

FOUNDATION FSSC ANNUAL REPORT 2023





LEADING THE WAY TO A BETTER TOMORROW.

Copyright © 2024, Foundation FSSC

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced and/or published in any form, by means of printed matters, photocopy, microfilm, recording or any other method or technology, without written approval by the Foundation FSSC.

It is a great honor and a pleasure to share with you FSSC's second Annual Report, covering 2023, in which we celebrated major successes. Over these 12 months, Foundation FSSC achieved considerable certification growth to over 34,000 Certified Organizations worldwide. We have professionalized and developed our team, strengthened our Integrity Program, and delivered a significant update to our flagship certification Scheme, FSSC 22000, with the release of Version 6, thereby providing trust and delivering impact at a global scale.

The 2030 Strategy is set to deliver the FSSC vision of creating a better world by focusing our efforts on three main areas: Market Value, Sustainable Development and Professionalization. We continue Creating Value for the consumer goods industry through robust and trusted ISO-aligned management system certification schemes that include related assistance through guidance, learning & development, and other supporting tools such as the FSSC 22000 Development Program.

We see recognition from the Consumer Goods Forum (CGF) of our state-of-the-art Schemes for certification of management systems as a central driver for global market acceptance. Recognition of our FSSC 22000 Scheme for food safety through the CGF Coalition of Action named the Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) has been established and is maintained through annual on-site and remote assessments. We are proud to mention that in 2023, we also began the benchmarking process to achieve recognition of the new FSSC 24000 Scheme for social management systems through the CGF Coalition of Action's Sustainable Supply Chain Initiative (SSCI).

Our responsibility is to support the consumer goods industry with our Schemes and facilitate the implementation of effective management systems that will have a long-term impact on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The development of a holistic impact strategy has started small. Still, it will eventually be shared with our direct and indirect supply chain partners, where a more significant impact can be realized due to the large number of Certified Organizations involved.

We cannot do this alone, and creating partnerships with like-minded organizations is critical to accelerating and scaling our impact worldwide. The strategic alliance with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) on food safety capacity-building projects in Africa and Asia is an excellent example of scaling impact globally and leaving no one behind.

We have made abundant progress in further growing and professionalizing our non-profit Foundation, with remarkable new FSSC team members to increase diversity and ensure inclusion, making us even more colorful and successful. We make a difference by staying close to our values of transparency, integrity, ambition, engagement, and care, which have shaped and brought us to where we are today.

On behalf of the FSSC Management Board, I am pleased to reaffirm that we have maintained our support for and involvement in the United Nations Global Compact activities. This Annual Report serves as our second *Communication on Engagement*, in which we disclose our ongoing commitment and continuous efforts to integrate the Ten Principles related to Human Rights, Labor, Environment, and Anti-Corruption into our business strategy, culture, and daily operations. We are proud of our progress in 2023 and humble contributions to help achieve the SDGs.

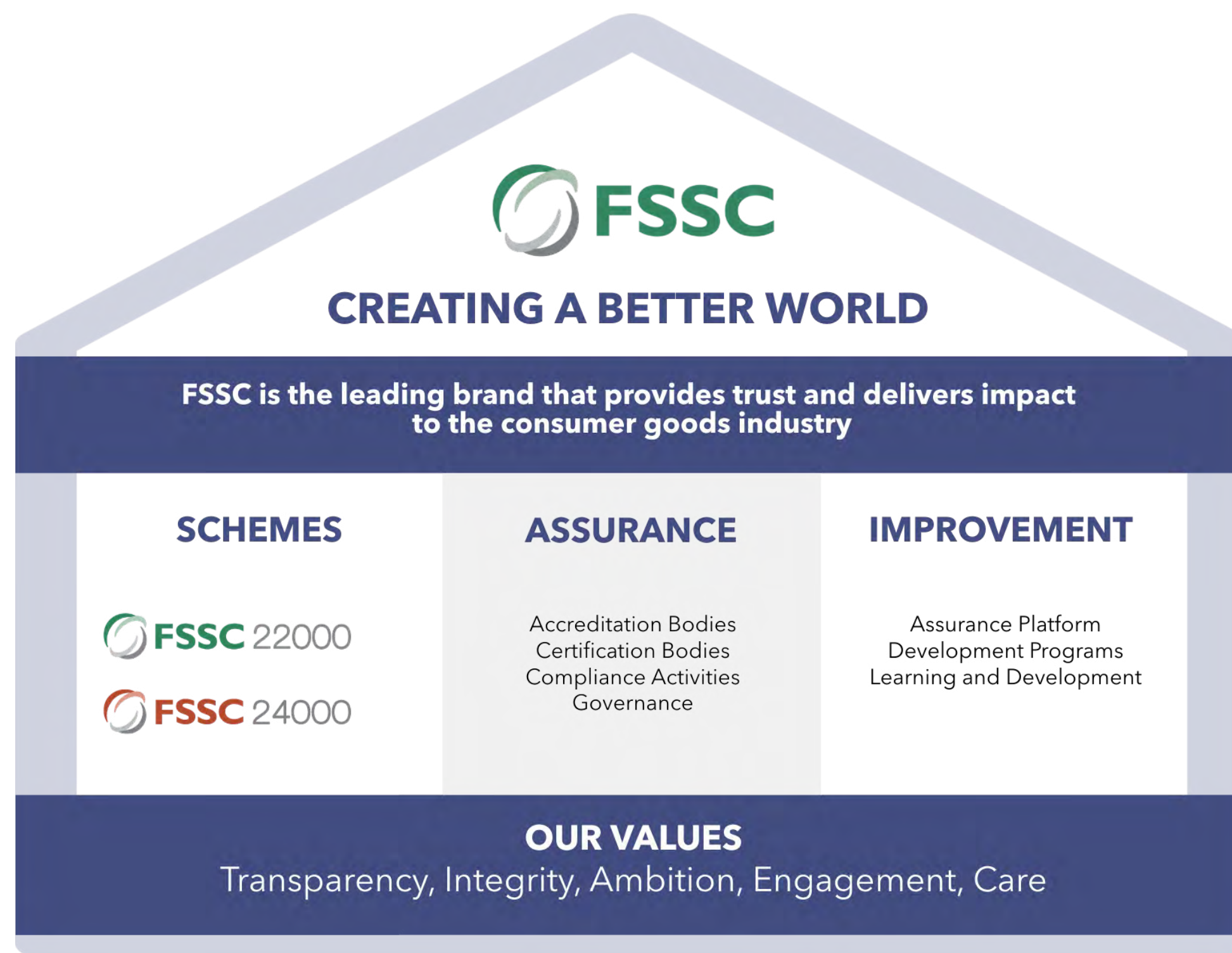
I want to express my sincere appreciation for your continued support in achieving our mission to be the leading Scheme owner in management system certification, data solutions, and capacity building, providing trust and delivering impact to the consumer goods industry.

