 (Supplier Engagement Approach), and Target 3: Landscape Engagement.

2.2.1 Selecting the relevant Land Area target

SBTN provides companies with flexibility in how they engage with the Land Area targets, depending on their land use profile and operational realities. Companies with material links to agriculture, as determined by their materiality screening in SBTN Step 1, may choose to set a Land Footprint Reduction target, a Natural Land Cover target, or both. SBTN strongly recommends that companies pursue both Land Area targets where feasible. Companies may also set both a Natural Land Cover and a Land Footprint Reduction target within the same production unit, if desired.

Requirement T2.4

Land Area target selection for non-agricultural companies
Companies required to set Target 2: Working Land Regeneration and Restoration that do not have material links to agriculture may not set a Land Footprint Reduction target.

Requirement T2.5

Direct operations with mixed production unit types
WWhere a company has a mix of production unit types in its direct operations, the units subject to the Natural Land Cover target are determined by the scope conditions in Requirement T2.7 and the in-scope selection in Requirement T2.11. Each case will be assessed individually during target validation.

Requirement T2.6

Production unit assignment for Land Area targets
Companies with material links to agriculture may assign individual production units, or defined categories of production units, to the Land Footprint Reduction target or the Natural Land Cover target, depending on their ecological and operational characteristics. The assignment and its rationale must be disclosed at the time of validation submission. Any reassignments must be justified with SBTN and may require re-validation.

Recommendation T2.2

Pursue both Land Area targets
SBTN strongly recommends that companies pursue both the Natural Land Cover and Land Footprint Reduction targets where feasible, including through the production unit assignment approach, in cases where different portions of the company's land portfolio are better served by different targets. Natural Land Cover and Land Footprint Reduction each address a different dimension of land-related impacts; pursuing only one may lead to unintended consequences or trade-offs. Combining land sparing and land sharing approaches enables companies to reduce their total land footprint while enhancing the health and resilience of land under production.

2.2.2 Setting the Natural Land Cover target

A Natural Land Cover target works to increase the area of natural and semi-natural ecosystems across landscapes to support the delivery of Nature's Contributions to People (NCP). The scientific basis for this target draws on evidence showing that in highly human-modified landscapes, the provision of NCP declines significantly when the area of (semi-)natural land cover per km^2 falls below 20–25%.[5] The target is available to all companies required to set Target 2, unless they meet the exclusions under Requirement T2.7.

5 Mohamed, A. et al. (2024). Securing Nature's Contributions to People requires at least 20%–25% (semi-)natural habitat in human-modified landscapes. One Earth 7, 59–71.

Requirement T2.7

Natural Land Cover scope and exclusions
The Natural Land Cover target applies to production units whose primary ISIC classification falls under Section A (Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing) or Section B (Mining and Quarrying), provided the unit meets the conditions below. Production units whose primary ISIC classification falls under other sections are out of scope. Companies may optionally include additional sites they consider relevant to the target by demonstrating, during validation, that the site is ecologically connected to an agricultural or natural landscape and that meaningful Natural Land Cover (NLC) intervention is feasible.

Recommendation T2.3

Companies may implement NLC improvements at out-of-scope sites as part of broader nature commitments; such improvements shall not be submitted for SBTN NLC validation or form the basis of an SBTN NLC claim, and shall be disclosed separately as voluntary, beyond-target actions.

Requirement T2.8

Spatial data requirement for Natural Land Cover target
For this target, companies must utilize spatial data (points or polygons) for each production unit in their direct operations or in known upstream sourcing. If this data is not immediately available, companies must collect it prior to setting this target. Production units that exceed 5 ha should be reported as polygons, not points.

Requirement T2.9

Base year for Natural Land Cover
The chosen base year must be no earlier than 2020, as this is the base year of the SBTN Natural Lands Map.

Requirement T2.10

Target duration for Natural Land Cover
The Natural Land Cover target must span a minimum of five years and a maximum of ten years from the date the target is submitted to SBTN for official validation.

Requirement T2.11

Thresholds for in-scope Natural Land Cover production units
Companies must identify a subset of total production units that are in-scope for the Natural Land Cover target. The number of production units selected will likely depend on the size of the production units and the number of production units identified and ranked by the company in Step 2c. Those production units selected as "in-scope" should meaningfully address the near-term potential of a company's contributions to improving natural land cover to 25% in operational and/or sourcing landscapes across their land footprint. Companies must review out-of-scope production units following the five-year validity period for claims, post-validation. Production units excluded from the scope of the active NLC target must not actively reduce their current natural land cover baseline.

The following conditions determine whether an in-scope production unit (Req. T2.11) is subject to the NLC target:

a. The production unit shall not be situated in a predominantly urban or industrial landscape, defined as an area where the majority of the surrounding 1 km^2 is classified as urban or industrial land under the SBTN Natural Lands Map or equivalent.

b. For mixed-use sites combining agricultural land with built processing infrastructure, the agricultural land area is in scope, and the built processing footprint is excluded from NLC calculation. Production units classified as processing and manufacturing facilities, logistics and storage facilities, retail and office premises, or operational infrastructure in urban settings are considered out of scope based on their ISIC classification or landscape context.

Production units assigned to the NLC target because they've been removed from LFR (under the production unit assignment approach) must meet all NLC requirements, including spatial data, base year, and target duration. Companies must report these units as a distinct category ("LFR-assigned to NLC") in their validation submission to enable monitoring of cross-target coverage.

TWO SPATIAL SCALES FOR THE NATURAL LAND COVER TARGET

The details of the Natural Land Cover target depend on whether each production unit is greater than or less than 1 km² . These two spatial scales reflect the degree to which a company can characterize natural and semi-natural land cover within the production unit boundary, and plan and implement interventions at the relevant ecological scale. If a company has a mix of production unit sizes across its direct operations, Scale 1 or Scale 2 must be applied independently to each in-scope production unit.

Requirement T2.12

Determine the applicable Natural Land Cover pathway. Companies must determine which spatial scale applies to each production unit, based on the area of that production unit:

- Scale 1 applies to production units with an area of 1 km² or greater.
- Scale 2 applies to production units with an area less than 1 km².

Scale 1 and Scale 2 correspond to Pathway 1 and Pathway 2 in AGILE Section 5.2.3

Scale 1: Production Units ≥ 1 km²
Where a production unit has an area of 1 km² or greater, the spatial resolution of the SBTN Natural Lands Map (30 meters) is likely sufficient to characterize the distribution of natural and semi-natural land cover within the production unit boundary. At this scale, the company can directly assess natural land cover within the production unit boundary and plan and implement restoration or maintenance interventions within it.

Requirement T2.13

Calculate baseline natural land cover:
Scale 1 (≥1 km²). Companies must calculate the percentage of natural and semi-natural land cover within each production unit using the SBTN Natural Lands Map or equivalent data source. This constitutes the production unit natural land cover baseline. (See AGILE Chapter 5 for calculation methods).

AGILE § 5.2

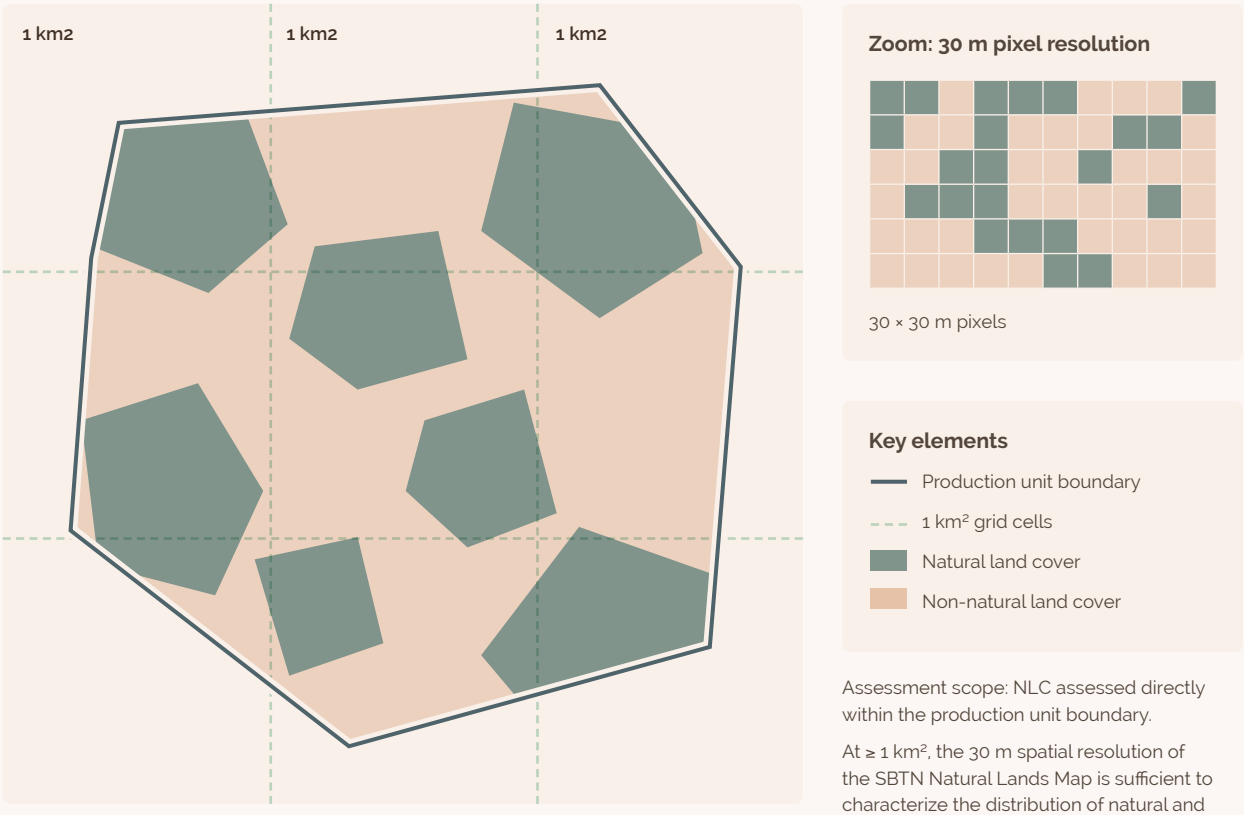


Figure 5: Assessment scope for Natural Land Cover assessed within the production unit boundary.

Requirement T2.14

Set the Natural Land Cover target:
Scale 1 (≥1 km^2). Based on the baseline natural land cover percentage, companies must set a target for each production unit as follows:

For production units where natural and semi-natural land cover is below 25% per km^2, a target must be set to increase it to at least 25% per km^2 by the target year.

For production units where natural and semi-natural land cover is at or above 25% per km^2, a target must be set to maintain natural and semi-natural land cover at or above the baseline value in each production unit throughout the target period. Conversion of existing natural land would undermine the achievement of Target 1.

Recommendation T2.4

Increase targets for production units already above 25%: Scale 1
Companies with production units at or above 25% natural and semi-natural land cover per km^2 are encouraged to set a target to increase natural and semi-natural land cover beyond the baseline, thereby further contributing to landscape-level ecological integrity.

AGILE Insight T2.1

AGILE § 5.2.4

AGILE—The SBTN Natural Lands Map's definition of "natural land" includes semi-natural land; calculations using the Natural Lands Map, therefore, inherently calculate the percentage of natural and semi-natural land combined. The process for calculating a company's baseline natural land cover under Scale 1 is outlined in Section 5.2.4 of AGILE

Scale 2: Production Units < 1 km^2

Where a production unit is 1 km^2 or smaller, assessing only the natural land cover at the production unit boundary is insufficient to characterize the ecological context in which that production unit is situated. A small production unit may fall entirely within a highly managed matrix where conditions within the boundary do not reflect the broader landscape (Scenario A), or conversely, within a naturally functioning landscape where the production unit itself appears degraded (Scenario B). To account for this, companies must assess natural land cover at two nested spatial scales: the 1 km^2 landscape context surrounding the production unit, and the production unit itself.

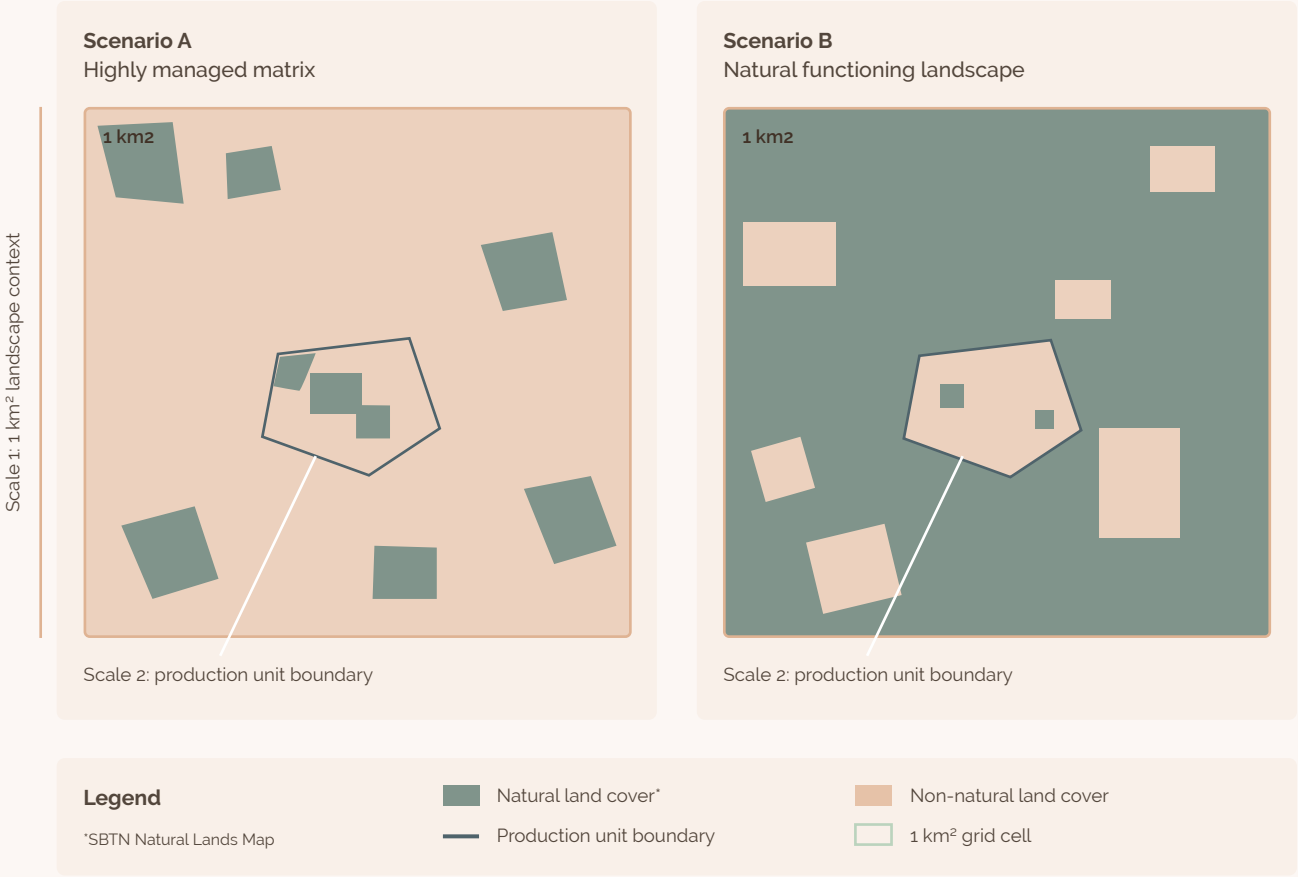
Requirement T2.15

Calculate baseline natural land cover at two scales: Scale 2 (< 1 km^2)
Companies must calculate the percentage of natural and semi-natural land cover for each production unit at the following two spatial scales:

1. The 1 km^2 landscape scale: the proportion of natural and semi-natural land cover within a 1 km^2 spatial unit associated with the centered production unit, assessed using the SBTN Natural Lands Map or equivalent data source.

2. The production unit scale: the proportion of natural and semi-natural land cover within the production unit boundary, assessed using the SBTN Natural Lands Map or an equivalent data source.

Together, the two assessments constitute the production unit's natural land cover baseline under Scale 2.



Where a production unit has an area of less than 1 km², assessment of NLC at the production unit boundary alone is insufficient to characterize the ecological context. Companies must assess NLC at two nested spatial scales: the 1 km² landscape context surrounding the production unit, and the production unit itself.

Figure 6: The two scenarios (A & B) and scales (Scale 1 and 2) required to assess natural land cover for the Natural Land Cover target when production units under assessment have an area of less than 1 km².

Requirement T2.16

Set the Natural Land Cover target: Scale 2

Based on the baseline natural land cover percentages at both spatial scales, companies must set a target at the level of the production unit, applying the 25% per km² threshold:

Where natural and semi-natural land cover falls below 25% at both scales, a target must be set to increase natural and semi-natural land cover to 25% or higher at the production unit level by the target year.

Where natural and semi-natural land cover is at or above 25% in the 1 km² grid cell, but below the threshold in the production unit, a target to increase natural and semi-natural land cover in the production unit throughout the target period is recommended. If the recommended target is not set, a target must be set to maintain natural and semi-natural land cover at or above the baseline value throughout the target period.

Where natural and semi-natural land cover is at or above 25% in the production unit, a target must be set to maintain natural and semi-natural land cover at or above the baseline value in the production unit throughout the target period.

Recommendation T2.5

Phased improvement strategy across scales: Scale 2

Where natural and semi-natural land cover is below 25% at both scales, SBTN recommends that companies develop a phased implementation strategy addressing both scales over the target period. Near-term actions should be focused within the production unit, with medium-to-long-term engagement extended to the broader landscape context, e.g., through the Landscape Engagement target (Target 3).

AGILE Insight T2.2

Baseline Natural Land Cover Calculations

AGILE § 5.2.5

The process for calculating a company's baseline natural land cover at both the 1 km² landscape scale and the production unit scale under Scale 2 is outlined in Section 5.2.5 of AGILE.

Recommendation T2.6

Use of higher-resolution natural land cover data
If a company has publicly accessible spatial natural land cover data of higher resolution or higher accuracy than the SBTN Natural Lands Map (30-meter resolution), these data may be used instead of the Natural Lands Map to calculate baseline natural land cover under either pathway.

Recommendation T2.7

Improve the quality of natural land cover data over time
Companies should seek to improve the quality of the land cover data they collect over time, particularly for production units where the Natural Lands Map provides the only available baseline.

Recommendation T2.8

Long-term Natural Land Cover targets
Companies are encouraged to develop longer-term targets (e.g., to 2050) on natural land cover in addition to the required near-term targets.

Recommendation T2.9

Step 2 prioritization for Natural Land Cover implementation
It is recommended that companies follow the SBTN Step 2: Interpret & Prioritize approach to guide the implementation and achievement of the Natural Land Cover target, particularly when determining which production units to prioritize for restoration interventions.

Please see Step 4: Act Box "Natural Land Cover Target. Track Selection: Interim Implementation Guidance" for more information on guidance to support achieving this target. Annex 5 sets out the three compliance tracks for the Natural Land Cover target (Track A: spatial natural land cover; Track B: Landscape Engagement; Track C: practice-based) and the three conditions that Track C practices must meet.

Box 5: Template statements for Natural Land Cover target.

Scale 1—Production units ≥ 1 km²

For production units with natural land cover below 25% per km²:
[Company name] commits to increase natural land cover to 25% per km² by [target year] within [production unit] from the [base year] base year.

For production units with natural land cover at or above 25% per km²:
[Company name] commits to maintain natural land cover at no less than [baseline natural land cover value]% per km² within [production unit].

Scale 2—Production units < 1 km²

Where natural and semi-natural land cover falls below 25% at both scales:
[Company name] commits to increase natural and semi-natural land cover to 25% or above at the level of [production unit] by [target year], from a baseline of [Y]% in [base year].

Where natural and semi-natural land cover is at or above 25% at the 1 km² grid cell, but below the threshold in the production unit:
Recommended target: [Company name] commits to increase natural and semi-natural land cover in [production unit] throughout the target period, from a baseline of [Y]% in [base year] to [target year].

If the recommended target is not set:
[Company name] commits to maintain natural and semi-natural land cover in [production unit] at or above the baseline value of [Y]% throughout the target period from [base year].

Requirement T2.17

Validation submission for Natural Land Cover target

To begin the target validation process, companies must submit to SBTN:

i. ISIC sector classification(s) for activities within their direct operations;

ii. Disclosure of the base-year footprints of direct operations' production units, including the area of each production unit;

iii. The applicable spatial pathway (Scale 1 or Scale 2) for each production unit, with justification where the classification is not straightforward;

iv. Calculation details for the natural land cover proportion at the relevant spatial scale(s) for the base year, including the data source used;

v. For each production unit, disclosure of whether the target is to increase or maintain natural land cover at the relevant scale(s); and

vi. A narrative description of their strategy for achieving their Natural Land Cover target at each production unit.

2.2.3 Setting the Land Footprint Reduction target

The Land Footprint Reduction (LFR) target is specifically designed for companies with material links to agriculture, either through direct production or sourcing of agricultural commodities (see Box 2 for FLAG-relevant sectors). For the purposes of this target, "land footprint" refers to the amount of agricultural land required per year to produce the products that the company itself produces or sources (reported in hectares per year). It does not necessarily include all land owned or controlled by companies.

Requirement T2.18

Inclusion of all locations

All locations and activities within the land target boundary must be included to avoid leakage among locations. Companies may follow the prioritization approach in Step 2: Interpret & Prioritize to guide implementation, but all locations must be included in the scope in the first year that targets are set. Where a company elects the production unit assignment approach under Requirement T2.6, production units assigned to the NLC target are excluded from the LFR target boundary.



Requirement T2.19

Scope of agricultural land

This target applies to all agricultural land (cropland and land under permanent meadows and pastures) used to produce goods that a company sells or sources. Agricultural lands not attributable to direct operations or upstream value chain activities must not be counted within the Land Footprint Reduction target boundary.

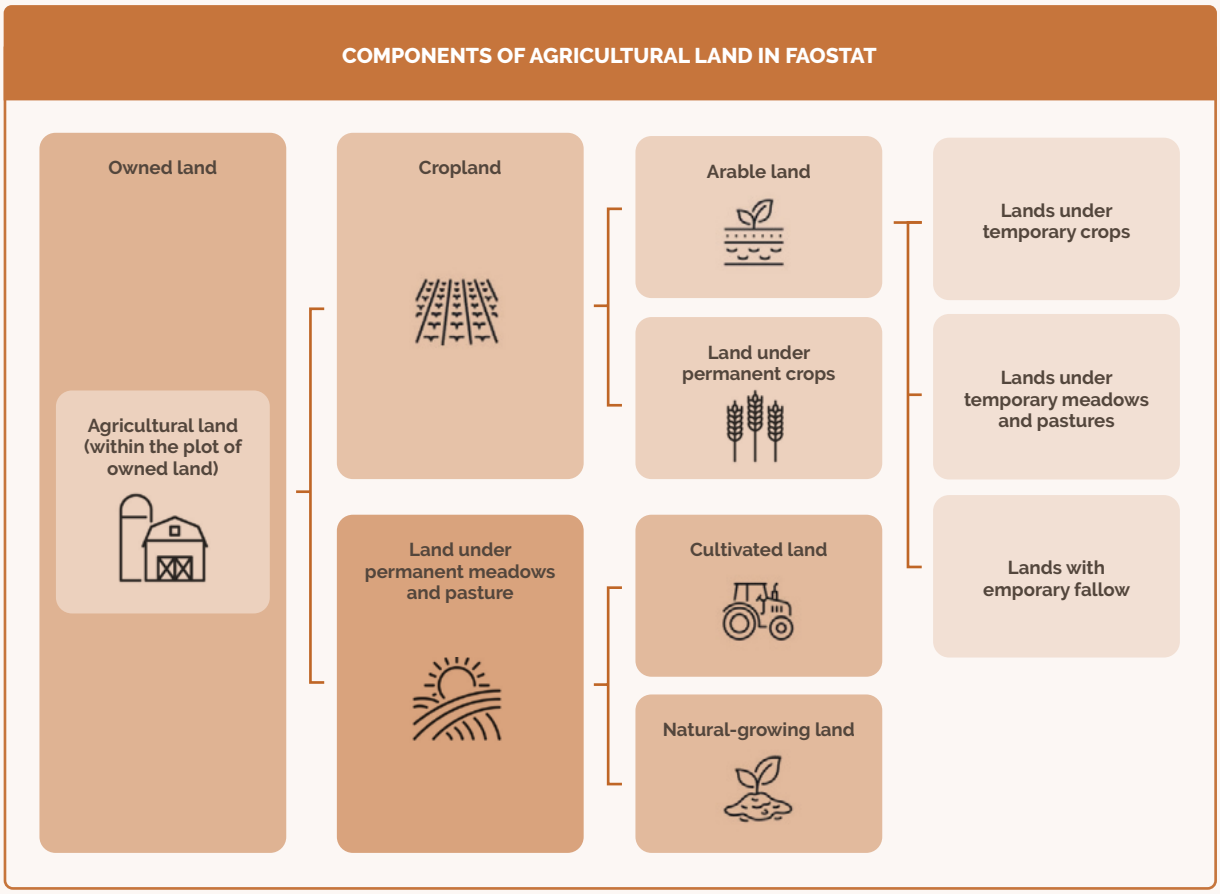


Figure 7: Components of agricultural land in FAOSTAT. Source: Land statistics and indicators: Global, regional and country trends, 2000–2020. FAO 2022.

Requirement T2.20

Selection of the target-setting approach

The company must determine which of the two target-setting approaches to apply:

i. Absolute land footprint reduction approach: Companies reduce their absolute land footprint at a linear rate of 0.35% per year compared with the base year; or

ii. Intensity land footprint reduction approach: Companies reduce the land footprint per kg of agricultural products produced at a linear rate of 1% per year relative to the base year.

Requirement T2.21

Base year for Land Footprint Reduction

The choice of base year must be no earlier than 2015. The base year does not need to align with the cutoff date used for the No Conversion of Natural Ecosystems target; instead, it is intended to align with existing climate targets.

Requirement T2.22

Target duration for Land Footprint Reduction

Land Footprint Reduction targets must span a minimum of five years and a maximum of ten years from the date the target is submitted to SBTN for official validation.

Requirement T2.23

Calculate the Land Footprint Reduction target
The company uses the following information to calculate its percentage reduction target:

i. Preferred reduction approach (absolute or intensity); and

ii. Base year and target year.

Where the intensity approach is used, the company must also express the target in absolute terms, projecting the expected absolute change in land footprint over the target period based on anticipated activity growth.

AGILE § 5.1

AGILE Insight T2.3

Baseline agricultural land footprint
The process for calculating a company's baseline agricultural land footprint is outlined in Chapter 5 of AGILE. This guidance is consistent with Step 1b pressure assessment calculation and the GHG Protocol Land Sector and Removals Guidance (Chapter 8: "Land Use and Leakage"). Calculation formula:

- Absolute: Number of years × 0.35% per year.
- Intensity: Number of years × 1.0% per year.

Requirement T2.24

Recalculation of baseline land footprint
Aligning with the GHG Protocol, the baseline land footprint must be recalculated when the following changes occur and have a significant impact on the total land footprint calculated:

i. Structural changes in the reporting organization (e.g., mergers, acquisitions, divestments, outsourcing, insourcing);

ii. Changes in calculation methods, improvements in data accuracy, or discovery of significant errors; or

iii. Changes in the categories or activities included in the land footprint inventory.

Recommendation T2.10

Selection of a representative base year
SBTN recommends that companies choose a base year that is representative of the company's typical activity. Years significantly affected by exceptional events (e.g., the COVID-19 pandemic) should not be selected as a base year.

Recommendation T2.11

Long-term Land Footprint Reduction targets
Companies are encouraged to develop long-term targets (e.g., to 2050) in addition to near-term targets.

Recommendation T2.12

Absolute targets for large consumer companies
Absolute Land Footprint Reduction targets are recommended for large consumer companies, such as retailers, given their greater ability to reduce their land footprint through demand-side measures, such as shifting product portfolios toward less land-intensive goods. Companies should consult Annex 2a to weigh the advantages and disadvantages of each target-setting approach for their specific context.

Recommendation T2.13

Accompany Land Footprint Reduction with Land Quality targets
Companies setting a Land Footprint Reduction target are recommended to set accompanying Land Quality targets for the same production units, to avoid unsustainable intensification and safeguard ecosystem function and resilience.

Recommendation T2.14

Restoration of land through Landscape Engagement
SBTN encourages companies to consider modalities through which collective action in the Landscape Engagement target (Target 3) can contribute to the restoration of land removed from agricultural production under the Land Footprint Reduction target.

Box 6: Template statements for Land Footprint Reduction target.

Absolute target:
[Company name] commits to reduce its absolute agricultural land footprint from direct operations [and upstream activities] by [reduction]% by [target year] from a [base year] base year.

Intensity target:
[Company name] commits to reduce its agricultural land footprint intensity from direct operations [and upstream activities] by [reduction]% per [unit] by [target year] from a [base year] base year. This corresponds to a [reduction]% in absolute land footprint by [target year] from [base year].

Requirement T2.25

Validation submission for the Land Footprint Reduction target

To begin the target validation process, companies must submit to SBTN:

i. ISIC sector classification(s) for activities within their direct operations and upstream;

ii. Number of employees (Full Time Equivalents, FTE);

iii. Disclosure of agricultural land footprint in the base year;

iv. Activity amounts (quantities of land-based products produced or sourced) in the base year;

v. Calculation details for base year land footprint (e.g., yield estimates and sources; spatial data used and sources);

vi. Calculation details for the Land Footprint Reduction target (e.g., number of years in the target period; reduction rate applied);

vii. A rationale for choosing an absolute or intensity target;

viii. A narrative description of the strategy and potential response options for achieving the Land Footprint Reduction target, including the proposed approach to addressing potential risks associated with unsustainable intensification and avoiding unintended social consequences; and

ix. For companies submitting both Land Footprint Reduction and Landscape Engagement targets: information specifying whether and how locations and/or commodities prioritized for Land Footprint Reduction overlap with landscapes selected for the Landscape Engagement target.

Requirement T2.26

Annual land footprint accounting and reporting

Companies must account for and report their agricultural land footprint annually. Companies must apply their land footprint accounting methods consistently across their entire land footprint inventory and must report direct operations and upstream land footprints separately. Companies must disclose the data sources, methods, and assumptions used to quantify the agricultural land footprint.

2.2.4 Setting the Land Quality targets

The Land Quality target is a multi-part target that works to improve the quality of working lands in companies' direct operations and upstream supply chain by focusing on areas that are most degraded or areas at risk of degradation in the near future. It addresses three indicators: Soil Organic Carbon (SOC), Soil Erosion, and Terrestrial Acidification.

The target is informed by science-based, ecoregional thresholds for each land quality indicator that were developed in support of SBTN. These thresholds quantify key, place-specific components of land quality that are directly related to sustainable commodity production and inform the magnitude of actions needed to maintain or strengthen ecosystem stability for each indicator (see Annex 3 and Annex 4 for further information). Following a precautionary approach, Land Quality target values for each indicator are given a 10% buffer around their respective ecoregion threshold.
Companies using the SBTN Land Target data submission template will find that several of the steps below—identifying the ecoregion, retrieving the ecoregion baseline, threshold, and target value, determining exceedance, and assigning the priority tier—are populated automatically once production unit locations and baselines are entered.

Requirement T2.27

Selection of Land Quality indicators for target setting
Companies for which land pressures are material and that set Land Quality targets must select indicators according to the pressure indicators identified in Step 1b:

i. If both land use/land use change and soil pollution are identified: select one or more of soil organic carbon, soil erosion, or terrestrial acidification;

ii. If only land use/land use change is identified: select soil organic carbon or soil erosion, or both; or

iii. If only soil pollution is identified: select terrestrial acidification

Recommendation T2.15

Set targets for all material land quality indicators
SBTN recommends that companies set targets for all material land quality indicators (soil organic carbon, soil erosion, and terrestrial acidification) across all production units, to enable a comprehensive understanding of land quality pressures and focus improvements where they are most needed.

Requirement T2.28

Selection of an Upstream Supply Chain approach
Companies that must set an upstream supply chain land quality target shall select either a Direct Operations approach or a Supplier Engagement Approach (Section 2.2.5) for each of their suppliers with material land quality impacts.

A Supplier Engagement target may be used where:

a. The company fulfills upstream materiality requirements for one or more Target 2 indicators; and.

b. The company is unable to set a place-based upstream Target 2 for the relevant indicator(s) because location data are insufficient to identify sourcing regions at subnational level.

Companies must document and disclose why a place-based upstream target cannot be set and define a time-bound plan to improve upstream traceability.

A Supplier Engagement target must not replace required upstream targets where place-based target setting is feasible. Where a company has a mix of commodity flows with different traceability levels, the Supplier Engagement Approach applies only to flows where a place-based setting is not feasible; remaining flows must be addressed through direct operations or a place-based upstream approach.

Recommendation T2.16

Use a Direct Operations approach for upstream suppliers
SBTN recommends that companies follow a direct operations approach whenever they have sufficient production unit data.

DIRECT OPERATIONS APPROACH

The direct operations approach has been designed for companies that know the majority of their land footprint within their target boundary. This approach requires close knowledge of geographical conditions and land management practices and will guide companies to set targets on higher-priority ecoregions.

Requirement T2.29

Establish baseline Land Quality indicators
A company must first establish the baseline values for each land quality indicator selected in each production unit. These are named production unit land quality baselines.

Requirement T2.30

Determine ecoregions
For each production unit, determine the ecoregion in which it is situated following the Dinerstein et al. (2017) ecoregion classification. If a production unit is situated within more than one ecoregion, calculate the area of the production unit within each ecoregion and assign the whole production unit to the ecoregion that represents its majority area.

Requirement T2.31

Record ecoregion baseline, threshold, and target value
Using the SBTN reference datasets (provided through the SBTN Land Target data submission template; see AGILE Section 5.3), gather the baseline, threshold, and target value for each selected land quality indicator across all in-scope production units. See Section 5.3 "Calculation guidelines for soil organic carbon, soil erosion, and terrestrial acidification" in AGILE for detailed methods and resources. See Annex 3 for more general information on ecoregional thresholds.

AGILE § 5.3

Requirement T2.32

Determine whether the ecoregion threshold value has been exceeded
Compare the ecoregion's threshold value for each relevant land quality indicator to the respective baseline and determine whether it has been exceeded in the ecoregion. The SBTN reference dataset will populate the exceedance for land quality indicator and ecoregion automatically. (See Land Guidance data).

Note: Target values for soil erosion and terrestrial acidification are set 10% below their thresholds, while SOC targets are set 10% above their thresholds, meaning that exceedance values for soil organic carbon will refer to SOC loss (falling below acceptable SOC values), and those for soil erosion and acidification will refer to excessive levels (requiring decreases in levels). When using the SBTN Land Target data submission template or API linked above, this comparison is automatic.

Requirement T2.33

Determine whether the ecoregion threshold value has been exceeded by company operations or sourcing
For each production unit, compare the relevant ecoregion threshold value for each selected Land Quality indicator with the production unit baseline to determine whether the threshold has been exceeded.



PRODUCTION UNIT PRIORITIZATION FRAMEWORK

Depending on the threshold values transgressed for the ecoregions and overlapping production units under assessment, production units that have been prioritized in Step 2 are assigned a priority tier that determines whether a Land Quality Improvement target or a Land Quality Maintenance target must be set.

Requirement T2.34

Prioritization of ecoregion and production units
Companies must use **Table 7** to independently assign priorities to each in-scope production unit and ecoregion for each selected land quality indicator. When using the SBTN Land Target data submission template, this assignment is made automatically.

Recommendation T2.17

Amalgamation of production units
Companies with more than five production units per ISIC category in a single ecoregion may set an amalgamated target for those units. Primary land quality data must still be collected for each production unit independently, but these values may be averaged across the set of amalgamated units in the same ISIC category. These amalgamated production unit baselines, weighted by land footprint for each production practice, are then compared with the respective ecoregional threshold values.

Recommendation T2.18

Maintenance targets for Third and Fourth Priority production units
For Third Priority and Fourth Priority production units, it is recommended that the company set, at a minimum, a Land Quality Maintenance target at the current production unit baseline.

Recommendation T2.19

Landscape and supply chain considerations for ecoregion selection
Companies are encouraged to select landscapes that have traditionally been linked to the supply chains of their largest inputs, as indicated by their land footprint or purchasing volumes, and to incorporate ecoregion thresholds into the selection process alongside other state-of-nature indicators.

Recommendation T2.20

Long-term Land Quality targets
Companies are encouraged to develop long-term targets (e.g., to 2050) in addition to the required near-term targets (e.g., next five years following a designated base year).

Table 7: Production unit prioritization framework for Land Quality targets.

Target Component	First Priority	Second Priority	Third Priority	Fourth Priority
Ecoregion Baseline	**Threshold Exceeded**	Threshold Not Exceeded	**Threshold Exceeded**	Threshold Not Exceeded
Production Unit Baseline	**Threshold Exceeded**	**Threshold Exceeded**	Threshold Not Exceeded	Threshold Not Exceeded
Target Setting	Required	Required	Recommended	Recommended
Target Type	Improvement	Improvement	Maintenance	Maintenance

Requirement T2.35

Target duration for Land Quality
The Land Quality targets must span a minimum of five years and a maximum of ten years from the date the target is submitted to SBTN for official validation.

Requirement T2.36

Validation submission for Land Quality targets. To begin the target validation process, companies must submit to SBTN:

i. ISIC sector classification(s) for activities within their direct operations;

ii. Disclosure of production unit footprints in the base year and their respective ecoregion(s);

iii. Disclosure of any production units that have been amalgamated, including their ISIC categories and ecoregions;

iv. For each production unit and/or amalgamated production unit: the calculated baseline value for each land quality category assessed;

v. For each production unit and/or amalgamated production unit: whether the threshold has been exceeded and the relevant priority tier; and

vi. Disclosure of the target values for First Priority and Second Priority units where thresholds have been exceeded.

2.2.5 Supplier Engagement Approach for upstream activities

Where a company cannot set a place-based upstream Target 2 because location data are currently insufficient for site-level or sourcing-area-level target setting (as determined through Steps 1 & 2), a **Supplier Engagement target** can serve as an alternative mechanism to meet upstream Target 2 validation requirements. Through this mechanism, the company aims to stimulate suppliers to adopt and implement working land regeneration and restoration. As a result, this will help to progressively align upstream supply with ecoregional thresholds and advance traceability toward the spatial resolution required for place-based target setting. Please note, however, that it is not itself a place-based, science-based target.

The Supplier Engagement target **complements place-based upstream targets where traceability gaps make direct implementation of Target 2 not yet possible by the company.** Where a company has a mix of commodity flows with different spatial-level classifications, the approach applies to those flows where place-based target setting is not yet feasible; the remaining flows are addressed through the direct operations pathway.

Please see Step 4: Act Box "Implementation, achievement, and verification of the Supplier Engagement Target" for more information on guidance to support the achievement of this target.

Box 7: Template statements for Land Quality targets.

Soil Organic Carbon

Improvement target—production unit:
[Company name] commits to increase the soil organic carbon stock to above [target value] t C ha^{-1} yr^{-1} within [production unit] in [ecoregion] ecoregion by [target year] from the [base year] base year.