Aldin Hilbrands, CEO




THIS IS FOUNDATION FSSC		
NON-PROFIT SCHEME OWNER	FSSC 22000	FSSC 24000
MARKET VALUE	INTEGRITY PROGRAM	FSSC INSIGHTS EVENT
SUSTAINABILITY	PARTNER PERFORMANCE PROGRAM	FSSC ONLINE
PROFESSIONALIZATION	INFORMATION SECURITY	COMMUNICATION ON ENGAGEMENT

FOUNDATION FSSC



WHAT MAKES FSSC

Foundation FSSC is the leading global non-profit and independent certification Scheme owner to provide trust and deliver impact beyond certification. We support the consumer goods industry and related supply chain in implementing ISO-aligned effective management systems for food safety with FSSC 22000 and social sustainability with FSSC 24000.

We are a lean and collaborative Foundation with the ambition to help organizations contribute to the SDGs and thus create a better world. We provide trust in certification through a robust Integrity Program and an advanced Assurance Platform.

OUR MISSION

FSSC has formulated a three-year strategy to ensure we can drive forward global aims based on our brand values, the three pillars of the FSSC branded house, and our vision to create a better world. We aim to make meaningful change through our contributions as a Foundation, through the ISO-aligned design of our Schemes, and with the Assurance Platform that enables transparency and informed decision-making.



MARKET VALUE

Consumers today are more conscious about the products they purchase, preferring those from companies that adhere to stringent policies and requirements. Certification to the FSSC 22000 Scheme for food safety management systems and the FSSC 24000 Scheme for social management systems serves as a trust-building framework for end-to-end supply chain awareness of food safety, quality, and sustainable performance.

With our strong values as a non-profit Foundation, supported by our giving back strategy, we want to create a better world by sharing knowledge and expanding our impact. We provide our licensed partners with continuous trust through a robust Integrity Program and an advanced Assurance Platform. Our strategic partnerships and development program support communities in low- and middle-income countries to support capacity building.

Supply chains prefer opting for ISO-aligned management system certifications to build trust and enhance their commitment to integrated management systems and sustainable supply chains. FSSC supports supply chains that demonstrate a commitment to safety, quality, and socially responsible practices with our Schemes. The Foundation goes further still by supporting the SDGs, for example, with food loss and waste. Integrating the FSSC digital solutions for monitoring and creating industry insights with customized management information for continuous improvement is a valued step forward.

FSSC provides added value in several dimensions, such as being the leading brand for the certification of food safety management systems and supporting the supply chain to accelerate social sustainability in the consumer goods industry through our new FSSC 24000 Scheme. Recognition of the FSSC brand, as a non-profit Foundation supported by over 34,000 Certified Organizations, serves to enhance trust in the consumer goods industry. Additionally, using audit data innovatively on the Assurance Platform supports the industry in driving change and building resilient supply chains.

“
Recognition of the FSSC brand, as a non-profit Foundation supported by over 34,000 Certified Organizations, serves to enhance trust in the consumer goods industry.
”

FSSC broadened its horizon in 2022 with the launch of FSSC 24000 for Social Management Systems from the food supply chain to the consumer goods industry, opening new opportunities for the consumer goods industry and Certification Bodies.

In 2023, FSSC has onboarded eight Certification Bodies for FSSC 24000, licensing them to certify the industry’s social management systems. This new social sustainability certification market has a more comprehensive segmentation as it goes beyond food & beverages and includes textiles, garments, and leather, among others.

We are confident that the FSSC 24000 Scheme for social sustainability, which is also aligned with the ISO management system approach and ISO harmonized structure, will benefit supply chain partners in the same way the FSSC 22000 Scheme for Food Safety Management Systems certification does. The strength and trust of the FSSC brand and the advantage of integrating FSSC 24000 with other ISO-aligned standards (ISO 9001, ISO 14001, FSSC 22000) will drive market recognition next to SSCI benchmarking and IAF Multilateral Recognition Arrangement approval.

SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainable Development is defined as meeting the needs of the present without compromising those of future generations. For FSSC to be successful in this, we must support the consumer goods industry through our Schemes, facilitate the implementation of effective ISO-aligned management systems, and help deliver long-term impact on the SDGs.

The whole supply chain can realize the goal of large-scale impact through the considerable number of FSSC Certified Organizations. For instance, an estimated one-third of all food produced is lost or wasted, which equals some 8% of the human-caused global greenhouse gas emissions. And now, with roughly 85% of FSSC 22000 certifications within the food manufacturing sector, food loss and waste requirements are included under FSSC 22000 Scheme Version 6, published in April 2023.

FSSC has chosen to become part of the solution and help the industry deliver against the global SDG target of halving food loss and waste by 2030. To better comprehend the current state of play and the food industry’s needs, we became a member of the Dutch Food Waste Free United platform in 2022 and look forward to contributing to their excellent work.



FSSC may have become the global market leader over the last decade, but we cannot do this alone; creating partnerships with like-minded organizations is critical to accelerating and scaling our impact worldwide. The strategic affiliations we have formed with UNIDO and World Packaging Organization on food safety and packaging are great examples of how to help scale impact globally and leave no one behind. Nevertheless, the world urgently needs answers to address the complex problems raised by the SDGs, and FSSC needs more partners to speed up possible solutions. Therefore, we are calling for the public and private sectors to unite and discuss how standards can play a more impactful role at the global level.

The consumer goods industry constitutes a majority of small to medium-sized enterprises (SME). By their sheer number, this is where the greatest impact on the SDGs could be achieved. Yet, it is the most challenging part of the industry to reach and support on a global scale. For the food industry, FSSC designed a Development Program, a steppingstone model aimed at gradually improving the food safety performance of SMEs. However, we have learned that helping organizations of this size means offering support beyond certification to address their many resource issues.

One of our latest efforts is to explore and leverage the role of e-learning in sharing information with our business partners. So far, it has been very successful and should be extended to include the wider industry. However, to reach the SME target group, we must understand their needs and develop support accordingly with our global partners. As a first step, our plan is to launch a survey for Certification Bodies and the industry in 2024 to investigate their view on how to further support SMEs.

“ FSSC has chosen to become part of the solution and help the industry deliver against the global SDG target of halving food loss and waste by 2030. ”

PROFESSIONALIZATION

Although FSSC began with only two people, as of 31 December 2023, the organization counted 43 professionals representing 20 nationalities contributing to our work globally. The involvement of skilled and diverse team members from various regions brings a rich array of perspectives, experiences, and expertise to FSSC’s initiatives. This is essential to support and deliver on our vision to create a better world.

By prioritizing and integrating diversity, inclusion, and well-being into our HR policies, we create a diverse workplace that supports the overall health, happiness, and productivity of the FSSC team. It is our foundation for team member commitment and solid partnerships.

The world is changing rapidly, and as FSSC continues to expand, the complexities of ensuring the quality of our work across different regions are a challenge. This requires having a scalable infrastructure and responding to varying market dynamics and customer needs. It involves aligning people, processes, technology, and culture to make sure that FSSC not only grows in size but also matures in its capabilities and effectiveness.