Improvement target—amalgamated production unit:
[Company name] commits to increase the soil organic carbon stock to above [target value] t C ha^{-1} yr^{-1} on average across its [ISIC classification] production units in [ecoregion] ecoregion by [target year] from the [base year] base year.

Maintenance target:
[Company name] commits to maintain the soil organic carbon stock above [target value] t C ha^{-1} yr^{-1} within [production unit / across its [ISIC classification] production units] in [ecoregion] ecoregion.

Soil Erosion

Improvement target:
[Company name] commits to reduce the soil erosion rate to below [target value] t ha^{-1} yr^{-1} within [production unit / across its [ISIC classification] production units] in [ecoregion] ecoregion by [target year] from the [base year] base year.

Maintenance target:
[Company name] commits to maintain the soil erosion rate below or equal to [baseline value] t ha^{-1} yr^{-1} within [production unit / across its [ISIC classification] production units] in [ecoregion] ecoregion.

Terrestrial Acidification

Improvement target:
[Company name] commits to reduce the terrestrial acidification rate below [target value] kg SO_2-eq within [production unit / across its [ISIC classification] production units] in [ecoregion] ecoregion by [target year] from the [base year] base year.

Maintenance target:
[Company name] commits to maintain the terrestrial acidification rate below or equal to [baseline value] kg SO_2-eq within [production unit / across its [ISIC classification] production units] in [ecoregion] ecoregion.

2.3 Target validation

Once all required data and documentation have been prepared in accordance with the relevant validation submission requirements above, companies must submit these materials to SBTN for target validation. Once validated, companies may make a public statement in line with the SBTN Claims Guidance.

SBTN will work with the Accountability Accelerator, SBTN's independent validation body, and other system actors, to define appropriate Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification (MRV) approaches for SBTN Step 5: Track.



Target 3:
Landscape Engagement





"The Landscape Engagement target puts company action and effort within the context of stakeholder collaboration at the landscape scale to improve ecological and social conditions."

This chapter sets out:

- What a Landscape Engagement target is and why it is required;
- How to set, validate, and communicate a Landscape Engagement target; and
- The Landscape Engagement Roadmap and required documentation (as determined by the initiative readiness scenario).

3.1 What is a Landscape Engagement target?

The intention of landscape engagement is to incentivize regenerative, restorative, and transformational actions in landscapes that are meaningful to a company's operations and supply chains. Annex 6 presents a more detailed overview of the interconnections between the Land targets and the Climate, Freshwater, and Ocean targets. In practice, these realms often overlap at the landscape scale.

Landscape engagement allows consideration of multiple objectives across numerous stakeholders. Material landscapes can include non-natural, semi-natural, and natural land cover and use. A landscape-scale engagement helps to determine larger-scale impacts and dependencies among land use types, nature and natural processes, and relevant stakeholders. Naturally, a key stakeholder is the company setting targets.

The Landscape Engagement target is flexible and broad by design. It is not a restrictive target but allows a company a variety of potential actions to engage in landscapes with other stakeholders to collaboratively achieve multi-objective environmental, biodiversity, social, and economic outcomes.

Requirement T3.1

Minimum landscape coverage
Companies must engage in either:

- One landscape initiative equivalent to at least 10% coverage of the company's estimated land impact area footprint (following SBTN Step 2: Interpret & Prioritize Guidance, which recommends addressing the top 10% of areas within the target boundaries for land pressures);

or

- Two landscape initiatives, regardless of size, in materially relevant landscapes.

Requirement T3.2

Landscape selection approach

Companies must select landscapes using the two approved approaches for selecting material landscapes (see Section 3.2.1 for full criteria).

Requirement T3.3

Evaluation against key criteria
Companies must evaluate prioritized landscape initiatives against the four key criteria for validated landscape initiatives (Section 3.2.2).

Requirement T3.4

Commitment to substantial improvement
Companies must commit to a substantial improvement in ecological and social conditions through selected metrics for the target landscape(s).

Requirement T3.5

Target duration for Landscape Engagement
The Landscape Engagement target must span a minimum of five years and a maximum of ten years from the date the target is submitted to SBTN for official validation.

Social, human, and land rights

Requirement T3.6

Social and environmental safeguards
All actions proposed within a landscape initiative must uphold and respect the rights of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLC) and other affected stakeholders. Companies must:

- Respect the rights of Indigenous Peoples to self-determination including the right to free, prior, and informed consent.
- Move beyond surface level approaches to develop meaningful engagement with stakeholders.
- Aim to ensure that engagement is inclusive, equitable and incorporates those stakeholders most impacted by economic activities or the landscape initiative.

Companies must include a preliminary assessment of the potential consequences of their proposed actions in their target documentation, identifying any potential negative or unintended impact on people and the environment. Where unacceptable outcomes are identified, steps must be taken to avoid or mitigate them.

SBTN recognizes that ambitious Land targets may bring risks of limiting vulnerable producers' and smallholders' opportunities to benefit from corporate supply chains and associated resources. Engagement within a multi-stakeholder process exposes companies to stakeholders who may more clearly see such risks (see ISEAL, 2023; Proforest, 2023). Companies should be able to clearly communicate any trade-offs and the steps taken to avoid or mitigate unacceptable outcomes (see SBTN Stakeholder Engagement Guidance).



3.2 How to set a Landscape Engagement target

All companies required to set a Landscape Engagement target (see Section i, "How to determine if your company must set Land targets") must follow the procedure below. Steps 1–3 are described in detail in Sections 3.2.1–3.2.3.

1. **Selection of landscapes for engagement.** Use one of two approaches (Section 3.2.1) to prioritize material landscapes and evaluate existing candidate initiatives.

2. **Commit to substantial improvement of ecological and social conditions.** Companies commit to substantially improving ecological and social conditions as part of a stakeholder-led, landscape-level initiative, using recommended metrics and stakeholder-defined objectives. Calculating baseline information is not required for setting the Landscape Engagement target, but it will be necessary to demonstrate progress.

3. **Develop an action plan for engagement in the landscape.** Companies commit to developing and/or contributing to collective actions within landscape initiatives, assessing potential negative social or environmental impacts, and select indicators to measure and track progress.

4. **Target validation.** Submit data for target validation (Section 3.3). Once approved, companies may make a public statement as outlined in the SBTN Claims Guidance.

3.2.1 Selection of material landscapes: Two approaches

Two main approaches are outlined in **Table 8**. They provide guidance on how a company will prioritize landscapes for engagement.

In their target validation submission, companies should report on the percentage of their land footprint that each landscape initiative is estimated to cover, then track and disclose changes in land footprint related to those landscape initiative(s) over time.

Table 8: Two approaches for selecting material landscapes.

Approach	When to use / Description
Approach 1 Landscapes in connection with SBTN Steps 1 & 2 and a Working Land Regeneration and Restoration target	This approach should be followed by companies that are setting a Working Land Regeneration and Restoration target or have material impacts in their direct operation or supply chains for one or more of the Land Quality categories. After using the SBTN methods for Step 1: Assess and Step 2: Interpret & Prioritize, companies will have already estimated their value chain pressures and know where these are occurring. Companies should rank landscapes using (i) land use area (km^2) and (ii) terrestrial ecosystem state of nature metrics (e.g., ecoregional condition, extent of natural ecosystems, species threat indexes). Companies setting multiple targets across freshwater, land, oceans, and climate may also choose landscapes that maximize multiple benefits (e.g., connecting to the Freshwater Step 3 Pesticide Landscape Engagement target).
Approach 2 Landscapes in connection with a No Conversion of Natural Ecosystems target	This approach is suitable for companies with moderate or extensive conversion within their operations or supply chain. Following this approach, companies select landscapes based on the assessment of conversion that occurred between the cutoff date and the date their No Conversion target is set, prioritizing landscapes that exhibit the highest levels of ecosystem conversion. Landscape initiatives and collective action can support companies' efforts to achieve Target 1 and remediate land that was converted post cutoff date.

Box 8: Example for selection of landscapes using Approach 1.

For companies with a low land footprint or that have already achieved significant sustainability improvements in their sourcing lands (e.g., 100% Forest Stewardship Council certification on fiber sourced), it may be more appropriate to prioritize landscapes using the state of nature assessment. Companies should complete the assessment in Step 1b and Step 2 then use the state of nature criteria to select landscapes for engagement and document the rationale.

Companies are also encouraged to use ecological thresholds data to help inform selection of landscape initiatives. Ecoregions that have surpassed their threshold for a given Land Quality category indicator may be prioritized due to the more pressing need to improve ecological conditions. Ecoregion thresholds may also inform the level of ambition for on-the-ground actions. Refer to Annex 3 for further details on ecological thresholds.

Recommendation T3.1

Setting targets across multiple pressures (land, water, climate, ocean)

Companies are encouraged to choose landscapes that maximize benefits across multiple pressures (e.g., Freshwater Step 3 Pesticide Landscape Engagement targets). A lower coverage percentage may be accepted with appropriate justification when landscapes are selected to optimize outcomes across several SBTN target realms simultaneously.

Companies setting an absolute Land Footprint Reduction target

Companies should use the Landscape Engagement target to align lands removed from production with local or regional landscape initiatives, as well as the biodiversity (CBD), climate (UNFCCC), and land degradation (UNCCD) agendas over time. Restoring lands taken out of production to natural cover is a worthy goal and a strong contribution to a Landscape Engagement target.

Reference: Landscape and Jurisdictional Maturity Matrix

The four key criteria below are aligned with the Landscape and Jurisdictional Maturity Matrix, developed by CDP in collaboration with the SBTN Land Hub, ISEAL, and LandScale. The Maturity Matrix uses three levels of maturity—Comprehensive, Partial, and Uncertain—to characterize the quality of landscape initiative disclosure and corporate engagement. Companies reporting to CDP may use the Maturity Matrix as a supplementary reference to communicate initiative quality within that framework. The Maturity Matrix is also available through CDP's disclosure guidance.

Within the SBTN target-setting procedure, the four criteria below, together with the self-assessment tool, are the operative assessment mechanism.

3.2.2 Assessing landscape initiative readiness

Once material landscapes have been selected, companies must assess whether the landscape initiatives they have identified—or plan to establish—are sufficiently credible and well-governed to deliver lasting sustainability outcomes. This assessment is based on four key criteria, which also underpin the Landscape Engagement Roadmap requirements in Section 3.2.3 and the target validation submission in Section 3.3.

THE FOUR KEY CRITERIA

Criterion 1. Scale

The boundary of the landscape initiative corresponds to a recognized geographic, administrative, or ecological boundary (e.g., a watershed, a subnational jurisdiction, or an ecoregion). National-scale initiatives will likely be too large. Where the area is not defined according to ecological, jurisdictional, or water-basin boundaries, the area must be at least 10,000 ha.

Criterion 2. Multi-stakeholder governance process or platform

The landscape initiative is governed by a multi-stakeholder process or platform with decision-making responsibility for the design, implementation, and monitoring of the initiative.

- At least three stakeholder groups have participated in one or more phases of the landscape initiative.
- A written collaboration agreement has been developed and signed by participating landscape stakeholders to formalize the partnership.

Criterion 3. Collective goals and actions

Stakeholders in the landscape initiative have agreed on a set of long-term, landscape-scale sustainability impact goals and a collective action plan to achieve them.
There are collective objectives and actions for nature and people.

- At least three landscape objectives have been identified, including at least one environmental objective and one social objective. Each objective includes a specific, measurable milestone the initiative aims to achieve by a specific date (e.g., reduce deforestation by 20% relative to the 2020 baseline by 2030).
- A collective action plan to meet the defined landscape objectives has been developed and is publicly available.

Criterion 4. Transparent reporting

The landscape initiative manages a collective monitoring and reporting framework that enables assessment and communication of progress toward the initiative's collective sustainability impact goals.

There are transparent reporting and information systems that share the actions and investments made in the initiative.

- Regular reports are produced that describe progress and setbacks in implementing the activities outlined in the action plan.
- A baseline assessment of the ecological and social condition of the landscape has been conducted and is publicly available, including at least one indicator relevant to each landscape goal.
- A time-series including at least two results—the baseline and one more recent result—is publicly available for all indicators included in the baseline assessment.
- All results from the baseline assessment and subsequent assessments have been validated by an entity with some degree of independence from those involved in conducting the assessment and the landscape initiative.

Table 9: Self-assessment of landscape initiative readiness.

Criterion	Core requirement	Met?
Criterion 1: Scale	Initiative operates at the scale of a recognized geographic, administrative, or ecological boundary (or is at least 10,000 ha).	☐ Yes ☐ No
Criterion 2: Multi-stakeholder process	At least three stakeholder groups participate; formal collaboration agreement is in place.	☐ Yes ☐ No
Criterion 3: Collective goals and actions	At least three landscape objectives (including ≥1 environmental and ≥1 social) with measurable milestones; collective action plan publicly available.	☐ Yes ☐ No
Criterion 4: Transparent reporting	Baseline assessment publicly available; regular progress reports; time-series of at least two results; independent validation of results.	☐ Yes ☐ No

Recommendation T3.2

Use ecological thresholds to sharpen initiative selection and ambition

Where ecoregion-level averages of land quality indicators exceed ecoregion thresholds (see Annex 3), prioritize these landscapes because improving ecological conditions is more urgent. Thresholds can also guide the level of ambition within the initiative by indicating how much the conditions for specific indicators should improve.

SELF-ASSESSMENT AND SCENARIO DETERMINATION

Requirement T3.7

Self-assessment and scenario determination

Companies must complete a binary self-assessment of whether their selected landscape initiative(s) fulfill each of the four key criteria. The outcome determines the applicable engagement scenario and the corresponding roadmap requirements. Validators will require evidence that this self-assessment has been completed.

Recommendation T3.3

Engage in and improve initiatives that are not yet fully mature

SBTN encourages companies to engage with landscape initiatives at earlier stages of development and to actively contribute to bringing them into compliance with the four key criteria, rather than exclusively selecting already-mature initiatives.

Establish new landscape initiatives:

Companies are encouraged to establish new landscape initiatives beyond what is strictly required for target compliance, as multi-stakeholder collective action is essential to achieving science-based targets for nature at scale.

3.2.3 Landscape Engagement Roadmap

> **Requirement T3.8**
>
> **Landscape Engagement Roadmap**
> Companies must prepare the Landscape Engagement Roadmap and an action plan for engagement in the selected landscape(s) as a formal document to facilitate implementation and enable future audits. It must be submitted during target validation. SBTN validators (the Accountability Accelerator) will check the completeness of all items.
>
> The roadmap is not intended to evaluate evidence against the completion of all requirements as the target is set, but must instead demonstrate the intent to achieve roadmap requirements by the target date. The documentation requirements vary by scenario, as determined by the self-assessment in Section 3.2.2.

For companies already investing in landscape initiatives, landscape engagement may provide a simplified, integrated framework for quantifying and recognizing such contributions. Actions taken in landscapes that are not materially relevant to a company cannot satisfy the requirements of the Landscape Engagement target.

Additional guidance from ISEAL clarifies that a landscape investment or action that could be recognized by SBTN must:

- Address critical sustainability issues in the landscape and contribute to agreed landscape goals;
- Aim to have impacts beyond individual supply chains;
- Include support for multi-stakeholder landscape coordination processes;
- Be embedded in collective action plans, ensuring complementarity with other activities and interventions in the landscape;
- Contribute to broader systems-level change, helping create the enabling conditions to achieve agreed landscape goals.

Companies already involved in selected landscape initiatives must therefore demonstrate both the materiality and quality of those initiatives, as well as the minimum land impact area coverage. A commitment to Landscape Engagement under SBTN must represent an acceleration of ambition—not only a recognition of existing engagement. Demonstrating additionality is key, though not prescriptive: Increased engagement in existing material landscapes would likely qualify.

When landscape initiatives are not present in any of the prioritized locations, or do not meet the key criteria, companies can rely on their roadmap documentation showing the planned steps to meet the criteria. Or they can develop new landscape initiatives.

At this stage, validators will not provide a standardized judgment on the integrity or quality of the information submitted; however, they may require additional information or clarification. This will help the SBTN and the Accountability Accelerator develop more precise evaluation criteria in future iterations.

Scenario 1: Initiative exists and meets all four criteria

The roadmap must be comprehensive in showing the governance and structure of the initiative, and must document how the company plans to contribute to improvements in ecological and social conditions. The actual linkage of actions to results will be part of Step 4: Act (tracking and progress reporting), but at this stage, the company must indicate the baseline for the landscape initiative and provide accurate information on its engagement. The information must include the selected metrics and indicators for the whole area that the initiative is working to influence, enabling the company to demonstrate how its investment has improved the overall landscape (e.g., restoration, regeneration, improved ecological conditions).

Scenario 2: Initiative exists but does not meet all four criteria

The roadmap must include how the company plans to improve the governance and structure of the initiative, to meet the key criteria, and detail how it intends to improve ecological and social conditions. Some requirements are less strict in this scenario, since the initiative may not yet have all documentation in place or may require further improvements to governance or transparency that the company is actively working toward.

Scenario 3: New initiative, or initiative meets no criteria

For an existing initiative that does not meet any of the key criteria, the roadmap must include all steps the company will take to meet the criteria. For a new initiative, the roadmap must include the steps the company is taking to establish one that meets the key criteria. Some roadmap items are required within a 12-month time frame rather than at the time of submission, as presented in **Table 10**.

The outcome of the self-assessment determines which engagement roadmap scenario applies:

- **Scenario 1:** All four criteria answered Yes—the initiative exists and meets all key criteria.
- **Scenario 2:** At least Criterion 1 "Scale" answered Yes, mix of Yes/No for other criteria—the initiative exists at the appropriate scale but does not meet all key criteria.
- **Scenario 3:** All four criteria answered No, or this is a new landscape initiative.

Table 10 summarizes the documentation required for each roadmap item, differentiating between scenarios where requirements differ.

3.2.4 Establishing and improving landscape initiatives

Where prioritized landscape initiatives do not meet the validation criteria, or when landscape initiatives do not exist in the prioritized locations, companies can either present an action plan and work toward bringing the initiative into compliance against the four key criteria, or they can develop new landscape initiatives by working toward the criteria from the outset. In general, companies should seek to improve conditions in the landscape as a whole and in alignment with landscape objectives, considering ecological thresholds, rather than working only for a specific set of producers or enterprises. Landscape investments and actions should complement supply chain investments by creating a more resilient environment and better conditions for the long-term wellbeing of local communities.

To ensure landscape initiatives achieve their objectives, companies can initiate or contribute to a varied range of activities and actions in collaboration with a landscape initiative. These can range from avoidance and reduction of pressures on land (e.g., loss of soil organic carbon, increases in soil erosion or terrestrial acidification), to restoration and regeneration of the state of nature (e.g., the extent and integrity of ecosystems and species extinction risk), and the transformation of underlying socioeconomic systems at multiple levels to address the drivers of degradation and nature loss.

Table 10: Landscape Engagement Roadmap.