As part of the organization’s goal of continuous improvement and operational efficiency, the scope of our Learning & Development department has broadened. In addition to offering online courses to external stakeholders through our Harmonization Program, we launched an internal FSSC Academy. Future projections also focus on industry and capacity building by sharing knowledge through our evolving giving-back strategy.

Adapting to the evolving digital landscape is also crucial. FSSC is committed to continuously upgrading and integrating digital solutions to support optimizing processes, deliver value, and drive innovation. Procedures and processes serve to control and mitigate the relevant information security risks.

This is how FSSC ensures that the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of information are maintained at the desired level throughout all organizational processes.

“ By prioritizing and integrating diversity, inclusion, and well-being into our HR policies, we create a diverse workplace. ”



INFORMATION SECURITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Foundation FSSC is committed to securing the information we process to realize our promise of delivering trust to all FSSC team members, partners, and stakeholders. This commitment is even more relevant considering the upcoming launch of extensions to the FSSC Assurance Platform, enabling transparency and informed decision-making for the entire consumer goods industry and related supply chain.

In line with our responsibility to information security, Foundation FSSC’s Management Board has set the objective to become ISO 27001 certified in 2024, and we set significant steps toward this goal in 2023.

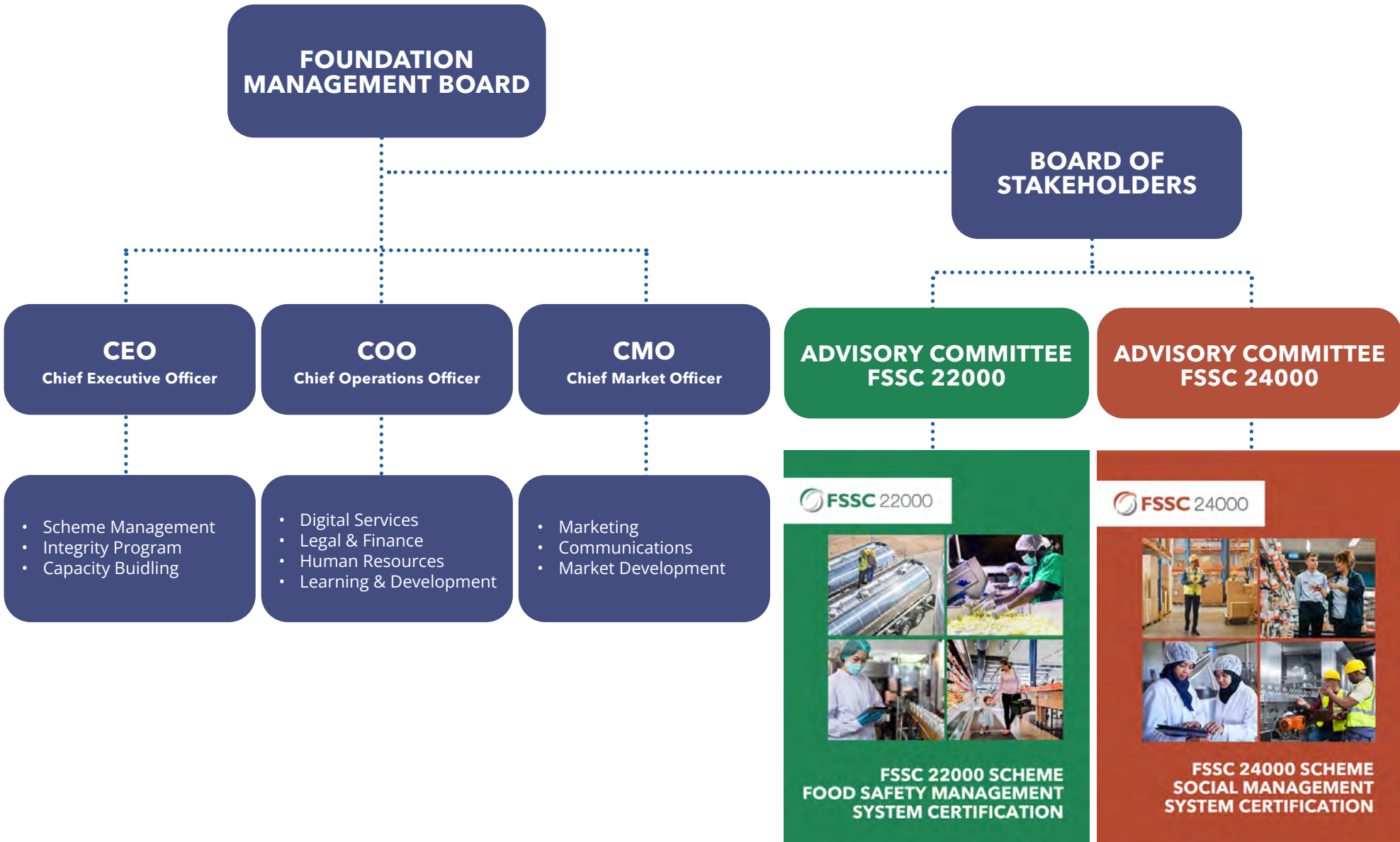
Key 2023 achievements include defining our ISO 27001 policies and completing a gap assessment with Information Security specialists to understand how to improve our security further. We are proud to have completed an internal audit by an independent auditor toward the end of the year, strengthening our belief that we are ready for certification in 2024.

FSSC understands that maintaining and continuously improving our security standards requires a collective effort from everybody within the Foundation and our partners. Therefore, we structurally dedicate time and energy to training our team and encouraging continuous improvement.

Anyone wanting to know more about how we protect your information can consult FSSC’s security and privacy statement on our website.



ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE OF FOUNDATION FSSC



GOVERNANCE

Foundation FSSC is managed by the Management Board, consisting of Aldin Hilbrands (Chief Executive Officer), Cornelia Glerum (Chief Operating Officer), and Guido Dinjens (Chief Market Officer).

An independent Board of Stakeholders (BoS) governs the Foundation FSSC Schemes. The BoS consists of a balanced representation of key stakeholders in the consumer goods industry and representations related to certification and accreditation. The BoS receives all Scheme changes for final review, discussion, and decision-making.

Bert Debets is the independent Chair of our BoS, and its members represent the interests of various sectors covered by FSSC Schemes, including representatives from The Coca-Cola Company, Mars, Royal Friesland Campina, Unilever, Food Drink Europe (FDE), Serving Europe, Metro, Independent International Organization for Assurance (IIOA), IQNET, Independent Association of Accredited Registrars (IAAR), and Safe Supply of Affordable Food Everywhere (SSAFE).

A scheme-specific Advisory Committee for FSSC 22000 supports the BoS and provides additional expertise and input to any Scheme revisions and recommendations. It includes technical aspects like guidance documents, requirements, and unannounced audits. FSSC's Technical Director, Elsabe Matthee, is the FSSC 22000 Advisory Committee Chair. Its members include representatives from ANSI National Accreditation Board (ANAB), IAAR, IIOA, IQnet, Nampak Rigid, Nestlé, Pepsico, United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS), Yum! and Walmart.

Preparations were made in 2023 for the installation of an Advisory Committee FSSC 24000. It is expected that it will be installed in early 2024.

“An independent Board of Stakeholders (BoS) governs the Foundation FSSC Schemes. The BoS consists of a balanced representation of key stakeholders in the consumer goods industry and representations related to certification and accreditation.”



PARTNER ENGAGEMENT

We can only safeguard reliable audits and certification of FSSC Schemes through collaboration with our licensed Certification Bodies and Accreditation Bodies. An ongoing dialogue with our partners is crucial to ensuring we serve the consumer goods industry in continuously improving food safety and social sustainability.

FSSC Insights Event

The annual FSSC Insights Event is a great opportunity to meet with our partners, exchange information, and have strategic discussions. The 2023 FSSC Insights Event took place in Amsterdam, with participants joining on 14 and 15 June. The theme was 'Leading the way to a better tomorrow.'

Together with almost 250 participants, we explored strategic key topics like integrated management systems, FSSC 24000, auditor scarcity, and the Assurance Platform.



FSSC Harmonization Program

Launched in October 2022, FSSC’s Harmonization Program, aims to provide more accessible calibration to our licensed partners through regular training and case studies. The program supports the training of Certification and Accreditation Bodies and their auditors to further provide transparency and trust in our alignment of knowledge and Scheme understanding. The program is convenient with its presence online and can be followed at the time and location preferred by our global partners. At FSSC, we strive to make training more comprehensive, free of charge, widespread, and accessible. We aim to share knowledge and expand FSSC’s impact in line with our giving-back strategy.

MyFSSC Solutions Database

In 2023, we expanded our FSSC knowledge base, MyFSSC, with content about FSSC 24000 and FSSC 22000 Version 6. All our partners have access to MyFSSC, where they can consult various solutions and submit a ticket through the Helpdesk.

Technical Newsletters and Webinars

Throughout 2023, we published seven technical newsletters to inform FSSC partners of developments within the organization and held four technical webinars, which were dedicated exclusively to our partners:

- HAVI GQSR Addendum Requirements (7 February)
- FSSC Partner Performance Program (30 March)
- FSSC 22000 Version 6 (13 April)
- FSSC 22000 V6 Auditor Register and Partner Performance Program (26 October)



We aim to share knowledge and expand FSSC’s impact in line with our giving-back strategy.



FOUNDATION FSSC ONLINE

Anyone interested in the Foundation FSSC and our Certification Schemes for food safety and social sustainability-related management systems can find us online.

Website: www.fssc.com

For 2023, our website attracted 1,752,534 views, marking a significant 23% growth compared to the 1,424,857 views in 2022. This surge in interest is also reflected in the 343,349 new users who visited our site over the 12 months.

Webpages most visited include the homepage for FSSC 22000, which alone garnered 316,610 page visits, demonstrating its importance to our audience, e.g., to download the FSSC 22000 Version 6 Scheme documents for free. The public register of all Certified Organizations to our Scheme(s) also drew considerable attention, with 310,098 visits.

Social Media

Foundation FSSC’s social media strategy focuses on LinkedIn and X (formerly Twitter). The audience for our LinkedIn company page grew 13,98% in 2023 to over 62,500 followers, with an engagement rate of 4,25%. Besides this company page, we facilitate people working in food safety with an FSSC 22000 group. This group also contains over 52,500 professionals.

On X, @FoundationFSSC has approximately 7,000 followers. Our social media offers content about our Schemes and other relevant initiatives supporting FSSC’s partners and stakeholders.



FSSC Insights Webinars

In 2023, we organized four public webinars, which were free to join. All recordings and presentations are available through our website.

INTEGRITY PROGRAM

The FSSC Integrity Program delivers a level of assurance and Scheme governance beyond that provided by Accreditation Bodies. It is one of the fundamental mechanisms for providing trust in certification to our stakeholders and the consumer goods industry. The Integrity Program focuses on continued assurance and compliance activities linked to the performance of FSSC’s licensed Certification Bodies.

Monitoring the performance of Certification Bodies is multidimensional and includes off-site desk review activities of the audit information provided to FSSC. Certification Body office assessments focus on the Certification Body’s management system and how it implements the Scheme requirements alongside data tracking and monitoring key performance indicators.

In 2023, we performed 471 Desk Reviews and 60 Office Assessments across all FSSC-licensed Certification Bodies in 30 countries. The Desk Reviews were only for the FSSC 22000 Scheme, whereas the Office Assessments included five for the FSSC 24000 Scheme.

These evaluations resulted in 1,727 Nonconformities (NC) against the FSSC 22000 Scheme requirements and 17 NCs against the FSSC 24000 Scheme requirements (from Office Assessments only). The identified trends are used as a driver for continuous improvement.

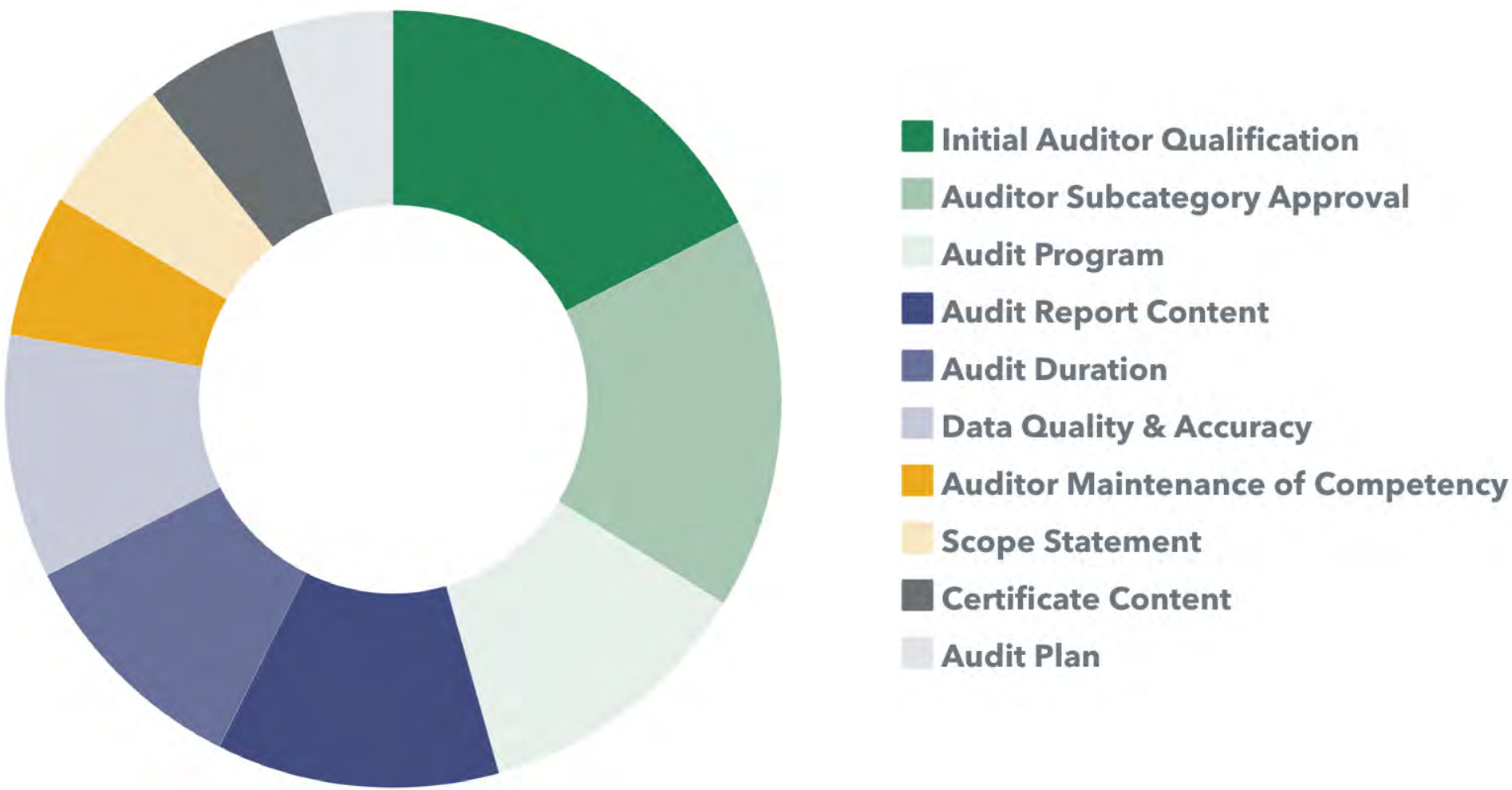
Desk Reviews (DR):