Information	Documentation required	Desired outcome
Actions and timelines (across all key criteria)	**Scenarios 1 & 2:** Documentation with a list and description of actions and/or investments the company has made and is making, including: expected outcome for each action/investment; timeline to measure progress; and a collective action plan showing how the company intends to improve ecological and social conditions in the landscape. **Scenario 3:** Documentation with a list and description of planned actions/investments including expected outcomes and timelines, and documentation showing how the company plans to establish the initiative, create the governance structure, and progress toward meeting the key criteria.	Documentation of a collective action plan showing how the company intends to improve ecological and social conditions in the landscape.
Funding for actions (across all key criteria)	**Scenarios 1 & 2:** Explanation and quantification of investments and funding supporting the implementation of any actions the company is making to improve the landscape initiative overall. **Scenario 3:** A financial plan for the landscape initiative, to be developed within 6–12 months of target submission.	A financial plan for the landscape.
Landscape selection (Criterion 1 - Scale)	**Scenarios 1 & 2:** Clear description of how material landscapes have been selected, based on Approach 1 or Approach 2 from Section 3.2.1. **Scenario 3:** Clear description of how the company has selected the location where the new initiative will be established. *Recommended: All scenarios—additional selection has to describe:* current or future sourcing risks; priority issues or regions for the company's broader strategy; existence of other collective action initiatives; the company's potential to drive positive outcomes beyond its supply chain; and the regulatory environment.	Company engages in a landscape or jurisdiction where it is well placed to have positive impacts.
Stakeholder engagement (Criterion 2 - Multi-stakeholder process)	**Scenarios 1 & 2:** Documentation showing: (i) evidence that an adequate assessment of the needs of local communities has taken place through stakeholder consultation; (ii) a stakeholder map with key stakeholders; (iii) documentation of formal support of stakeholders for the company's involvement in the landscape collective action plan; and (iv) evidence that corporate actions are aligned with community needs and objectives. **Scenario 3:** A plan for assessing the needs of local communities; a plan for stakeholder mapping; and a plan describing how the company intends to engage key stakeholders in the landscape or jurisdiction.	Key stakeholders in the jurisdiction, including local government and producing enterprises, are actively engaged and committed to any action plans and their stated outcomes.
Governance (Criterion 2 - Multi-stakeholder process)	**Scenarios 1 & 2:** Documentation showing: formal collaboration agreements (e.g., memoranda of understanding); governance structure; terms of reference and membership of governance bodies; operating procedures/codes of conduct; and dispute resolution and grievance processes. **Scenario 3:** Documentation showing how the company plans to support or create a management structure meeting the key criteria, including formal collaboration agreements, governance structure, and operating procedures.	Clear and transparent operating procedures define the legal standing of the initiative and the governance roles, responsibilities, and decision-making for different stakeholders.

Information	Documentation required	Desired outcome
Goals and linkages (Criterion 3 - Collective goals and actions)	**All scenarios:** Documentation showing the theory of change, with intended outputs of the actions and the steps by which those outputs will lead to positive landscape outcomes. A context assessment that determines who is doing what; critical risks and their root causes; levers of change; and priority actions.	Company communicates how it is supporting the achievement of landscape objectives and how it monitors its investments and impacts.
Unintended consequences and safeguards (Criterion 3 - Collective goals and actions)	**Scenarios 1 & 2:** An assessment of unintended negative consequences of proposed actions, and an implementation plan for environmental and social safeguards. **Scenario 3:** An assessment and implementation plan to be completed within 6–12 months of target submission.	An effective landscape initiative acts on multiple objectives, addressing sustainable production, human wellbeing, and landscape conservation.
Metrics and indicators (Criterion 3 - Collective goals and actions)	**Scenarios 1 & 2:** Selection of a set of metrics suitable to measure both progress and impact of planned actions, and improvement in ecological and social conditions at landscape scale. Calculation of the baseline corresponding to each indicator. Metrics may be selected from **Table 11** in Section 3.3.1 or from other sources. Justification for the use of each metric must be provided. **Scenario 3:** Selection of metrics and calculation of baselines as above. A monitoring framework is to be in place within 6–12 months.	A framework is in place to monitor performance improvements in the landscape, with the capacity to manage and analyze data and accurately communicate results.
Data sources (Criterion 3 - Collective goals and actions)	**Scenarios 1 & 2:** A list of data sources used to derive the baseline values of each selected metric and indicator, including primary and secondary sources. **Scenario 3:** A list of data sources to be developed within 6–12 months.	A clearly documented evidence base underpins the baseline and progress assessments.
Transparency (Criterion 4 - Transparent reporting)	**All scenarios:** Information on the structure, agreements, financing, and actions of the initiative is publicly and easily accessible.	The initiative's activities and governance are open to public scrutiny.
Data management system (Criterion 4 - Transparent reporting)	**Scenarios 1 & 2:** Documentation showing how the company, within the landscape initiative, has in place data governance systems and protocols to credibly gather, store, analyze, and use the data collected. The protection of sensitive data is a critical component. **Scenario 3:** Documentation showing how the company will create data governance systems and protocols within 6–12 months.	Data governance systems are in place to credibly collect, store, analyze, and report landscape data, with appropriate protections for sensitive information.
Reporting progress (Criterion 4 - Transparent reporting)	**Scenarios 1 & 2:** A clear reporting framework and strategy for communicating accessible information about results, partners, and future actions on a regular and recurring basis. **Scenario 3:** Evidence of a reporting framework and strategy to be developed within 6–12 months.	Consistent public reporting communicates progress against landscape objectives, partners involved, and planned next steps.

3.3 Target validation and disclosure

To begin the target validation process, companies must submit to SBTN:

1. ISIC sector classification(s) describing their direct operations and upstream activities.
2. Data required in Section ii, "Data requirements to set Land targets."
3. Demonstrated engagement with one landscape initiative that covers at least 10% of land use impact (as defined in Step 2: Interpret & Prioritize) or demonstrated engagement in two landscape initiatives.
4. Descriptive rationale of the process chosen for the selection of priority landscapes, including the approach used (Approach 1 or Approach 2) and percentage coverage with justification.
5. Results of the self-assessment of landscape initiative readiness against the four key criteria (Section 3.2.2), confirming the applicable scenario (Scenario 1, 2, or 3), and supported by evidence of the assessment process. The Landscape Engagement Roadmap prepared in accordance with Section 3.2.3 and Table 10.
6. Demonstrated engagement within an iterative process of stakeholder consultation that includes relevant parties as needed.
7. Evidence that an adequate and impartial assessment of the needs of local communities has taken place within this stakeholder consultation.
8. Alignment of corporate actions with community needs and objectives resulting from the stakeholder consultation process.

3.3.1 List of potential metrics—baselining for ecological and social conditions

SBTN acknowledges the variety of indicators, metrics, and indexes that can be used to assess ecological and social conditions in landscapes. Companies setting a Landscape Engagement target should select an appropriate set of metrics according to the needs of specific locations and in collaboration with other stakeholders involved in the initiative. A key addition in this version is the inclusion of impact-based metrics covered under the Land Quality target (Soil Organic Carbon, Soil Erosion, and Acidification).

Table 11 below is a non-exhaustive list of potential metrics, compiled based on availability and usability from SBTN methods and several commonly used landscape assessment frameworks, including the LandScale Assessment Framework, the Restoration Opportunities Assessment Methodology (ROAM), and the Landscape Reporting Framework from GCF. The list also includes metrics from the CBD's Global Biodiversity Framework monitoring guidance.

Note: AGILE Chapter 6 provides guidelines for companies to set baselines and measure progress against selected metrics, with an example case study.

> **Recommendation T3.4**
>
> **Indicator selection should prioritize long-term measurability**
>
> It is essential that companies evaluate the long-term capacity of any selected metric to change and be measured within the landscape over the life of the target. Metrics from **Table 11** or other recognized frameworks (LandScale, ROAM, GCF) should be chosen in collaboration with other landscape stakeholders, with a clear justification for each indicator selected.

Table 11: List of potential metrics for ecological and social conditions.

Indicator	Topic	Metric
1.1	Ecosystems	Proportion of target boundary land area under productive and sustainable land management.
1.2	Ecosystems	Total area (ha) within the engaged landscape(s) of natural lands converted since 2020 (SBTN Natural Lands Map).
1.3	Ecosystems	Total area (ha) under restoration in the landscape.
1.4	Ecosystems	Coverage (% of total landscape area) of protected areas and other effective conservation measures (OECMs).
1.5	Ecosystems	Total area (ha) and percentage (%) of natural ecosystems in the landscape that are currently degraded.
1.6	Ecosystems	Biodiversity risk assessment including dependencies and impacts using WWF's Biodiversity Risk Filter.
1.7	Ecosystems	Water risk assessment using the WWF Water Risk Filter or WRI Aqueduct.
1.8	Ecosystems	Species threat abatement and restoration (STAR) score at the landscape scale (freely available 5 km^2 resolution data).
1.9	Ecosystems	Species threat abatement and restoration (STAR) score at the landscape scale (finer resolution data through an IBAT subscription).
1.10	Ecosystems	Services provided by ecosystems, or an assessment of critical natural assets.
1.11	Ecosystems	Total climate regulation services provided by ecosystems by ecosystem type (System of Environmental Economic Accounts).
1.12	Ecosystems	Species Population Abundance (IND9): number and proportion of species meeting Entry/Standard/Advanced-Level case-specific trigger criteria.
1.13	Ecosystems	Soil Organic Carbon—metric tons C/yr.
1.14	Ecosystems	Soil Erosion—metric tons of soil loss per ha/yr.
1.15	Ecosystems	Terrestrial Acidification and Eutrophication (threshold in total nitrogen deposition in kg N/ha)—kg SO_2-eq.
1.16	Ecosystems	Natural Land Cover % per km^2.
2.1	Governance	Number of stakeholder groups involved (e.g., local communities, producers, government, Indigenous peoples).
2.2	Governance	Type of governance implemented—full, equitable, inclusive, effective, and gender-responsive representation and participation in decision-making, including a gender-action plan.
2.3	Governance	Number of unresolved land and resource conflicts or grievances, and area of land (ha) subject to such conflicts.
2.4	Governance	User-defined metric(s) on access and use rights for key natural resources in the landscape.

Indicator	Topic	Metric
2.5	Governance	Proportion of total adult population with secure tenure rights to land, (a) with legally recognized documentation, and (b) who perceive their rights to land as secure, by gender and type of tenure.
3.1	Health and Wellbeing	Percentage (%) of female and male population living below the local poverty line (or earning <$1.90/day).
3.2	Health and Wellbeing	Percentage (%) of girls and boys who are undernourished.
3.3	Health and Wellbeing	Percentage (%) of households without electricity.
3.4	Health and Wellbeing	Number of farmers realizing additional benefits and income streams.
3.5	Health and Wellbeing	Percentage (%) of households without access to safe drinking water within a 15-minute walk from home.

3.4 Template statement for Landscape Engagement targets

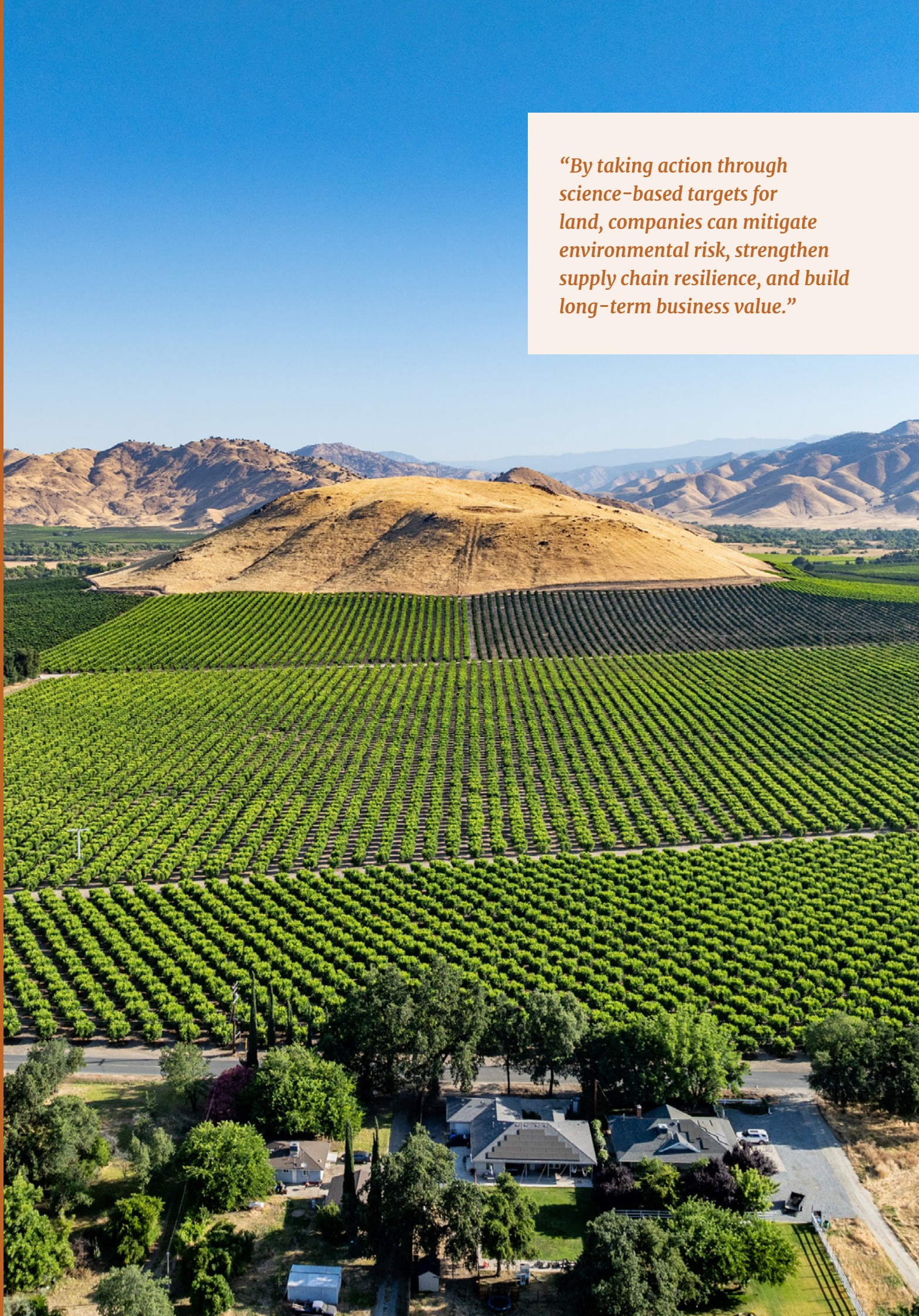
Landscape Engagement targets will be stated in the following form:

Box 9: Template statement for Landscape Engagement targets.

[Company name] is engaged in [initiative name and location] and committed to a substantial improvement in ecological and social conditions by [target year].



"By taking action through science-based targets for land, companies can mitigate environmental risk, strengthen supply chain resilience, and build long-term business value."



Annexes

Annex 1: No Conversion of Natural Ecosystems

a. Why is the No Conversion target needed?

The contributions of natural ecosystems are critical to planetary and human health. They provide protection, livelihoods, materials, food, fresh water, and a sense of cultural identity to billions of people, including Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLC), local communities, and many others.[1, 2] They store vast quantities of carbon. Forests alone provide habitats for about 80% of amphibian species, 75% of bird species, and 68% of mammal species.[3]

Yet humans have converted between one-third and one-half of habitable land for crop and livestock production, undermining these critical ecosystem services on which humans rely.[4] Deforestation and land degradation cost as much as US$6.3 trillion a year through their impact on forest and agricultural productivity.[5] In sub-Saharan Africa, over two-thirds of productive land is degraded, compromising its capacity to support people and nature and undermining the livelihoods of at least 450 million people.[6]

The conversion and degradation of forest land has been given significant attention via dedicated initiatives and private sector commitments to end deforestation. Over one third of forests have been lost globally due to deforestation since it first became a pervasive threat in temperate zones between the 18th and 20th centuries, and the problem has drastically increased in the tropics over the past 50 years.[7, 8]

Since 2010, the global net loss of forests is estimated to be 4.7 Mha per year.[9] The rates of tropical deforestation are now particularly dire: They are estimated to account for more than 97% of global deforestation in the past century and more than 90% of global deforestation between 2000 and 2018.[10, 11] Across the tropics, 90% of recent deforestation has been driven by agriculture, the majority of which is caused by seven commodities: cattle, oil palm, soy, cocoa, rubber, coffee, and plantation wood fiber, with cattle having by far the largest impact.[12]

Less attention has been given to the loss of non-forest natural ecosystems, although they too are critically important. Non-forest ecosystems are suffering conversion rates as high or higher than those of forests.[13]

For example, natural grasslands—which hold high levels of biological diversity, are crucial for the mitigation of climate change, and provide significant value to people—are among the most threatened ecosystems in the world.[14] Efforts toward avoiding the conversion of forests should

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1 Beatty, C. R. et al. (2022). The Vitality of Forests: Illustrating the Evidence Connecting Forests and Human Health. World Wildlife Fund, Washington, DC, United States.

2 Chaplin-Kramer, R. et al. (2023). Mapping the Planet's Critical Natural Assets. Nature Ecology & Evolution, 7: 51–61. https://doi.org/10.1038/s41559-022-01934-5.

3 FAO. 2022. The State of the World's Forests 2022. Forest pathways for green recovery and building inclusive, resilient and sustainable economies. Rome, FAO

4 https://www.fao.org/food-agriculture-statistics/en/

5 Sutton, P. C. et al. (2016). The Ecological Economics of Land Degradation: Impacts on Ecosystem Service Values. Ecological Economics, 129: 182–192.

6 UNEP. (2015). The Economics of Land Degradation in Africa. Bonn: ELD Initiative. Available online at: https://www.eld-initiative.org/fileadmin/ELD_Filter_Tool/Publication_The_Economics_of_Land_Degradation_in_Africa__Reviewed_/ELD-unep-report_07_spec_72dpi.pdf

7 Hansen, M.C., Potapov, P.V., Moore, R., Hancher, M., Turubanova, S.A., Tyukavina, A., Thau, D., Stehman, S.V., Goetz, S.J., Loveland, T.R., Kommareddy, A., Egorov, A., Chini, L., Justice, C.O. and Townshend, J.R.G. (2013). High-Resolution Global Maps of 21st-Century Forest Cover Change. Science, 342(6160), pp.850–853. doi: https://doi.org/10.1126/science.1244693.

8 Haddad, N.M., Brudvig, L.A., Clobert, J., Davies, K.F., Gonzalez, A., Holt, R.D., Lovejoy, T.E., Sexton, J.O., Austin, M.P., Collins, C.D., Cook, W.M., Damschen, E.I., Ewers, R.M., Foster, B.L., Jenkins, C.N., King, A.J., Laurance, W.F., Levey, D.J., Margules, C.R. and Melbourne, B.A. (2015). Habitat fragmentation and its lasting impact on Earth's ecosystems. Science Advances, 1(2). doi: https://doi.org/10.1126/sciadv.1500052.

9 FAO and UNEP. 2020. The State of the World's Forests 2020. Forests, biodiversity and people. Rome.

10 https://research.wri.org/gfr/latest-analysis-deforestation-trends

11 FAO. 2022. The State of the World's Forests 2022. Forest pathways for green recovery and building inclusive, resilient and Sustainable economies. Rome, FAO.

12 Pendrill, F. et al. (2022). Disentangling the numbers behind agriculture-driven tropical deforestation. Science, 377(6611), abm9267.

13 Sayre, R., Karagulle, D., Frye, C., Boucher, T., Wolff, N. H., Breyer, S., ... & Possingham, H. (2020). An assessment of the representation of ecosystems in global protected areas using new maps of World Climate Regions and World Ecosystems. Global Ecology and Conservation, 21, e00860.

14 Gonçalves-Souza, D., P. H. Verburg, & R. Dobrovolski. (2020). Habitat loss, extinction predictability and conservation efforts in the terrestrial ecoregions. Biological Conservation, 246, 108579.

be broadened to incorporate the conservation of non-forest natural ecosystems,[15] and this guidance walks that path.
For additional information on the importance of natural ecosystems and for the scientific evidence supporting the choice of the No Conversion target, please refer to the supplementary material.

b. How to assess compliance with No Conversion target requirements

Detailed guidance on implementing actions to achieve targets will be released by SBTN as guidance for Step 4: Act and Step 5: Track. This annex provides a brief anticipation of how companies can assess their progress toward deforestation- and conversion-free status for their sourced commodities.

Building on AFi's Operational Guidance on Supply Chain Management, companies can assess the deforestation- and conversion-free status of the commodities they source by:

- Tracing commodities back to the production or processing units of origin and ensuring that conversion events did not occur after the relevant cutoff date.
- Tracing commodities back to an intermediate supplier that itself has effective control mechanisms in place and can demonstrate the ability to trace its suppliers to the production or processing units of origin, and can demonstrate compliance with target requirements.
- Utilizing credible assurance systems (e.g., credible certification systems based on a physical chain of custody) capable of linking raw material supplies with production units in compliance with target requirements.
- Tracing materials to jurisdictions or landscapes where it has been demonstrated that conversion did not occur after the relevant cutoff date.