- #DR conducted: 471 (versus 434 in 2022)
- #NC raised: 1,401 Minor NCs and 140 Major NCs

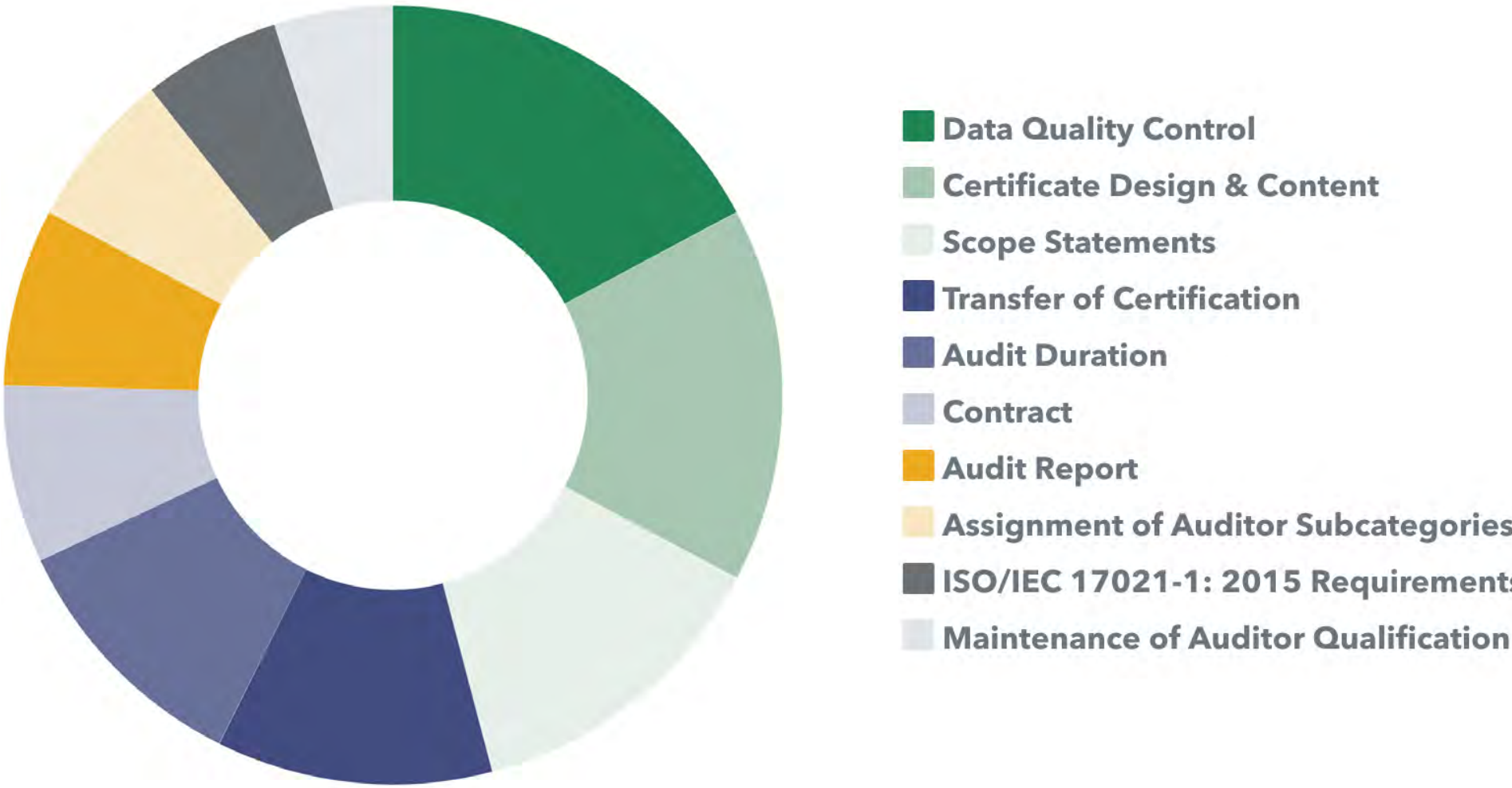
Office Assessments (OA):

- #OA completed for FSSC 22000: 55 OAs in 27 countries (versus 48 in 2022) + 5 OAs in 5 countries (FSSC 24000)
- #NC raised: 186 NC, including 19 Major (FSSC 22000) + 17 NC, incl. 4 Major (FSSC 24000)

MAIN NONCONFORMITIES RAISED DURING DESK REVIEWS



MAIN NONCONFORMITIES RAISED DURING OFFICE ASSESSMENTS



Escalations 2023

FSSC uses a card system to flag compliance breaches, consisting of yellow and red cards issued based on the severity of the noncompliance. In 2023, FSSC issued 19 yellow cards and six red cards. More severe infringements result in the suspension of the Certification Body license and could result in license termination. Two Certification Bodies were suspended in 2023, and three Certification Bodies had their licenses terminated.



“ FSSC’s Integrity Program is one of the fundamental mechanisms for providing trust in certification to our stakeholders.”

Onboarding program

Aligned with our organizational values, the FSSC Onboarding Program continues to support new Certification Bodies in understanding the Scheme requirements through e-learning and mentoring sessions, with the objective of improving Certification Body performance. To date, 42 Certification Bodies have participated in the Onboarding Program for FSSC 22000 since its inception in 2021, with 11 enrolled for 2023.

Eight Certification Bodies have applied and achieved their provisional license in 2023, through the FSSC onboarding process for FSSC 24000.