Table 12: Amount of conversion of global ecosystems, grouped by their vegetation/land cover attribute.[16]

Vegetation/land cover	Current (actual) area (thousand ha)	Converted (potential) area (thousand ha)	Conversion (%)
Forestlands	4,377,500	1,501,203	25.5
Shrublands	1,632,918	202,040	11
Grasslands	1,267,528	891,752	41.3
Sparsely or non-vegetated	2,967,203	58,316	1.9
Snow and ice	228,479	10	0.005

15 Sayre, R., Karagulle, D., Frye, C., Boucher, T., Wolff, N. H., Breyer, S., ... & Possingham, H. (2020). An assessment of the representation of ecosystems in global protected areas using new maps of World Climate Regions and World Ecosystems. Global Ecology and Conservation, 21, e00860.

16 Sayre, R., Karagulle, D., Frye, C., Boucher, T., Wolff, N. H., Breyer, S., ... & Possingham, H. (2020). An assessment of the representation of ecosystems in global protected areas using new maps of World Climate Regions and World Ecosystems. Global Ecology and Conservation, 21, e00860.

Annex 2: Land Footprint Reduction

a. The relative merit of absolute versus intensity approaches

This section provides information on the scientific basis of the absolute and intensity Land Footprint Reduction target options and explores the benefits and challenges of each approach.

THE SCIENCE BASED TARGETS INITIATIVE APPROACH

SBTi allocates responsibility for climate mitigation based on convergence or contraction approaches (see Figure 8). Under the convergence approach, all companies in a given sector reduce their emissions intensity to a common value by a given year, as dictated by a global temperature pathway. For example, power sector companies reduce their emissions intensity per kWh produced to the same value. Under the contraction approach, all companies reduce their absolute or economic-intensity emissions at the same rate, regardless of baseline performance. For example, the power companies may each reduce their emissions intensity by a common percentage but arrive at different absolute values.[17]



Figure 8: SBTi's allocation approaches (adapted from SBTi). Source for the figure.

17 https://sciencebasedtargets.org/resources/files/foundations-of-SBT-setting.pdf

ABSOLUTE CONTRACTION APPROACH FOR LAND FOOTPRINT REDUCTION

Applying this concept to Land Footprint Reduction, all companies reduce their agricultural land footprint at the same rate (determined by the global IPCC target for agricultural footprint reduction), regardless of sector baseline performance (see Figure 9).

Companies setting absolute Land Footprint Reduction targets would reduce their absolute land footprint at a linear rate of 0.35% per year, or by 3.5% by 2030, from a 2020 base year, and by 10.6% by 2050 from a 2020 base year. This method is a simple, straightforward approach to setting and tracking progress toward targets, applicable to the agriculture sector. **Table 13** summarizes the inputs and outputs of the method.

Intensity contraction approach for land footprint reduction

SBTi also includes an intensity contraction approach where companies in a given sector reduce their emissions intensity by a common percentage by a given year[18].

With global food demand projected to grow by 45% between 2017 and 2050[19], it follows that if productivity in terms of food produced per ha were also to grow at this rate (a 1.4% annual linear rate), no further agricultural land expansion would be needed to meet projected demand. When these productivity increases are coupled with changes to consumption (e.g., reduced food loss and waste, shifts to healthy and sustainable diets), it would free up an amount of land greater than the 500 Mha goal of global agricultural land footprint reduction in the SSP1 scenario in the IPCC's Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C.[20]

GLOBAL LAND USE	Finite base of ice-free land on the planet (roughly 13 billion ha), distributed between production areas (e.g., agriculture, forestry), conservation areas, and natural ecosystems, the built environment and other lands. Agriculture's global land footprint was 4.7 billion ha in 2020.
GLOBAL LAND FOOTPRINT REDUCTION SCENARIO	Reduction in agricultural production areas of 500 million ha (10.6%) by 2050 relative to a 2020 base year, based on SSP1 scenario in the IPCC's Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5C (2018), to allow for regeneration of natural ecosystems to achieve global nature and climate goals.
COMPANY LAND FOOTPRINT REDUCTION TARGET	The 500 million ha of global land footprint reduction is allocated equally among large land-intensive companies, translating to a 10.6% decrease in land occupation by 2050 relative to a 2020 base year, or a 0.35% annual linear reduction in land footprint. By 2030, companies would be required to reduce agricultural land footprint by 3.5%, relative to a 2020 base year.

Figure 9: SBTN method for absolute land footprint reduction.

18 https://sciencebasedtargets.org/resources/files/foundations-of-SBT-setting.pdf

19 Searchinger, T., Zionts, J., Wirsenius, S., Peng, L., Beringer, T., Dumas, P., Taff, G., Waite, R., Rich, D., Ranganathan, J. and Rudee, A. (2021). A Pathway to Carbon Neutral Agriculture in Denmark A PATHWAY TO CARBON NEUTRAL AGRICULTURE IN DENMARK. Available at: https://searchinger.princeton.edu/sites/g/files/toruqf4701/files/wri-carbonneutralag-denmark-2021.pdf

20 https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15

Table 13: Characteristics of the absolute and intensity reduction approach.

Method	Company input	Method output
Absolute Reduction	• Base year. • Target year. • Base year agricultural land occupation ("land footprint" or "land use"), disaggregated by direct operations versus upstream impacts (SBTN Step 1 output).	Overall reduction in the agricultural land footprint of the company by the target year, relative to the base year, using a rate of 0.35% annual linear reduction.
Intensity Reduction	• Base year. • Target year. • Base year agricultural land footprint, disaggregated by direct operations versus upstream impacts (Step 1 output). • Activity level in the base year (e.g., amount of agricultural products produced or purchased). • Projected change in activity by target year.	A reduction in the agricultural land footprint of the company by the target year per kg of agricultural products, relative to the base year, using a rate of 1% annual linear reduction, and its translation to absolute change in land footprint.

In a similar vein, the Food and Land Use Coalition's "Better Futures" scenario (2019) also exceeds this global 500 Mha agricultural land footprint reduction goal, and includes annual linear productivity growth of 1.1%, along with demand-side measures.[21]

To be precautionary and ambitious, SBTN's Land guidance proposes that the land footprint intensity reduction method is based on the higher productivity growth (1.4% annual linear rate; 45% growth between 2017 and 2050). This level of productivity growth also corresponds to roughly a 1% reduction in land occupation per kg of agricultural products produced per year. **Table 14** summarizes the inputs and outputs of this intensity reduction (contraction) method.

21 https://www.foodandlandusecoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/FOLU-GrowingBetter-GlobalReport.pdf

Table 14: Considerations for choosing the denominator for the intensity target.

Denominator	Benefits	Challenges
Weight (e.g., kg or t)	Relatively easy to measure and communicate.	Does not capture food functionality or nutrition; incentivizes commodities high in water content, including land-intensive ones (e.g., milk).
Spend or sales (e.g., US$)	Most businesses already measure this, easy to communicate.	Commodity prices fluctuate, which can hide true trends in land footprint intensity; it is therefore less accurate as a land footprint indicator.
Kilocalories	Moderately easy to measure with conversion ratios from weight; covers all foods.	Does not describe nutrition more broadly than energy content; incentivizes energy dense commodities, including nutrient poor ones (e.g., sugar, vegetable oils).
Protein	Moderately easy to measure with conversion ratios from weight; covers all land-intensive foods.	Does not describe nutrition more broadly than protein content; is not meaningful for protein-poor foods and can disincentivize some healthy ones (e.g., vegetables).
Combined nutrient quality metric or index	Potentially most meaningful in terms of balancing resource use with health and nutrition.	Most complex to measure and communicate; lack of consensus about which metric or index is most appropriate to use.

Pros and cons of absolute versus intensity Land Footprint Reduction targets

Absolute and intensity targets each have advantages and disadvantages, which are shown in **Table 15**. For both sets of targets, there is a risk that they incentivize unsustainable agricultural intensification or incentivize consumer companies to shift away from lower-yielding smallholder farmers if not appropriately balanced with social and environmental safeguards.

Given the benefits and challenges with both approaches, SBTN's Land guidance has left open the option for companies to set either type of target as part of the revised Target 2, but SBTN recommends absolute targets, especially for large consumer companies such as retailers, given that they have a greater ability to reduce land footprint through demand-side measures such as shifting their portfolios to less-land-intensive products.

Table 15: Considerations regarding absolute vs. intensity targets for Land Footprint Reduction.

Aspect	Absolute target	Intensity target
Weight (e.g., kg or t)	Simpler to calculate and communicate.	Can be more complex to calculate and communicate. If targets are differentiated by geography or commodity in future versions, it would increase complexity but could also introduce clarity about where there are yield gaps and sustainable intensification opportunities.
Spend or sales (e.g., US$)	Clear link; company can say it is reducing land pressures in line with global goal.	Needs additional step to convert into absolute target and link to global goal.
Kilocalories	A company could hit an absolute target by reducing agricultural production; if not made up in efficiency elsewhere then other actors' agricultural land footprints could expand.	A company could hit an intensity target even while its absolute land footprint continues to increase.
Protein	Bias toward large producers and purchasers; unfair for small landowners; unfair for small companies producing less-land-intensive products (similar to SBTi for absolute GHG emissions).	Can accommodate both large and small producers and purchasers; could be more appropriate for companies based in the Global South.
Combined nutrient quality metric or index	No guarantee that the company will be "doing its fair share" of contribution to global productivity growth; targets can be met for wrong reason (business failure).	Company "does its fair share" of contribution to global productivity growth, regardless of its size and projected business growth.
Risk of unintended consequences for nature (note: the risk mitigated through the No Conversion of Natural Ecosystems and Landscape Engagement targets)	Could incentivize unsustainable agricultural intensification; safeguards needed (company must also set SBTi FLAG climate and SBTN water targets; future SBTN Land targets could include soil health); could disincentivize forms of agriculture that are lower yielding but have lower local environmental impacts.	Could incentivize unsustainable agricultural intensification; safeguards needed (company must also set SBTi FLAG climate and SBTN water targets; future SBTN Land targets could include soil health); could disincentivize forms of agriculture that are lower yielding but have lower local environmental impacts.

Annex 3: Introduction to thresholds

Defining what nature needs in a given location, both in terms of avoiding further ecosystem degradation and loss, as well as defining how much is enough when it comes to restoration actions and interventions needed to support the system in returning to a stable state and resuming proper functioning, is a critical question. SBTN aims to answer it by identifying ecological thresholds for land.

Understanding land system thresholds is a key part of defining the level of ambition of science-based targets for land. Identifying land system thresholds is similar to aligning climate targets with 1.5°C, which is widely regarded as the safer upper limit of climate change, beyond which its catastrophic impacts will increase. However, unlike global climate targets, when it comes to nature targets, place matters. SBTN Land targets therefore must be place-based, spatially explicit, and relevant to the geographic areas where companies operate or source from.

A full characterization of the full, detailed methodological approach underpinning this work is currently available as a preprint (Rogan et al., in prep). A dataset interface via an API tool also provides companies with a resource that can assist them in organizing relevant data and setting their Land targets. Within the SBTN data submission template SBTN has automated the population of relevant ecoregion threshold values associated with production or sourcing areas. This section describes the relevant process of integrating and using thresholds to support Land targets, rather than duplicating the full methodology for generating thresholds that are detailed in (Rogan et al., in prep).

Using the precautionary principle to inform threshold integration and support target ambition

There are a few cases where the definition of a reliable threshold for a particular indicator and ecoregion using the SBTN modeling approach may not be possible. In these instances, indicator-specific ecoregional thresholds are derived from peer-reviewed resources on critical thresholds or limits to guide the ambition of the land quality targets (specifically here for Target 2, Land Quality). There are several reasons why it was not possible to generate a threshold, including:

1. A simple, a detectable threshold or non-linear relationship detected between a particular indicator variable and the ecosystem stability variable for a specific ecoregion does not exist;

2. The ecoregion in question was determined to be too small for reliable inference (<1,000 km2), part of Antarctica, or hyper arid (AI <0.05 on aridity index) and was precluded prior to model analysis;

3. The best available global layers used for the indicators are missing too many data points for a specific ecoregion for a reliable inference of thresholds in the models (e.g., high levels of uncertainty) or potentially unable to pick up a threshold, if present, due to too many data gaps in that ecoregion.

Further details on this process are included in (Rogan et al., in prep).

SAFE DISTANCE 10% TARGET BUFFER

Target values are based on integrating a 10% buffer around threshold values. While guidance on the exact distance to set nature targets based on critical thresholds is limited, this buffer is integrated to ensure that targets are set a safe distance from threshold points for Land Quality indicators following best practice for setting targets based on ecological thresholds. This buffer distance is at the safer end of the 5–10% buffer range. For soil organic carbon (SOC), the target is set at 10% above the SOC threshold, and for both acidification and soil erosion, the target is set at 10% below the threshold.

Annex 4: Introduction to Land Environmental Assessment Factors

Land Environmental Assessment Factors (LEAFs) are numerical factors that help translate companies' activities, including their operations and purchases of products and services, into different environmental indicators and impacts, by using the elementary flows (e.g., land use, emissions) collected for the company inventory. LEAFs represent the state of a specific land quality indicator (such as SOC or soil erosion), or the unit impact of a specific category (such as terrestrial acidification), for each relevant elementary flow. They are based on life-cycle assessment characterization factors (CFs), which are calculated through characterization models.

One of the most common sets of CFs is used to calculate products or corporate carbon footprints. In this case, the elementary flows are GHGs emitted or captured from the atmosphere, measured in kilograms of carbon dioxide equivalent (kg CO_2e). Each GHG has a different characterization factor depending on its global warming potential compared to carbon dioxide. For example, 1 kg of carbon dioxide emitted to the atmosphere has a characterization factor equal to 1 kg of CO_2-eq., as it is used as a reference, but 1 kg of methane (CH_4) from fossil fuel combustion has a substantially higher value, depending on the time horizon and source used.

CFs for other indicators related to emissions are usually calculated similarly to climate change CFs. Terrestrial acidification follows a similar process but with SO_2 as the reference, being used as the basis for terrestrial acidification LEAFs. Land use impacts characterization factors follow a different approach, comparing the state of different indicators under a natural land use and a different one, and this cannot be compared to thresholds. LEAFs for SOC and soil erosion represent the estimated indicator state for a given land use in a specific ecoregion, enabling direct comparison against ecoregional thresholds.

How are LEAFs used within these target-setting guidelines

Three land quality categories have been added to Target 2—Working Land Regeneration and Restoration: SOC, soil erosion, and terrestrial acidification. Companies that need to set the Working Land Regeneration and Restoration target can use LEAFs to estimate their contribution toward each impact category, following the process described in AGILE Chapter 5. A summary of each impact category and data needed is given in **Table 16**.

LEAFs can also help companies estimate how much each response option could help them achieve Target 2. LEAFs are available for a specific set of land use types, land management practices, and ecoregions. Companies are encouraged to follow AGILE to derive compliant land quality indicators estimates when their own set of practices or land use types are not available.

Table 16: Summary of Land Quality indicators and data requirements.

	Soil Organic Carbon	Soil Erosion	Terrestrial Acidification
Description	SOC stock per ha in 2030 a land use can reach on a given ecoregion if maintained long-term	Annual soil erosion rate per ha of land use on a given ecoregion can lead to	Change in acidity in the soil due to a change in acid deposition coming from nitrogen and sulfur emissions
Unit of measurement	metric t C/ha	metric t soil/ha/year	kg SO2-eq./kg
Data needed	Land use and duration by location and intensity (ha*yr)	Land use and duration by location and intensity (ha*yr)	Emissions of NH3, NOx, and SOx (kg)
Granularity	Ecoregion, Sub-country, Country	Ecoregion, Sub-country, Country	Ecoregion, Sub-country, Country

Annex 5: Natural Land Cover

a. Natural Land Cover compliance tracks—scenario guidance

This annex sets out the full guidance for applying the three natural land cover (NLC) compliance tracks (A, B, and C) across the four scenarios that arise from combining production unit (PU) and 1 km² grid cell NLC, relative to the 25% threshold. It also specifies the eligible practices for Track C and the annual reporting requirements. For the summary compliance matrix see Table 17 below.

TABLE 17: SCENARIO-TRACK SELECTION MATRIX

The four scenarios are defined by the combination of PU NLC and 1 km² grid cell NLC relative to the 25% per km² threshold. Scale 1 (PU ≥ 1 km²) is assessed at the PU scale only; for Scale 1 the Grid column does not apply. Scale 2 (PU < 1 km²) requires assessment at both scales and the full 2×2 matrix logic applies.

Table 17: Scenario-track selection matrix

	Track A Spatial NLC	**Track B** Landscape Engagement	**Track C** Practice-Based
Scenario 1 PU ≥25% Grid ≥25% *Lowest priority*	Maintenance at PU scale *(required)*	Optional *(supplementary)*	Optional *(supplementary)*
Scenario 2 PU ≥25% Grid <25% *Low-medium*	Maintenance at PU scale *(required)*	**Improvement** *(recommended)*	Optional *(supplementary)*
Scenario 3 PU <25% Grid ≥25% *Medium*	**Improvement** *(required)*	Optional *(supplementary)*	**Improvement** *(required if Track A is unfeasible)*
Scenario 4 PU <25% Grid <25% *Highest priority*	**Improvement** *(required)*	**Improvement** *(recommended)*	**Improvement** *(required if Track A is unfeasible)*

Scenarios 1–2: Connectivity guidance applies—companies are encouraged to assess opportunities to enhance ecological connectivity between NLC elements within and beyond the production unit.

Scenario 3: Healthy landscape context with high levels of natural land cover. Track C is strongly applicable from Year 1 as incremental habitat creation practices (margins, hedgerows, grassland conversion) to enhance NLC levels within production unit.

Scenario 4: Track B strongly recommended (Recommendation T2.5). Track C required when Track A is not feasible; heightened scrutiny at validation.

b. Track C: Eligible practices and annual reporting

Practice-based NLC pathway for scenarios where spatial detection lags behind on-the-ground action.

Eligible practices (illustrative, non-exhaustive)

All practices must meet the three conditions set out below. The following are illustrative examples:

a. **Field margins:** Permanent uncultivated margins (≥2 m width) managed for native vegetation; no cultivation, pesticide application, or fertilizer inputs.

b. **Hedgerows:** Planting or restoration, including native woody species mixes consistent with regional biodiversity standards.

c. **Wetland features:** Creation or restoration of in-field or adjacent features (ditch widening, scrapes, buffer ponds) of defined minimum area.

d. **Semi-natural grassland:** Conversion from cultivated grassland; cessation of reseeding, drainage, and synthetic inputs; documented species-recovery trajectory.

e. **Agroforestry:** Tree or shrub component creating a defined minimum cover of woody semi-natural habitat integrated into the production unit.

f. **Rewilding parcels:** Permanent rewilding of marginal or unproductive parcels; cessation of all cultivation; management plan for natural succession.

THREE CONDITIONS

1. Documented causal pathway to (semi-) natural habitat
2. Additionality from the management baseline
3. Spatial attribution to the production unit in scope

ANNUAL REPORTING

Companies electing Track C for one or more production units must submit at annual reporting:

i. **Practice register—**practice type, georeferenced location, area or linear extent, establishment date, management commitment period, and the agri-environmental standard or peer-reviewed source substantiating the causal pathway.

ii. **NLC-equivalent area**—using a nationally recognized conversion factor where available, or a disclosed conservative methodology reviewed at validation.

iii. **Detection gap statement—**explaining why the Natural Lands Map does not yet register the practice change.

iv. **Maintenance confirmation**—annual confirmation that the practice is maintained.