Partner Performance Program

The FSSC Partner Performance Program is designed as a measure to evaluate the performance of Certification Bodies with a full FSSC 22000 license against a predefined set of KPIs and as a driver for continuous improvement.

How We Measure Performance

FSSC has established six Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), the details of which are available to our licensed Certification Bodies in the KPI overview dashboard in our Assurance Platform. Each KPI has a complete description of the ratings, the calculation used, and the parameters considered as part of the calculation. We believe in transparency and encourage Certification Bodies to use the data as a tool to improve their performance.

A Certification Body’s performance against the defined KPIs is used as input for its overall performance rating. Currently, the performance ratings are conducted twice a year, based on performance data linked to 6-month monitoring periods.



FOOD SAFETY: FSSC 22000

FSSC 22000 LAUNCH VERSION 6

Version 6 of our FSSC 22000 Scheme for Food Safety Management Systems was published on 31 March 2023.

The main reasons for the new version included:

- Integrating the requirements of ISO 22003-1: 2022 (normative accreditation standard),
- Strengthening the requirements to support Certified Organizations in their contributions to meeting the SDGs,
- Incorporating feedback from our stakeholders that we received through our Version 6 development survey and
- Editorial changes and amendments are part of continuous improvement.

FSSC granted a 12-month transition period to allow Certified Organizations and Certification Bodies to make the conversion. The first audits to Version 6 of the Scheme will commence from 01 April 2024, and all upgrade audits against FSSC 22000 Version 6 shall be completed by 31 March 2025.

To ensure a smooth transition process, Foundation FSSC produced and supplied supporting webinars, guidance documents, and free e-learning lessons to assist our stakeholders with implementing Version 6.



The FSSC market representatives supported their specific regions by initiating Version 6 update webinars for Certification Bodies and for the industry and face to face meetings with Certification Bodies.

As part of the ongoing benchmarking and approval process with key industry and regulatory bodies, FSSC 22000 Version 6 received International Accreditation Forum approval in June 2023 and has been successfully benchmarked by the Dutch and Swedish governmental Food Safety Competent Authorities. Our GFSI recognition is ongoing as part of the normal benchmarking process.

We published quarterly public newsletters and several newsflashes to inform all interested stakeholders, including the wider industry, on topics related to the FSSC 22000 Scheme for Food Safety Management Systems, including the release of Version 6.

NONCONFORMITIES AGAINST FSSC 22000 V5.1

During FSSC 22000 audits, nonconformities are raised where an organization cannot demonstrate compliance to a Scheme requirement.

Below is a summary of the top 10 nonconformities that were raised in 2023:

#	STANDARD	CHAPTER	TITLE
1	ISO/TS 22002-1	10.4	Physical contamination
2	ISO/TS 22002-1	8.6	Preventative and corrective maintenance
3	ISO 22000	8.3	Traceability system
4	ISO/TS 22002-1	5.3	Internal structure and fittings
5	ISO 22000	8.7	Control of monitoring and measuring
6	ISO 22000	7.2	Competence
7	ISO/TS 22002-1	5.7	Storage of food, packaging materials, ingredients and non-food chemicals
8	FSSC 22000 Additional Requirement	2.5.7	Environmental monitoring
9	ISO/TS 22002-1	11.3	Cleaning and sanitizing programs
10	ISO 22000	7.1.6	Control of externally provided processes, products or services

We use this information to develop training, support articles, and guidance and as input in the Scheme development process.

In 2023, we organized three FSSC Insights webinars dedicated to the FSSC 22000 Scheme:

- *Integrated Management Systems*, 09 March 2023
- *FSSC 22000 Scheme Version 6*, 11 May 2023
- *Food Loss and Waste*, 06 December 2023

All FSSC Insights webinars are free of charge and open to anyone interested in the topics. The recordings and presentations are available on the FSSC Insights Event webpage.



FSSC Insights Webinar | Food Loss & Waste

[View Recording](#)

Join us for the next free FSSC Insights webinar in December as we present about Food Loss & Waste, with sp...



FSSC Insights Webinar | FSSC 22000 Scheme Version 6

[View Recording](#)

Join us for the next free FSSC Insights webinar in May as we present even more industry-relevant topics, to cr...



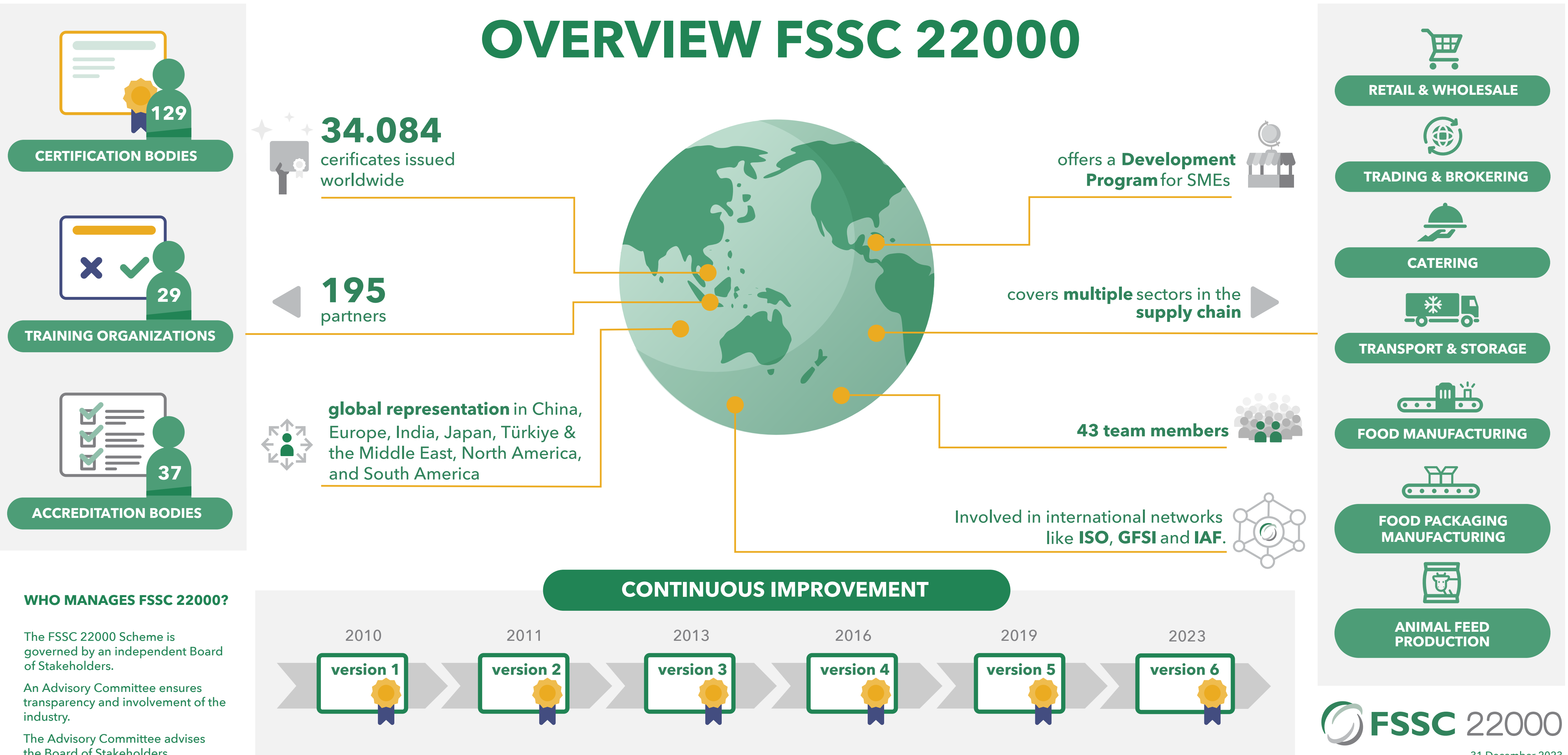
FSSC Insights Webinar | Integrated Management Systems

[View Recording](#)

In 2022, Foundation FSSC introduced a new series of free public webinars about FSSC 22000 – the “F...

“ All FSSC Insights webinars are free of charge and open to anyone interested in the topics. ”

OVERVIEW FSSC 22000



SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY: FSSC 24000

Next to the flagship Scheme of FSSC 22000, the Foundation launched the FSSC 24000 Scheme for Social Management Systems in October 2022. The Scheme is based on the internationally recognized, independent management system standard PAS 24000, developed and published by the British Standards Institute (BSI), the UK's ISO member, in September 2022.

This innovative, ISO-aligned management system standard enables organizations to create social impact by improving overall labor-related social performance and contributing to the SDGs. The FSSC 24000 Scheme targets consumer goods manufacturing and processing organizations (food and non-food), including their related service providers. The Scheme aims to ensure that organizations provide safe and fair working conditions, meet business ethics requirements, and apply human rights due diligence in their supply chain management.

The first eight Certification Bodies were licensed and enrolled in our Onboarding Program during 2023, resulting in the first audits delivered at the end of the year, including the first accreditation audits.

Besides focusing on onboarding Certification Bodies and the steps to strengthen market acceptance, we extended the FSSC team with an FSSC 24000 Strategic Advisor with extensive knowledge of risk and compliance management, including social sustainability-related topics.



“ A significant achievement was the announcement that the first manufacturers and retailers have started to accept FSSC 24000 for their supply base. ”

On behalf of the Foundation, Human Rights@Work (HR@W) and Löning - Human Rights & Responsible Business (Löning) conducted an analysis of the PAS 24000 to examine how it contributes to current and upcoming human rights due diligence-related requirements as a component of the FSSC 24000 Scheme. The comparing analysis provided us with an in-depth overview of how the FSSC 24000 Scheme can contribute to due diligence obligations coming from international authoritative guidelines such as the UN Guiding Principles on Business & Human Rights and OECD Due Diligence Guidance for the garment sector and for the agricultural sector, from national and from supranational/European (draft) due diligence legislation.

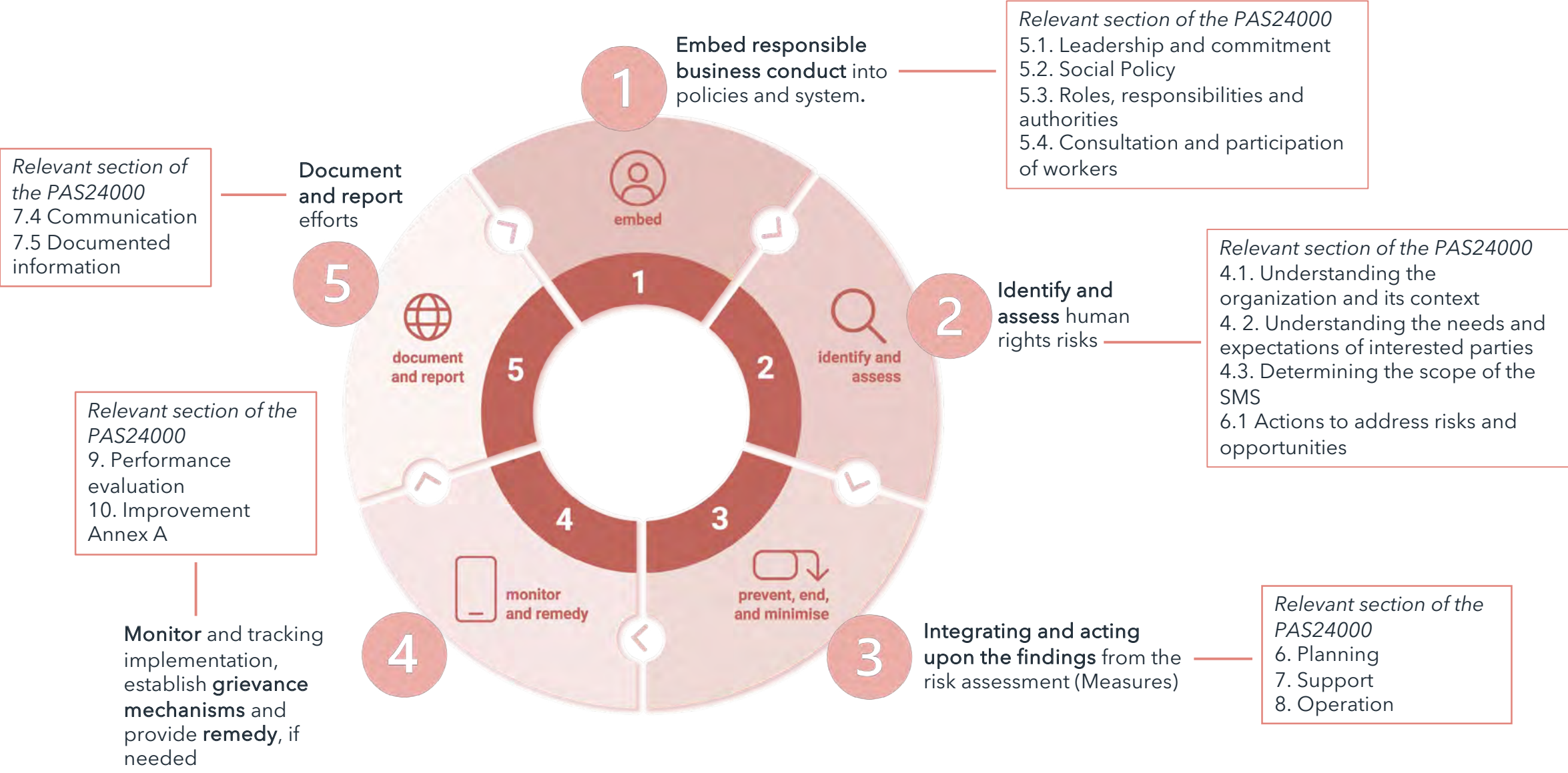
Together with Löning and HR@W, we worked on increasing our knowledge of the main civil society stakeholders: the organizations engaged in social sustainability-related issues within the food, leather, and textile sectors. FSSC investigated their role, position, agenda, and the main issues they focused on. A significant achievement was the announcement that the first manufacturers and retailers have started to accept FSSC 24000 for their supply base.