⚠ **Reversal rule**
Practices reversed before spatial verification is achieved are treated retroactively as if no Track C credit had been earned, and the trajectory record is adjusted accordingly.

Grounding: *The SBTN/AGILE definition of "regenerate"—"actions designed within existing land uses to increase the biophysical function and/or ecological productivity of an ecosystem"—explicitly encompasses Track C eligible practices. The AGILE response options framework already recognizes that practice changes preceding detectable inventory changes can be credited against land quality targets; Track C applies the same logic to the NLC indicator.*

Annex 6: The relationship between the Landscape Engagement target and other Land, Climate, Freshwater, and Ocean targets

All SBTN Land targets are designed to work together to incentivize the action and engagement that companies will implement to contribute to regional and global nature goals. Companies that engage in material landscapes will avoid the conversion of natural ecosystems in line with Target 1 and Approach 2 for their Landscape Engagement target. Companies required to set a Working Land Regeneration and Restoration target (Target 2) will link land taken out of production with the broader landscape goals defined by landscape initiatives in which they engage.

Landscape Engagement and Target 1: No Conversion of Natural Ecosystems

Engaging in landscape initiatives through collective actions will help companies to achieve Target 1. Landscape engagement is widely recognized as a key success factor for tackling deforestation and conversion of natural ecosystems by addressing local drivers of conversion, driving collective action, ensuring that efforts to halt conversion also deliver outcomes for local communities and biodiversity, while reducing the risk of leakage.

Landscape Engagement and Target 2: Working Land Regeneration and Restoration

Companies setting a Land Footprint Reduction and a Natural Land Cover target must appropriately balance the need to use land more efficiently with the need to avoid unsustainable forms of agricultural intensification that would reduce the ecological integrity of the landscape. Landscape engagement offers a framework for collective action in which land freed up to meet a Land Footprint Reduction target is used to advance broader nature and climate goals.

The Land Quality target (under Target 2) is focused on direct operations; however, a company's supply chain is also likely to have an impact on soil organic carbon depletion, soil erosion, and terrestrial acidification. Landscape engagement offers a framework for companies to collectively engage in activities and actions at the landscape scale that demonstrate effective strategies and deliver positive change on the ground.

Landscape Engagement and Climate targets

The proliferation of corporate climate commitments is a positive step toward addressing climate change, but often lacks the system-level, holistic objectives that would make such commitments truly transformational. Such commitments are increasingly transactional and tend to prioritize efficiency and scale instead of diversity and intent. The integration of climate and nature target-setting would help "course correct" science-based target setting to ensure that holistic place-based approaches are preferred over the current "race to the bottom" approach of carbon credits. Nature targets require a diversity of approaches to match the diversity of people, plants, and animals that define a place and what both people and nature need. A Landscape Engagement target brings business into collaborative relationships with other actors within their supply chains or operational landscapes to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes for climate mitigation, food security, land degradation neutrality, and biodiversity conservation.

The current field of climate-only targets tends to prioritize technological solutions over effective nature-based solutions. They also tend to value intensive over extensive management and additional corporate focus on nature targets and landscape engagement will balance these concerns. Carbon capture technologies will be promising, but all pathways to a climate- and nature-stable future rely on improving the ecological productivity of degraded and converted natural land.

SBTN's Land targets will support the achievement of climate targets. By integrating climate and nature at the same target-setting level, approaches that assess trade-offs and find optimal solutions for corporate investments are incentivized. The Landscape Engagement target will help ensure that activities such as restoration, even if undertaken primarily for climate objectives, are linked with what both nature and people need in a specific landscape.

Relationship with Freshwater targets

The Landscape Engagement target can complement the SBTN Freshwater target-setting process. If a company plans to set a Landscape Engagement target in the same basin where it is using a local approach to set Freshwater Quantity/Quality targets, it should first follow the necessary steps for setting a Freshwater target. Stakeholder engagement is a critical part of ensuring the model and threshold chosen are appropriate and compatible with corporate data, and it therefore strongly aligns with several requirements of the Landscape Engagement target. Additionally, the Freshwater Step 3 V2.0 Technical Guidance asks companies to set Landscape Engagement targets on reducing pesticide impacts on freshwater ecosystems. Combining Land and Pesticide Engagement targets is strongly encouraged and requires the explicit consideration of metrics and outcomes related to pesticide freshwater impact reduction (Refer to Freshwater Step 3: Measure, Set, & Disclose V2.0 for further details).

Relationship with Ocean targets

The Landscape Engagement target can also form a part of the SBTN Ocean target-setting process. The Ocean target-setting guidance (March 2025) includes a seascape engagement roadmap, built on the Landscape Engagement Roadmap, intended to be closely aligned for ease of use. Companies with land-based aquaculture, or that use aquaculture feed derived from agricultural products, may need to set Land and/or Freshwater targets. Where Landscape Engagement initiatives intersect with coastal or wetland areas, companies should understand and address the intersectionality of challenges and opportunities that affect land, freshwater, and oceans.

Annex 7: Landscape Engagement Roadmap

Companies must prepare the Landscape Engagement Roadmap as a formal document to facilitate implementation and to support future audits. Therefore, it should be presented as such during validation. SBTN validators will check the completeness of all items. At this stage, validators will not be able to provide a standardized judgment on the integrity or quality of the information submitted by the company. The roadmap does not necessarily need to provide evidence against all of the requirements but it should show the intent to achieve them before the target date.

Specifically for **scenario 1**, the Landscape Engagement Roadmap information needs to be comprehensive in showing the structure and governance, but most importantly, it needs to document how the company plans to contribute to improvements in ecological and social conditions.

For **scenario 2**, the roadmap information needs to include details of how governance and structure of the initiative will be improved in order to meet the key criteria to achieve ecological and social conditions.

In **scenario 3**, for a current initiative, the roadmap information needs to include all the steps the company will take to meet the key criteria. For a new initiative, the roadmap needs to include the steps the company is taking to set it up and meet the key criteria.



Table 18: Landscape Engagement Roadmap.

Information	Scenario	Details	Desired outcome
Actions and timelines (across key criteria)	1, 2	Documentation with list and description of actions and/or investments the company has made and is making, together with: Expected outcome for each action/investment. Timeline to measure progress.	Collective action plan showing how the company intends to improve ecological and social conditions in the landscape.
	3	Documentation with list and description of actions and/or investments the company has made and is making, together with: Expected outcome for each action/investment. Timeline to measure progress.	Documentation showing how the company is planning to establish the initiative, create the structure, and improve to meet the key criteria.
Funding for actions (across key criteria)	1, 2	Explanation and quantification of investments and funding supporting the implementation of any investments the company is making in improving the landscape initiative overall.	Financial plan for the landscape.
	3	Explanation and quantification of investments and funding supporting the implementation of any investments the company is making in improving the landscape initiative overall.	A financial plan for the landscape within 6–12 months
Landscape selection (Key criteria 1)	1, 2	Clear description of how material landscapes have been selected, based on Approach 1 or Approach 2 from the Land guidance.	Company engages in a landscape or jurisdiction where it is well placed to have positive impacts.
	3	Clear description of how the company has selected the location where the initiative will be established.	Company selects a landscape or jurisdiction where it is well placed to have positive impacts.
Landscape selection—additional (Key criteria 1)	1, 2, 3	Additional description of selection of landscapes based on: Current or future sourcing risks. Priority issues or regions for the company's broader strategy. Existence of other collective action initiatives. The company's potential to drive positive outcomes beyond its supply chain. Regulatory environment.	Company engages in a landscape or jurisdiction where it is well placed to have positive impacts.
Stakeholder engagement (Key criteria 2)	1, 2	Documentation showing: Evidence that an adequate assessment of needs of local communities has taken place with stakeholder consultation. Stakeholder map, with key stakeholders. Documentation of formal support of stakeholders for the company's involvement in the landscape collective action plan.	Key stakeholders in the jurisdiction, including local government and producing enterprises, are actively engaged and committed to any action plans and their stated outcomes.
	3	Documentation showing: Plan for assessment of needs of local communities. Plan for stakeholder mapping.	Plan on how the company intends to engage key stakeholders in the landscape/jurisdiction.
Stakeholder engagement (Key criteria 2)	1, 2, 3	Evidence that corporate actions are aligned with community needs and objectives.	

Information	Scenario	Details	Desired outcome
Governance **(Key criteria 2)**	1	Documentation showing: Formal collaboration agreements (e.g., memorandums of understanding). Governance structure.	Clear and transparent operating procedures define the legal standing of the initiative and the governance roles, responsibilities, and decision-making for different stakeholders in that initiative.
	2	Documentation showing how the company plans to support a governance structure to meet the key criteria: Formal collaboration agreements (e.g., memorandums of understanding). Governance structure.	Clear and transparent operating procedures define the legal standing of the initiative and the governance roles, responsibilities, and decision-making for different stakeholders in that initiative.
	3	Documentation showing how the company plans to create the governance structure to meet the key criteria: Formal collaboration agreements (e.g., memorandums of understanding). Governance structure.	Clear and transparent operating procedures define the legal standing of the initiative and the governance roles, responsibilities, and decision-making for different stakeholders in that initiative.
Governance **(Key criteria 2)**	1, 2, 3	Documents showing: Terms of reference and membership of governance bodies. Operating procedures/codes of conduct. Dispute resolution and grievance processes.	
Goals and linkages **(Key criteria 3)**	1, 2, 3	Documentation showing details of the theory of change, with intended outputs of the actions and steps by which those outputs will lead to positive landscape outcomes. A context assessment that determines: Who is doing what. Critical risks and their root causes. Levers of change. Priority actions.	Company communicates how it is supporting the achievement of landscape objectives and how it monitors its investments and impacts.
Unintended consequences and safeguards **(Key criteria 3)**	1, 2	Assessment of unintended negative consequences of proposed actions. Implementation plan for environmental and social safeguards.	An effective landscape initiative should act on multiple objectives, addressing sustainable production, human wellbeing, and landscape conservation.
	3	Assessment of unintended negative consequences of proposed actions. Implementation plan for environmental and social safeguards.	An assessment and implementation plan within 6–12 months:
Metrics and indicators **(Key criteria 3)**	1, 2	Selection of a set of metrics that are suitable to measure both progress and impact of planned actions, and improvement in ecological and social conditions at landscape scale. Calculation of the baseline corresponding to each indicator. The list of metrics can be selected from the proposed list of metrics in the guidance (ecological and social conditions), Table 11, or from other sources. Justification for the use of each metric must be provided.	A framework is in place to monitor performance improvements in the landscape, in conjunction with the capacity to manage and analyze the data and accurately communicate the results.

Information	Scenario	Details	Desired outcome
	3	Selection of a set of metrics that are suitable to measure both progress and impact of planned actions at the landscape level. Calculation of the baseline corresponding to each indicator. The list of metrics can be selected from the proposed list of metrics in the guidance (ecological and social conditions), Table 11, or from other sources. Justification for the use of each metric has to be provided.	A framework is in place to monitor performance improvements in the landscape, in conjunction with the capacity to manage and analyze the data and accurately communicate the results.
Data sources **(Key criteria 3)**	1, 2	Developing a list of data sources used to derive the baseline values of each of the selected metric and indicator. This can include primary and secondary sources.	
	3	Developing a list of data sources used to derive the baseline values of each of the selected metric and indicator. This can include primary and secondary sources.	Within 6-12 months, compile a list of data sources used to derive the baseline values of each of the selected metrics and indicators. This can include primary and secondary sources.
Transparency **(Key criteria 4)**	1, 2, 3	Information on the structure, agreements, financing, and actions of the initiative are publicly and easily accessible.	
Data management system **(Key criteria 4)**	1, 2	Documentation showing how the company, in the landscape initiative, has in place data governance systems and protocols to credibly gather, store, analyze, and use the data collected in the landscape initiative.	
	3	Documentation showing how the company is creating data governance systems and protocols to credibly gather, store, analyze, and use the data collected in the landscape initiative.	Documentation showing how the company is creating data governance systems and protocols to credibly gather, store, analyze, and use the data collected in the landscape initiative. Within 6-12 months, documentation showing how the company, in the landscape initiative, has in place data governance systems and protocols to credibly gather, store, analyze, and use the data collected in the landscape initiative. Note, the most important component of this roadmap requirements relates to the protection of sensitive data.
Reporting progress **(Criteria 4)**	1, 2	Clear reporting framework and strategy for communicating accessible information about results, partners, and future actions on a regular and recurring basis.	
	3	Clear reporting framework and strategy for communicating accessible information about results, partners, and future actions on a regular and recurring basis.	Within 6-12 months, evidence of a clear reporting framework and strategy.

Implementation and validation guidance

Companies must prepare the Landscape Engagement Roadmap as a formal document to facilitate implementation and in the future enable audits. Therefore, it should be presented as such during validation.

SBTN validators (The Accountability Accelerator[22]) will check the completeness for all items.

At this stage validators will not be able to provide a standardized judgment on the integrity or quality of the information submitted by the company. This will help the SBTN Land Hub develop more precise evaluation criteria in future iterations of SBTN's Land methods.

22 Accountability Accelerator - https://accountabilityaccelerator.org/

Annex 8: Summary of requirements and recommendations

Introduction

This section provides a consolidated reference of all requirements and recommendations for the Introduction. Requirements are mandatory for target validation. Recommendations represent best practice and are strongly encouraged by SBTN.

Requirements are indicated in brown; recommendations are indicated in green.

Table 19: Summary of overall requirements and recommendations when setting Land targets.

No.	Type	Title	Summary	Section	Applies to
L.1	**REQUIREMENT**	**Material Land targets and simultaneous target setting**	Set all Land targets identified as material in Step 1: Assess. No material headline Land target may be omitted, and all targets must be worked on simultaneously, although target dates may differ. Where Target 2 is material upstream and location data are insufficient, a Supplier Engagement target must be set.	Intro	All companies
L.2	**REQUIREMENT**	**Target boundary scope and alignment with Steps 1 and 2**	Define a target boundary aligned with the outcomes of Step 1: Assess and Step 2: Interpret & Prioritize, covering all activities for which land pressures are material in Step 1a. Upstream Target 1 boundaries must cover at least 90% of sourced conversion-driving commodity volumes and 100% of EUDR volumes, with exclusions disclosed and a time-bound plan to bring them into scope.	Intro	All companies
L.3	**REQUIREMENT**	**Target 1 applicability**	Set a No Conversion of Natural Ecosystems target where land pressures are material in Step 1a, or where 20% or more of GHG emissions come from land sector activities. For MICE sectors the target is required but applies only to Core Natural Lands.	Intro	Companies with material land pressures or FLAG-qualifying emissions
L.4	**REQUIREMENT**	**Target 2 applicability**	Set a Working Land Regeneration and Restoration target when land pressures are material in Step 1a (materiality screening).	Intro	Companies with material land pressures
L.5	**REQUIREMENT**	**Target 3 applicability**	Set a Landscape Engagement target when land pressures are material in Step 1a (materiality screening).	Intro	Companies with material land pressures
L.6	**REQUIREMENT**	**Use of AGILE**	Use SBTN's Accounting Guidelines for Impacts on Land Use and the Environment (AGILE) alongside this technical guidance to calculate baselines and footprints and to prepare targets for third-party validation.	Intro	All companies setting Land targets
Rec. L.1	**RECOMMENDATION**	**Climate target alignment**	Complement Land targets with a target for land-based GHG emissions and removals, in line with the SBTi forest, land, and agriculture (FLAG) methodology requirements.	Intro	FLAG-qualifying companies
Rec. L.2	**RECOMMENDATION**	**Reciprocal FLAG alignment**	Companies required by SBTi to set FLAG climate targets are recommended by SBTN to set all three SBTN Land targets.	Intro	FLAG-qualifying companies
Rec. L.3	**RECOMMENDATION**	**Beyond Value Chain Voluntary Landscape Engagement**	Companies for which land pressures are not material in Step 1 may validate Landscape Engagement targets and align with science-based targets for Land without setting Target 1 or Target 2.	Intro	All companies

Target 1: No Conversion of Natural Ecosystems

This annex provides a consolidated reference of all requirements and recommendations for Target 1. Requirements are mandatory for target validation. Recommendations represent best practice and are strongly encouraged by SBTN.

Requirements are indicated in brown; recommendations are indicated in green.

Table 20: Summary of requirements and recommendations for setting Target 1.

No.	Type	Title	Summary	Section	Applies to
T1.1	**REQUIREMENT**	**No conversion commitment**	Commit to no conversion from the cutoff date and achieve full DCF status by the target date.	1.1	All companies
T1.2	**REQUIREMENT**	**Cutoff date**	Apply a cutoff date no later than 2020; earlier existing dates must be retained.	1.1	All companies
T1.3	**REQUIREMENT**	**Target date commitment and disclosure**	Publish DCF target date per value chain segment; disclose rationale and pathway where target dates cannot be met.	1.1	All companies
T1.4	**REQUIREMENT**	**Coverage of direct operations; conversion-driving commodities**	Cover all direct operations and all conversion impacts for high-impact commodities within the target boundary.	1.1	All companies
T1.5	**REQUIREMENT**	**Accounting for conversion**	Account for LUC using the production unit assessment or sourcing area assessment method (see AGILE Ch. 4).	1.1	All companies
T1.6	**REQUIREMENT**	**De minimis— producers and site operators**	Clearing < 5% of production unit / 20 ha (whichever stricter) is not considered conversion; assessed cumulatively.	1.1	Producers, site owners/operators
T1.7	**REQUIREMENT**	**De minimis— downstream companies**	Downstream companies remain compliant where ≥95% of purchased commodity volume per year is conversion-free.	1.1	Downstream sourcing companies
T1.8	**REQUIREMENT**	**Use of the SBTN Natural Lands Map**	Use the SBTN Natural Lands Map to identify natural ecosystems and estimate conversion since cutoff date.	1.2.1	Standard pathway companies
T1.9	**REQUIREMENT**	**Baseline land cover comparison**	Identify conversion at production unit level using land cover change data from cutoff year to Year 0.	1.2.1	Producers, site owners/operators
T1.10	**REQUIREMENT**	**Traceability and sourcing area mapping**	Map value chain and establish traceability for all conversion-driving commodity volumes.	1.2.1	Upstream sourcing companies
T1.11	**REQUIREMENT**	**Upstream sourcing from MICE sectors**	Companies sourcing commodities extracted or produced by MICE sector companies must ensure no Core Natural Land areas are converted.	1.2.1	Upstream sourcing companies
T1.12	**REQUIREMENT**	**MICE pathway: no conversion in critical areas**	Commit to no conversion in Critical Habitat, HCV areas, KBAs, Protected Areas, and likely Critical Habitat.	1.2.2	MICE pathway companies
T1.13	**REQUIREMENT**	**MICE pathway: target date and disclosure**	Company-defined planning horizon; disclose earliest achievable date, not surpassing 2050; justify dates beyond 2040	1.2.2	MICE pathway companies
T1.14	**REQUIREMENT**	**MICE pathway: no viable alternatives**	Demonstrate that viable alternatives to conversion of Core Natural Lands have been exhausted before any conversion occurs.	1.2.2	MICE pathway companies

No.	Type	Title	Summary	Section	Applies to
T1.15	**REQUIREMENT**	**MICE pathway: remediation and restoration**	Remediate and/or compensate for any conversion of Core Natural Lands that occurred between 2030 and the achievement of the No Conversion target.	1.2.2	MICE pathway companies
T1.16	**REQUIREMENT**	**Target validation submission**	Submit defined data and documentation to SBTN, including sector classification, commodity lists, target dates, and compliance methods.	1.3	All companies
Rec. T1.1	**RECOMMENDATION**	**Alignment of cutoff dates**	Align cutoff dates with existing sectoral or regional dates; all must be no later than 2020.	1.1	All companies
Rec T1.2	**RECOMMENDATION**	**Annual interim milestones**	Publish year-on-year progress milestones and quantified non-DCF commodity volumes.	1.1	All companies
Rec. T1.3	**RECOMMENDATION**	**Annual monitoring of conversion**	Account for conversion annually; only allocate conversion for years with supply chain data available.	1.1	All companies
Rec. T1.4	**RECOMMENDATION**	**Remediation and restoration**	Remediate and restore converted natural ecosystems, following AFi Operational Guidance.	1.1	All companies
Rec T1.5	**RECOMMENDATION**	**Consider local rights**	When setting No Conversion targets, companies should consider local rights.	1.1	All companies
Rec. T1.6	**RECOMMENDATION**	**MICE: strategic environmental assessment**	Perform a strategic environmental assessment ahead of target-setting.	1.2.2	MICE pathway companies
Rec T1.7	**RECOMMENDATION**	**MICE maximizing biodiversity potential**	Interim biodiversity improvement and management strategies.	1.2.2	MICE pathway companies
Rec. T1.8	**RECOMMENDATION**	**Annual progress reporting**	Publish annual progress reports including non-DCF volumes, traceability breakdowns, hotspot coverage, and data gap rationale.	1.3	All companies

Target 2: Working Land Regeneration and Restoration

This annex provides a consolidated reference of all requirements and recommendations for Target 2. Requirements are mandatory for target validation. Recommendations represent best practice and are strongly encouraged by SBTN.

Requirements are indicated in brown; recommendations are indicated in green.

Table 21: Summary of requirements and recommendations for setting Target 2

No.	Type	Title	Summary	Section	Applies to
T2.1	REQUIREMENT	**Applicability**	Set a Working Land Regeneration and Restoration target when land pressures are material in Step 1a (materiality screening).	2.1	All companies
T2.2	REQUIREMENT	**Minimum target components**	Set at least one Land Area target or at least one Land Quality target.	2.1	All companies
T2.3	REQUIREMENT	**Direct Operations target applicability**	Companies whose direct operations account for less than 5% of their land footprint and/or material land quality indicators may not set Land Area targets.	2.1	All companies
T2.4	REQUIREMENT	**Land Area target selection for non-agricultural companies**	Companies required to set Target 2 that do not have material links to agriculture may not set a Land Footprint Reduction target.	2.2.1	Non-agricultural companies
T2.5	REQUIREMENT	**Direct operations with mixed production unit types**	Where a company has a mix of production unit types in its direct operations, the units subject to the Natural Land Cover target are determined by the scope conditions in Requirement T2.7 and the in-scope selection in Requirement T2.11. Each case is assessed individually during target validation..	2.2.1	All companies
T2.6	REQUIREMENT	**Production unit assignment for Land Area targets**	Companies with material links to agriculture may assign individual production units to the Natural Land Cover or the Land Footprint Reduction target.	2.2.1	Agricultural companies electing both targets
T2.7	REQUIREMENT	**Natural Land Cover scope and exclusions**	The Natural Land Cover target applies to production units whose primary ISIC classification falls under Section A (Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing) or Section B (Mining and Quarrying) and which meet the stated conditions. Units classified under other sections are out of scope.	2.2.2	All companies (NLC)
T2.8	REQUIREMENT	**Spatial data requirement for Natural Land Cover**	Use spatial data (points or polygons) for each production unit in direct operations or known upstream sourcing. Where such data are not available, collect them before setting the target. Production units exceeding 5 ha should be reported as polygons, not points.	2.2.2	All companies (NLC)
T2.9	REQUIREMENT	**Base year for Natural Land Cover**	The chosen base year must be no earlier than 2020, as this is the base year of the SBTN Natural Lands Map.	2.2.2	All companies (NLC)
T2.10	REQUIREMENT	**Target duration for Natural Land Cover**	The target must span a minimum of five years and a maximum of ten years from the date it is submitted to SBTN for official validation.	2.2.2	All companies (NLC)

No.	Type	Title	Summary	Section	Applies to
T2.11	REQUIREMENT	**Thresholds for in-scope Natural Land Cover production units**	Identify the subset of total production units that are in scope for the Natural Land Cover target. Selection is informed by the size and number of production units identified and ranked in Step 2c, and selected units must meaningfully address the company's land cover impact.	2.2.2	All companies (NLC)
T2.12	REQUIREMENT	**Determine the applicable Natural Land Cover pathway**	Determine which spatial scale applies to each production unit based on its area: Scale 1 for units of 1 km² or greater; Scale 2 for units of less than 1 km².	2.2.2	All companies (NLC)
T2.13	REQUIREMENT	**Calculate baseline natural land cover: Scale 1**	Calculate the percentage of natural and semi-natural land cover within each production unit using the SBTN Natural Lands Map or an equivalent data source. This constitutes the production unit natural land cover baseline (see AGILE Chapter 5).	2.2.2	All companies (NLC — Scale 1)
T2.14	REQUIREMENT	**Set the Natural Land Cover target: Scale 1**	Where natural and semi-natural land cover is below 25% per km², set a target to increase it to at least 25% per km² by the target year. Where it is at or above 25% per km², set a target to maintain it at or above the baseline.	2.2.2	All companies (NLC — Scale 1)
T2.15	REQUIREMENT	**Calculate baseline natural land cover at two scales: Scale 2**	Calculate the percentage of natural and semi-natural land cover at both the 1 km² landscape scale associated with the centered production unit and the production unit scale. Both constitute the baseline.	2.2.2	All companies (NLC — Scale 2)
T2.16	REQUIREMENT	**Set the Natural Land Cover target: Scale 2**	Apply the 25% per km² threshold at both spatial scales and set the target at production unit level: increase where cover is below 25% at both scales; increase (recommended) or maintain where the 1 km² cell is at or above 25% but the production unit is below; maintain at or above the baseline where the production unit is at or above 25%.	2.2.2	All companies (NLC — Scale 2)
T2.17	REQUIREMENT	**Validation submission for the Natural Land Cover target**	Submit ISIC sector classification(s), base-year footprints and areas of direct operations' production units, the applicable spatial scale for each unit with justification, baseline calculation details, and the target strategy.	2.2.2	All companies (NLC)
T2.18	REQUIREMENT	**Inclusion of all locations**	Include all locations and activities within the land target boundary to avoid leakage among locations. Prioritization under Step 2 may guide implementation, but all locations must be in scope in the first year targets are set.	2.2.3	Agricultural companies (LFR)
T2.19	REQUIREMENT	**Scope of agricultural land**	The target applies to all agricultural land—cropland and land under permanent meadows and pastures—used to produce goods a company sells or sources. Agricultural land not attributable to direct operations or upstream value chain activities must not be counted within the target boundary.	2.2.3	Agricultural companies (LFR)
T2.20	REQUIREMENT	**Selection of the target-setting approach**	Determine which of the two approaches applies: absolute land footprint reduction at a linear rate of 0.35% per year against the base year, or intensity land footprint reduction at a linear rate of 1% per year per kg of agricultural product produced.	2.2.3	Agricultural companies (LFR)
T2.21	REQUIREMENT	**Base year for Land Footprint Reduction**	The base year must be no earlier than 2015. It need not align with the cutoff date used for the No Conversion of Natural Ecosystems target; it is intended to align with existing climate targets.	2.2.3	Agricultural companies (LFR)

No.	Type	Title	Summary	Section	Applies to
T2.22	**REQUIREMENT**	**Target duration for Land Footprint Reduction**	Targets must span a minimum of five years and a maximum of ten years from the date they are submitted to SBTN for official validation.	2.2.3	Agricultural companies (LFR)
T2.23	**REQUIREMENT**	**Calculate the Land Footprint Reduction target**	Calculate the percentage reduction target using the preferred approach and the base and target years. Where the intensity approach is used, also express the target in absolute terms, projecting expected absolute change over the target period.	2.2.3	Agricultural companies (LFR)
T2.24	**REQUIREMENT**	**Recalculation of baseline land footprint**	In alignment with the GHG Protocol, recalculate the baseline land footprint where structural changes in the reporting organization, changes in calculation methods or data accuracy, or discovery of significant errors have a significant impact on the total land footprint.	2.2.3	Agricultural companies (LFR)
T2.25	**REQUIREMENT**	**Validation submission for the Land Footprint Reduction target**	Submit ISIC sector classification(s) for direct operations and upstream, number of employees (FTE), base-year agricultural land footprint, base-year activity amounts, calculation details, rationale, target strategy, and landscape overlap information.	2.2.3	Agricultural companies (LFR)
T2.26	**REQUIREMENT**	**Annual land footprint accounting and reporting**	Account for and report the agricultural land footprint annually, applying accounting methods consistently across the entire inventory, reporting direct operations and upstream separately, and disclosing data sources, methods, and assumptions.	2.2.3	Agricultural companies (LFR)
T2.27	**REQUIREMENT**	**Selection of Land Quality indicators for target setting**	Select indicators according to the Step 1b pressure indicators: where both land use/land use change and soil pollution are identified, select one or more of soil organic carbon, soil erosion, or terrestrial acidification; where only land use/land use change is identified, select soil organic carbon or soil erosion, or both; where only soil pollution is identified, select terrestrial acidification.	2.2.4	All companies (LQ)
T2.28	**REQUIREMENT**	**Selection of an Upstream Supply Chain approach**	Select either a Direct Operations approach or a Supplier Engagement Approach (Section 2.2.5) for each supplier with material land quality impacts. A Supplier Engagement target may be used only where place-based target setting is not feasible.	2.2.4	Companies with upstream agricultural sourcing
T2.29	**REQUIREMENT**	**Establish baseline Land Quality indicators**	Establish the baseline values for each selected land quality indicator in each production unit. These are the production unit land quality baselines.	2.2.4	All companies (LQ)
T2.30	**REQUIREMENT**	**Determine ecoregions**	Determine the ecoregion in which each production unit is situated following the Dinerstein et al. (2017) classification. Where a unit spans more than one ecoregion, assign the whole unit to the ecoregion representing its majority area.	2.2.4	All companies (LQ)
T2.31	**REQUIREMENT**	**Record ecoregion baseline, threshold, and target value**	Using the SBTN reference datasets, record the baseline, threshold, and target value for each selected land quality indicator across all in-scope production units (see AGILE Section 5.3).	2.2.4	All companies (LQ)
T2.32	**REQUIREMENT**	**Determine whether the ecoregion threshold value has been exceeded**	Compare the ecoregion's threshold value for each relevant land quality indicator with the respective ecoregion baseline to determine whether it has been exceeded.	2.2.4	All companies (LQ)

No.	Type	Title	Summary	Section	Applies to
T2.33	**REQUIREMENT**	**Determine threshold exceedance by company operations or sourcing**	For each production unit, compare the relevant ecoregion threshold value for each selected land quality indicator with the production unit baseline to determine whether the threshold has been exceeded.	2.2.4	All companies (LQ)
T2.34	**REQUIREMENT**	**Prioritization of ecoregions and production units**	Use Table 7 to independently assign priorities to each in-scope production unit and ecoregion for each selected land quality indicator.	2.2.4	All companies (LQ)
T2.35	**REQUIREMENT**	**Target duration for Land Quality**	Land Quality targets must span a minimum of five years and a maximum of ten years from the date they are submitted to SBTN for official validation.	2.2.4	All companies (LQ)
T2.36	**REQUIREMENT**	**Validation submission for Land Quality targets**	Submit ISIC sector classification(s), base-year production unit footprints and their ecoregions, details of any amalgamated production units, baseline values, threshold exceedance and priority classification per unit, and target values for First and Second Priority units.	2.2.4	All companies (LQ)
Rec. T2.1	**RECOMMENDATION**	**Upstream incorporation through Landscape Engagement**	Companies sourcing products from the ISIC categories listed in Table 6 may incorporate the land quality indicators into their Landscape Engagement target and address the main drivers of the land quality indicators identified as material.	2.1	Companies with upstream agricultural sourcing
Rec. T2.2	**RECOMMENDATION**	**Pursue both Land Area targets**	Pursue both the Natural Land Cover and Land Footprint Reduction targets where feasible, including through the production unit assignment approach, since each addresses a different dimension of land-related impact.	2.2.1	All companies
Rec. T2.3	**RECOMMENDATION**	**Natural Land Cover improvements at out-of-scope sites**	Improvements at out-of-scope sites may be implemented as part of broader nature commitments. Such improvements shall not be submitted for SBTN validation or form the basis of an SBTN claim, and shall be disclosed separately as voluntary, beyond-target actions.	2.2.2	All companies (NLC)
Rec. T2.4	**RECOMMENDATION**	**Increase targets for production units already above 25%: Scale 1**	Where natural and semi-natural land cover is at or above 25% per km^2, set a target to increase it beyond the baseline, further contributing to landscape-level ecological integrity.	2.2.2	All companies (NLC — Scale 1)
Rec. T2.5	**RECOMMENDATION**	**Phased improvement strategy across scales: Scale 2**	Where natural and semi-natural land cover is below 25% at both scales, develop a phased implementation strategy: near-term actions within the production unit, with medium-to-long-term engagement extended to the broader landscape through the Landscape Engagement target.	2.2.2	All companies (NLC — Scale 2)
Rec. T2.6	**RECOMMENDATION**	**Use of higher-resolution natural land cover data**	Where a company holds publicly accessible spatial natural land cover data of higher resolution or accuracy than the SBTN Natural Lands Map (30-meter resolution), these may be used instead to calculate the baseline under either pathway.	2.2.2	All companies (NLC)
Rec. T2.7	**RECOMMENDATION**	**Improve the quality of natural land cover data over time**	Improve the quality of land cover data collected over time, particularly for production units where the Natural Lands Map provides the only available baseline.	2.2.2	All companies (NLC)
Rec. T2.8	**RECOMMENDATION**	**Long-term Natural Land Cover targets**	Develop longer-term natural land cover targets (e.g., to 2050) in addition to the required near-term targets.	2.2.2	All companies (NLC)

No.	Type	Title	Summary	Section	Applies to
Rec. T2.9	**RECOMMENDATION**	**Step 2 prioritization for Natural Land Cover implementation**	Follow the SBTN Step 2: Interpret & Prioritize approach to guide implementation and achievement of the target, particularly when determining which production units to prioritize for restoration interventions.	2.2.2	All companies (NLC)
Rec. T2.10	**RECOMMENDATION**	**Selection of a representative base year**	Choose a base year representative of the company's typical activity. Years significantly affected by exceptional events should not be selected as a base year.	2.2.3	Agricultural companies (LFR)
Rec. T2.11	**RECOMMENDATION**	**Long-term Land Footprint Reduction targets**	Develop long-term targets (e.g., to 2050) in addition to the required near-term targets.	2.2.3	Agricultural companies (LFR)
Rec. T2.12	**RECOMMENDATION**	**Absolute targets for large consumer companies**	Absolute land footprint reduction targets are recommended for large consumer companies, such as retailers, given their greater ability to reduce their land footprint through demand-side measures.	2.2.3	Agricultural companies (LFR)
Rec. T2.13	**RECOMMENDATION**	**Accompany Land Footprint Reduction with Land Quality targets**	Set accompanying Land Quality targets for the same production units, to avoid unsustainable intensification and safeguard ecosystem function and resilience.	2.2.3	Agricultural companies (LFR)
Rec. T2.14	**RECOMMENDATION**	**Restoration of land through Landscape Engagement**	Consider modalities through which collective action under the Landscape Engagement target can contribute to restoring land removed from agricultural production under the Land Footprint Reduction target.	2.2.3	Agricultural companies (LFR)
Rec. T2.15	**RECOMMENDATION**	**Set targets for all material land quality indicators**	Set targets for all material land quality indicators — soil organic carbon, soil erosion, and terrestrial acidification — across all production units, to enable a comprehensive understanding of land quality pressures.	2.2.4	All companies (LQ)
Rec. T2.16	**RECOMMENDATION**	**Use a Direct Operations approach for upstream suppliers**	Follow a direct operations approach whenever sufficient production unit data are available.	2.2.4	Companies with upstream agricultural sourcing
Rec. T2.17	**RECOMMENDATION**	**Amalgamation of Production Units**	Companies with more than five production units per ISIC category in a single ecoregion may set an amalgamated target for those units. Primary land quality data must still be collected for each unit independently but may be averaged across the amalgamated set, weighted by land footprint.	2.2.4	All companies (LQ)
Rec. T2.18	**RECOMMENDATION**	**Maintenance targets for Third and Fourth Priority production units**	For Third Priority and Fourth Priority production units, set at minimum a land quality maintenance target at the current production unit baseline.	2.2.4	All companies (LQ)
Rec. T2.19	**RECOMMENDATION**	**Landscape and supply chain considerations for ecoregion selection**	Select landscapes traditionally linked to the supply chains of the largest inputs, as indicated by land footprint or purchasing volumes, and incorporate ecoregion thresholds into selection alongside other state-of-nature indicators.	2.2.4	All companies (LQ)
Rec. T2.20	**RECOMMENDATION**	**Long-term Land Quality targets**	Develop long-term Land Quality targets (e.g., to 2050) in addition to the required near-term targets.	2.2.4	All companies (LQ)

Target 3: Landscape Engagement

This annex provides a consolidated reference for all requirements and recommendations for Target 3. Requirements are mandatory for target validation. Recommendations represent best practice and are strongly encouraged by SBTN.

Requirements are indicated in brown; recommendations are indicated in green.

Table 22: Summary of requirements and recommendations for setting Target 3.

No.	Type	Title	Summary	Section	Applies to
T3.1	REQUIREMENT	**Minimum landscape coverage**	Engage in either one landscape initiative equivalent to at least 10% coverage of the company's estimated land impact area footprint, or two landscape initiatives, regardless of size, in materially relevant landscapes.	3.1	All companies setting Target 3
T3.2	REQUIREMENT	**Landscape selection approach**	Select landscapes using the two approved approaches for selecting material landscapes (see Section 3.2.1 for full criteria).	3.2.1	All companies setting Target 3
T3.3	REQUIREMENT	**Evaluation against key criteria**	Evaluate prioritized landscape initiatives against the four key criteria for validated landscape initiatives (Section 3.2.2).	3.2.2	All companies setting Target 3
T3.4	REQUIREMENT	**Commitment to substantial improvement**	Commit to a substantial improvement in ecological and social conditions through the selected metrics for the target landscape(s).	3.2	All companies setting Target 3
T3.5	REQUIREMENT	**Target duration for Landscape Engagement**	The target must span a minimum of five years and a maximum of ten years from the date it is submitted to SBTN for official validation.	3.1	All companies setting Target 3
T3.6	REQUIREMENT	**Social and environmental safeguards**	Uphold and respect the rights of Indigenous Peoples and other affected stakeholders: respect the right to self-determination including free, prior, and informed consent; move beyond surface-level engagement; and ensure engagement is inclusive and equitable. Include a preliminary assessment of the potential consequences of proposed actions in target documentation, and take steps to avoid or mitigate unacceptable outcomes.	3.1	All companies setting Target 3
T3.7	REQUIREMENT	**Self-assessment and scenario determination**	Complete a binary self-assessment of whether the selected landscape initiative(s) fulfill each of the four key criteria. The outcome determines the applicable engagement scenario and corresponding roadmap requirements; validators require evidence that the self-assessment has been completed.	3.2.2	All companies setting Target 3
T3.8	REQUIREMENT	**Landscape Engagement Roadmap**	Prepare the Landscape Engagement Roadmap and an action plan for engagement in the selected landscape(s) as a formal document, submitted during target validation. Validators check the completeness of all items.	3.2.3	All companies setting Target 3
Rec. T3.1	RECOMMENDATION	**Setting targets across multiple pressures**	Choose landscapes that maximize benefits across multiple pressures (land, water, climate, ocean). A lower coverage percentage may be accepted with appropriate justification where landscapes are selected to optimize outcomes across several SBTN target realms simultaneously. Companies with an absolute Land Footprint Reduction target should use the Landscape Engagement target to align land removed from production with landscape initiatives.	3.2.1	Companies setting multiple SBTN targets

Rec. T3.2	**RECOMMENDATION**	**Use ecological thresholds to sharpen initiative selection and ambition**	Prioritize landscapes where ecoregion-level averages of land quality indicators exceed ecoregion thresholds (see Annex 3). Thresholds can also guide the level of ambition within the initiative for specific indicators.	3.2.2	All companies setting Target 3
Rec. T3.3	**RECOMMENDATION**	**Engage in and improve initiatives that are not yet fully mature**	Engage with landscape initiatives at earlier stages of development and actively contribute to bringing them into compliance with the four key criteria. Companies are also encouraged to establish new landscape initiatives beyond what is strictly required for compliance.	3.2.2	All companies setting Target 3
Rec. T3.4	**RECOMMENDATION**	**Indicator selection for long-term measurability**	Evaluate the long-term capacity of any selected metric to change and be measured within the landscape over the life of the target. Metrics should be chosen in collaboration with other landscape stakeholders, with clear justification for each indicator selected.	3.3.1	All companies setting Target 3

Glossary of terms & acronyms

Term	Definition	Applicability
Agricultural land	Cropland and land under permanent meadows and pastures.	Defines the scope of land included in Target 2 Land Footprint Reduction calculations.
Allocation	Assignment of a given company's portion of effort toward issue/impact mitigation.	Used across all targets to determine a company's share of responsibility for land-related impacts.
AR3T	SBTN's Action Framework covers actions to avoid future impacts, reduce current impacts, regenerate and restore ecosystems, and transform the systems in which companies are embedded.	Overarching action framework structuring all three Land targets and guiding corporate responses.
Avoid	Prevent impact happening in the first place, eliminate impact entirely.	First action in the AR3T hierarchy; operationalized primarily through Target 1 No Conversion.
Bare land	Areas with exposed rock, soil, or sand with less than 10% vegetated cover.	Land cover category used in Natural Land Cover baseline calculations under Target 2.
Baseline	Value of impacts (on nature) or state (of nature) against which an actor's targets are assessed, in a particular previous year. An ecoregion baseline (see Annex 3) is based off the ecoregion-level average value for each land quality category (from Target 2, Land Quality) using the most current available global datasets for each land quality category indicator variables.	Required for all targets as the reference point from which target progress is measured.
Biodiversity	The variability among living organisms from all sources, including, inter alia, terrestrial, marine, and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part; this includes diversity within species, between species, and of ecosystems. (CBD 1992, Article 2)	Core concept underpinning the rationale for all three Land targets.
CBD	United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity.	International framework referenced throughout for definitions and alignment with the Global Biodiversity Framework.
Characterization Factors	Numerical factors that translate companies' activities into different environmental impacts, using elementary flows (e.g., land use, water consumption, emissions) collected for the company inventory. CFs represent the unit impact for each impact category and differ by elementary flow. They are calculated using characterization models, which can differ in scope, complexity, impact pathways, data used, and unit of measurement.	Basis for LEAFs used in Target 2 Land Quality assessments and detailed in AGILE.

Composition of an ecosystem	The biotic constitution of ecosystems—the pattern of the makeup of species communities and the interactions between them. It refers to the identity and variety of life.	Used in the definition of conversion (Target 1) and in assessing ecosystem condition (Target 2).
Conversion	A change of a natural ecosystem to another land use or a profound change in a natural ecosystem's species composition, structure, or function. Deforestation is one form of conversion. Conversion includes severe degradation or the introduction of management practices that result in substantial and sustained change in the ecosystem's former species composition, structure, or function. Change to natural ecosystems that meets this definition is considered as conversion, regardless of whether it is legal.	Central concept for Target 1; defines the activity that companies must commit to eliminating.
Core natural lands	Places with acknowledged ecological importance that require immediate action to prevent conversion due to existing legislation and/or initiatives; extinction/ collapse risk, irreplaceability, or natural uniqueness; maintaining natural ecosystem contiguity or intactness; the provision of critical natural assets or contributions to people. Includes areas identified through the IFC PS6 environmental assessment process as "Critical Habitat" or "High Conservation Value" areas; Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) and Protected Areas (all classes) as found in the Integrated Biodiversity Assessment Tool (IBAT); and areas identified as "likely" Critical Habitat in the UNEP-WCMC (2017) Global Critical Habitat Screening Layer	Used in Target 1 to identify priority areas for no-conversion commitments and conversion hotspot prioritization.
Cutoff dates	The cutoff date provides a baseline for the target. After this date, any conversion of natural ecosystems on a given site renders the materials produced on that site non-compliant with a No Conversion target.	Defines the temporal boundary for Target 1 compliance assessment.
Degradation	Changes within a natural ecosystem that significantly and negatively affect its species composition, structure, and/ or function and reduce the ecosystem's capacity to supply products, support biodiversity, and/or deliver ecosystem services. Degradation may be considered conversion if it is large-scale and progressive or enduring. (AFi)	Relevant to Target 1 (may constitute conversion) and Target 2 (addressed through regeneration and restoration).
Direct operations	All activities and sites (e.g., buildings, farms, mines, retail stores) over which the enterprise has operational or financial control. This includes majority-owned subsidiaries.	Defines the value chain segment for which companies set direct operations targets across all three targets.
Downstream	All activities linked to the sale of products and services produced by the company setting targets. This includes the use and re-use of the product and its end of life.	Value chain segment considered in target boundary scoping across all targets.
DPSIR Causal Framework	Describes causal relationships in social-ecological systems between driver (D), pressure (P), state (S), impact (I), and response (R) indicators.	Framework used in Steps 1 and 2 to structure the assessment of company pressures and state of nature.
Ecological/ habitat connectivity	The degree to which the landscape facilitates the movement of organisms and other environmentally important resources between similar habitats. Connectivity is hampered by fragmentation. (IPBES 2019)	Relevant to Target 2 Natural Land Cover target rationale and Target 3 landscape selection criteria.

Ecological threshold	The point in an ecosystem quality, property, phenomenon, or environmental driver where an often abrupt, and non-linear decline in the corresponding ecosystem state is detected. When a tipping point has been passed, the ecosystem may undergo a self-perpetuating and irreversible regime shift.	Central to Target 2 Land Quality; ecoregion thresholds determine whether improvement or maintenance targets apply.
Ecosystem	A dynamic complex of plant, animal, and microorganism communities and the non-living environment interacting as a functional unit. The term is not necessarily synonymous with 'biome' or 'ecological zone' and is better determined by the problem being addressed. (CBD)	Foundational concept used across all targets to define the natural systems companies must protect and restore.
Ecosystem condition	The quality of an ecosystem measured by its abiotic and biotic characteristics. Condition is assessed by composition, structure, and function, which underpin ecological integrity and capacity to supply ecosystem services. (UN SEEA 2021)	Assessed in Target 2 through land quality indicators and in Target 3 through landscape initiative metrics.
Ecosystem function	The flow of energy and materials through the biotic and abiotic components of an ecosystem. This includes biomass production, trophic transfer, nutrient cycling, water dynamics, and heat transfer. (IPBES 2019)	Underpins the scientific basis for thresholds and land quality indicators across all targets.
Ecosystem integrity	The full complexity of an ecosystem, including the physical, biological, and functional components, together with their interactions, measured against a 'natural' (i.e., current potential) reference level.	Referenced in Target 2 and Target 3 as the desired outcome of regeneration and restoration actions.
Embedded or highly transformed commodities	Volumes of high-impact commodities that are integrated into complex products. The company does not purchase a commodity in its raw or processed forms, but purchases a product that contains them.	Relevant to Target 1 and Target 2 for determining how conversion-driving commodities are traced through supply chains.
FLAG	Forest, Land, and Agriculture Guidance of the Science Based Targets initiative.	Referenced in the Introduction for alignment between SBTN Land targets and SBTi climate targets.
Forests	Land spanning more than 0.5 ha with trees higher than 5 meters and a canopy cover of more than 10%, or trees able to reach these thresholds in situ. Does not include land predominantly under agricultural or other land use. (FAO)	Key natural ecosystem type protected under Target 1 No Conversion.
Free, prior and informed consent (FPIC)	A specific right pertaining to Indigenous Peoples recognized in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. FPIC safeguards individual and collective rights including land and resource rights and right to self-determination. Consent must be free from coercion, provided prior to decisions, and based on informed understanding of impacts. (FAO 2016)	Recommended in Target 1 and required consideration in Target 3 landscape engagement processes.
GBF	Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. A global biodiversity agreement under the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity.	International framework providing the overarching context for SBTN's ambition and target alignment.
GHGP	Greenhouse Gas Protocol.	Referenced in the Introduction and AGILE for alignment of land-based accounting with GHG accounting standards.

Goal	In global sustainability framings, a high-level statement of ambition, including a time frame.	Distinguishes the broader ambition from the specific measurable targets set under each Land target.
High-impact commodities	Raw and value-added materials used in economic activities known to have material links to key drivers of biodiversity loss, resource depletion, and ecosystem degradation. See SBTN guidance for Step 1: Assess.	Determines which commodities trigger Target 1 and Target 2 obligations for companies.
IFC	International Finance Corporation.	IFC Performance Standard 6 referenced in Target 1 MICE pathway for critical habitat screening.
Impacts	Positive or negative contributions of a company or other actor toward the state of nature, including pollution, fragmentation or disruption of ecosystems and habitats, and alteration of ecosystem processes.	Assessed across all targets to determine the scope and scale of corporate responsibility.
Impacts on nature	A change in the state of nature, which may result in changes to the capacity of nature to provide value to business and society. (TNFD)	Aligned with TNFD framing; relevant to all targets and corporate disclosure.
Indicator	A measurable entity related to a specific information need, such as the state of nature, change in a pressure, progress toward a target, or association between two or more variables.	Used across all targets and Steps 1–2 to measure progress and assess the state of nature.
ISIC	International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities.	Used in Target 2 to determine sector-specific applicability and land quality indicator obligations.
Land cover	The observed physical and biological cover of Earth's land.	Basis for the Natural Land Cover target under Target 2 and used in Natural Lands Map assessments.
Land Environmental Assessment Factors (LEAFs)	Numerical factors that translate companies' activities into environmental indicators and impacts. LEAFs represent the state of a specific land quality indicator (SOC, soil erosion) or the unit impact (terrestrial acidification) for each relevant elementary flow. Based on Lifecycle Assessment characterization factors adapted to be directly comparable to ecoregion thresholds.	Used in Target 2 Land Quality to enable companies to assess their impacts against ecoregion thresholds.
Land footprint / land occupation	The amount of agricultural land required per year to produce the products produced or sourced by a company, reported in hectares per year. Refers to 'working lands' used to produce agricultural products in corporate supply chains—not necessarily all land owned or controlled by companies.	Defines the metric for Target 2 Land Footprint Reduction targets.
Land footprint intensity / land occupation intensity	The reciprocal of yield, referring to the amount of land needed to produce a given unit of product. The unit of product in the denominator can vary (e.g., weight, kilocalories, protein).	Used in Target 2 to calculate intensity-based Land Footprint Reduction targets.
Landscape	A socio-ecological system that consists of natural and/or human-modified ecosystems, influenced by distinct ecological, historical, economic, and socio-cultural processes. For this guidance, the landscape is the area where a landscape approach is being implemented.	Defines the spatial unit for Target 3 Landscape Engagement.

Landscape approach	Collaboration of stakeholders within a defined natural or social geography, seeking to reconcile competing social, economic, and environmental goals through integrated landscape management.	The collaborative model required under Target 3 for landscape-level action.
Land use	All the arrangements, activities, and inputs undertaken in a certain land-cover type, or the social and economic purposes for which land is managed.	Foundational concept relevant to all targets and to AGILE accounting methods.
Land use change	Changes in land use over time due to natural and anthropogenic causes, represented by land use change categories. Where the land use category remains the same but the subcategory changes, this should be accounted for as land use change.	Assessed under Target 1 (conversion), Target 2 (land footprint changes), and AGILE accounting.
Materiality	Significance of an entity's environmental impact.	Determines which targets apply to a company, assessed during Step 1 screening.
Measurement	The process of collecting data for baseline setting, monitoring, and reporting.	Required across all targets for establishing baselines and tracking progress.
MICE	Acronym describing sectors that must convert land to operate: mining, infrastructure, construction, and extractives.	Used in Target 1 to identify the applicability of a sector-based pathway for no-conversion commitments
Monitoring	Tracking progress toward targets.	Required across all targets for annual reporting and validation cycles.
Natural ecosystem	An ecosystem that substantially resembles—in terms of species composition, structure, and ecological function—what would be found in a given area in the absence of major human impacts. Includes pristine, regenerated, managed natural, and partially degraded ecosystems where composition, structure, and function remain present.	Defines what is protected under Target 1 and what is measured for Natural Land Cover under Target 2.
Natural forests	Forests that possess many or most of the characteristics of a forest native to the given site, including species composition, structure, and ecological function.	A key category of natural ecosystem protected under Target 1 No Conversion.
Nature	The diversity of living organisms, including people, and their interactions with each other and their environment.	Overarching concept framing the purpose of all SBTN Land targets.
Nature's contributions to people (NCPs)	All the beneficial and detrimental contributions that humans obtain from and with nature. Categorized as material NCPs, regulating NCPs, and non-material NCPs. (IPBES Global Assessment)	Scientific basis for the Target 2 Natural Land Cover 25% threshold and Target 3 landscape objectives.
Nature loss	The loss and/or decline of the state of nature.	The overarching problem that all three Land targets are designed to address.
Nature positive	A high-level goal describing a future state of nature that is greater than the current state.	The long-term ambition to which SBTN Land targets contribute.

Pressures	A human activity that directly or indirectly degrades nature. Five key pressures: land and sea use change; direct exploitation of organisms; climate change; pollution; invasion of alien species. (IPBES)	Assessed in Steps 1 and 2 to determine which targets apply to a company.
Primary data	Data collected specifically for the assessment being undertaken, generally through site-level direct measurement.	Preferred data source across all targets and AGILE for baseline and progress assessments.
Production unit	A plantation, farm, ranch, or forest management unit, or production site. Includes all plots under one management in the same general area, plus associated natural ecosystems, infrastructure, and other land. (Adapted from AFi)	The spatial unit at which Target 1 and Target 2 requirements are assessed and reported.
Reduce	Minimize impacts, from a previous baseline value, without eliminating them entirely.	Second action in the AR3T hierarchy; operationalized through Target 2 area and quality targets.
Regenerate	Actions within existing land uses to increase the biophysical function and/or ecological productivity of an ecosystem or its components. (Adapted from FOLU 2019)	Core action in Target 2 and Target 3; part of the AR3T hierarchy.
Reporting	Preparing a formal written document connected to desired objectives, outcomes, or outputs, such as those connected to targets and goals.	Required across all targets for validation and annual disclosure.
Restore	Initiate or accelerate the recovery of an ecosystem with respect to its health, integrity, and sustainability with a focus on permanent changes in state. (Adapted from SER)	Core action in Target 2 and Target 3; part of the AR3T hierarchy.
SBTi	Science Based Targets initiative.	Partner initiative; SBTN Land targets align with SBTi FLAG methodology.
SBTN	Science Based Targets Network.	The network developing and validating all Land science-based targets.
Science-based targets	Measurable, actionable, and time-bound objectives, based on the best available science, that allow actors to align with Earth's limits and societal sustainability goals.	Defines the standard that all three Land targets must meet.
Secondary data	Data originally collected and published for another purpose or a different assessment, e.g., derived from modelled or proxy-level data.	Acceptable data source across all targets and AGILE where primary data is unavailable.
Short vegetation	Areas of land with vegetation shorter than 5 meters in height, including areas dominated by grass or shrubs.	Land cover category used in Natural Land Cover baseline calculations under Target 2.
Site(s)	Operational locations within a company's value chain/ spheres of control and influence. Sites can include operations from any phase of a product's life cycle.	Used across all targets to define where company activities take place.
Snow/ice	Areas covered by permanent snow or ice.	Land cover category excluded from Natural Land Cover calculations under Target 2.

Stakeholder engagement	Interactive processes of engagement with relevant stakeholders through meetings, hearings, or consultation proceedings. Characterized by two-way communication and good faith participation. (TNFD)	Required under Target 3 as a core element of landscape initiative governance.
Stakeholders	Persons or groups who are directly or indirectly affected by a project, as well as those who may have interests in a project and/or the ability to influence its outcome. (TNFD)	Relevant to Target 3 landscape initiatives and Target 1 FPIC considerations.
State of nature indicators	Indicators describing the general conditions of nature in physical, chemical, or biological terms. Important state indicators in SBTN methods include water availability, terrestrial ecosystem intactness, net primary productivity, soil organic carbon content, water quality, and ecosystem extent or connectivity.	Used in Steps 1 and 2 to assess conditions and prioritize locations for target setting.
States	Unless otherwise specified, 'state' means 'state of nature' in three key categories: species (abundance and extinction risk), ecosystems (extent, integrity, and connectivity), and nature's contributions to people.	Framework for understanding what all three Land targets aim to protect and improve.
Structure of an ecosystem	The three-dimensional aspect of ecosystems—the biotic and abiotic elements that form the heterogeneous matrix supporting composition and functioning. Dependent on habitat area, intactness, and fragmentation.	Used in defining conversion (Target 1) and assessing ecosystem condition (Target 2).
Target	In global sustainability framings, a more specific quantitative objective, usually nested under a goal, with defined measurement and an associated indicator.	The measurable commitment companies make under each of the three Land targets.
Target boundary	The corporate scope of the target, specific to each issue area. Defined in terms of value chain aspect, specific locations, products, brands, etc.	Defined in the Introduction requirements (L.2); applies to all targets.
Target dates	The time by which companies must achieve their Land targets.	Set for each target; varies by target type and value chain position.
Threatened ecosystems	Ecosystems classified as Vulnerable, Endangered, or Critically Endangered by the IUCN Red List of Ecosystems.	Provides additional protection for ecosystems assessed by the IUCN Red List of Ecosystems.
Threshold	Level of an environmental indicator representing attainment of the desired state of nature.	Central to Target 2 Land Quality; defines what nature needs at the ecoregion level.
Transform	Actions contributing to system-wide change, notably the drivers of nature loss, through technological, economic, institutional, and social factors. (Adapted from IPCC and IPBES 2019)	Fifth action in the AR3T hierarchy; addressed through Target 3 landscape-level systemic change.
Upstream	All activities associated with suppliers, e.g., production or cultivation, sourcing of commodities of goods, and transportation of commodities to manufacturing facilities.	Value chain segment addressed across all targets; Supplier Engagement Approach applies to upstream under Target 2.
Validation	An independent process involving expert review to ensure the target meets required criteria and methods of science-based targets.	Required for all targets before companies may disclose validated Land science-based targets.

Value chain	Production of 'economic value' along a series of activities, sites, and entities. Divided into upstream, direct operations, and downstream segments.	Defines the full scope within which all three Land targets operate.
Verification	An independent third-party confirmation of baseline values of a target indicator and/or progress toward achieving the target.	Applies to all targets as part of ongoing monitoring and reporting.
Water	Surface water is present 20% or more of the year, outside wetlands.	Land cover category used in Natural Land Cover baseline calculations under Target 2.
Wetlands	Transitional ecosystems with saturated soil that can be inundated by water either seasonally or permanently and can be covered by short vegetation or trees.	Land cover category used in Natural Land Cover baseline calculations under Target 2.
Working lands	Human-modified lands, including farms, forests, rangelands, and infrastructure, managed to provide goods and services.	Defines the scope of land addressed by Target 2 Working Land Regeneration and Restoration.
Yield	Intensity of production per unit of land area. Defined as the amount of product produced in a year divided by the amount of land occupied by that product.	Used in Target 2 Land Footprint Reduction for calculating intensity-based targets.

For further definitions, please see the SBTN Glossary: https://sciencebasedtargetsnetwork.org/resources/faqs



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