Since the launch of FSSC 24000, the target audience of Foundation FSSC has expanded. Our stakeholders are no longer limited to food safety professionals within the food supply chain, the domain in which we have established top-quality relationships based on our position as the market leader in certification with our FSSC 22000 Scheme for Food Safety Management Systems. The scope of the FSSC 24000 Scheme for social management systems is much broader and involves addressing decision-makers other than food safety-related personnel.

With the FSSC 24000 Scheme, we include HR, compliance, legal, human rights and sustainability champions, as well as supply chain professionals related to responsible sourcing as our stakeholders. The scope also consists of the non-food industry and related service suppliers. At the start of 2023, FSSC began contacting these new stakeholders. We invited them to participate in the governance structure of FSSC (our Board of Stakeholders and the inclusion of a new Advisory Committee dedicated to the FSSC 24000 Scheme in 2024). FSSC also directly connects to the industry with our public newsletters, webinars, and online content.

In September, we organized our first FSSC Insights webinar dedicated to the FSSC 24000 Scheme. It was open to any organization interested in social sustainability and how the concept focuses on the need to ‘put people first’ and how this will affect businesses. An inaugural FSSC 24000 Focus Event was held for India in October. Participants from major Certification Bodies joined to deep-dive into the Scheme structure and auditor qualification requirements.

PAS 24000 MAPPED TO HRDD KEY ELEMENTS



Source: Human Rights@Work and Löning - Human Rights & Responsible Business

STEPS TO STRENGTHEN MARKET ACCEPTANCE

IAF MLA APPROVAL

Foundation FSSC applied to endorse the FSSC 24000 Scheme as a sub-scope of the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) and their Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (MLA).

Once IAF members have endorsed the FSSC 24000 Scheme as a sub-scope, Certification Bodies require accreditation by an Accreditation Body recognized under the IAF MLA sub-scope for their FSSC 24000 certification activities, similar to the endorsement of the FSSC 22000 Scheme.

This accreditation provides assurance and trust in third-party certification through reliable and consistent Accreditation Body oversight in a globally harmonized manner.

ITC STANDARDS MAP

The International Trade Centre (ITC) is a United Nations agency that presents in-depth information on sustainability standards through its Standards Map database. It comprises baseline indicators allowing for benchmarking environmental and social sustainability standards performance.

Alongside the FSSC 22000 Scheme, we are in the process of benchmarking the FSSC 24000 Scheme and having it listed on the Standards Map database. This listing will enable interested stakeholders to access critical features in their decision-making process.


SSCI RECOGNITION

FSSC applied for Sustainable Supply Chain Initiative (SSCI) recognition in 2023 and has completed all the work plan steps. The SSCI is the Consumer Goods Forum (CGF) Coalition of Action that recognizes Scheme owners following a successful benchmarking process.


The benchmarking aims to provide clear guidance to the consumer goods industry that a Scheme demonstrably covers essential sustainability requirements and applies relevant governance and verification.

SSCI recognition of the FSSC 24000 Scheme will build client confidence and lead to global acceptance among those that adopt the SSCI principles, in the same way as the recognition of FSSC 22000 by the Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI), which is the CGF Coalition of Action overseeing food safety schemes.


OVERVIEW FSSC 24000



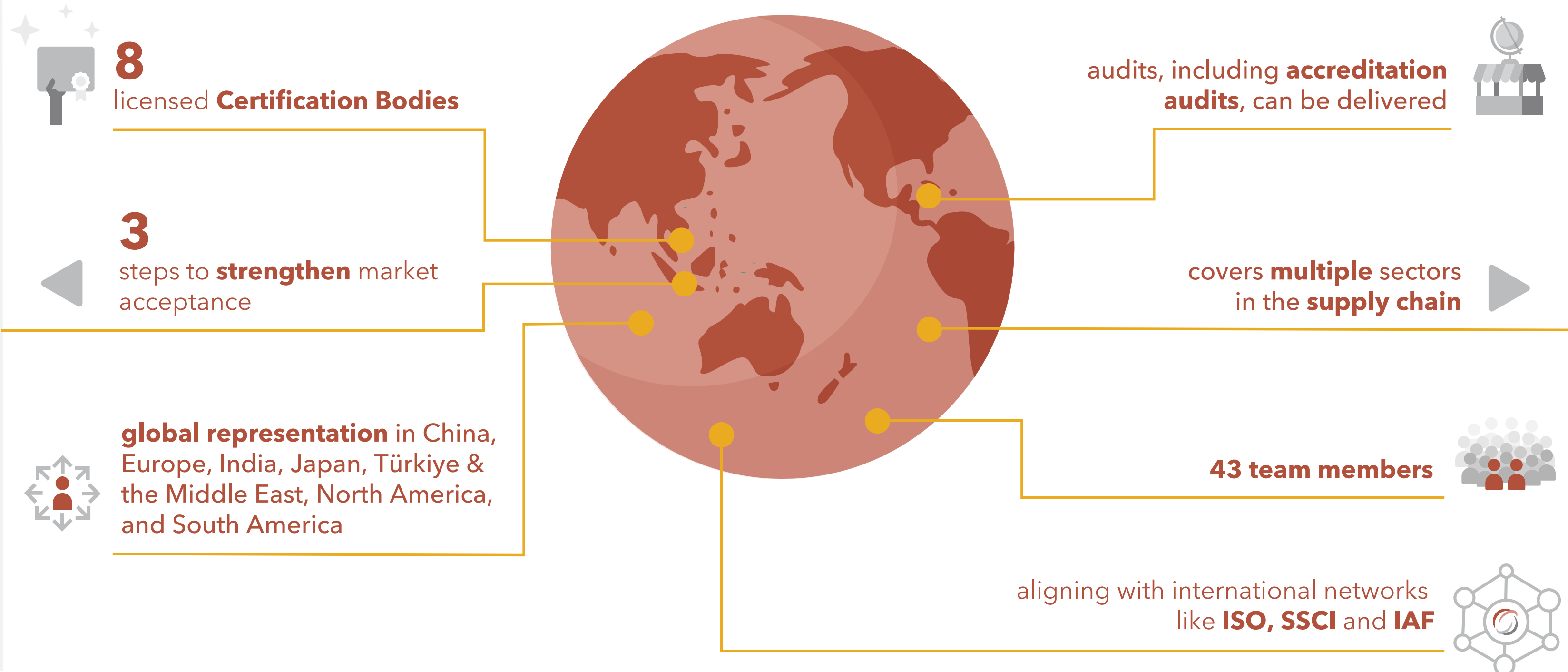
Endorsement from IAF MLA applied for and waiting on approval.



Benchmarking process for ITC Standards Map is still ongoing.



All required steps toward SSCI-recognition successfully completed.



- FOOD (INC. PETFOOD) & BEVERAGES
- TEXTILES, CLOTHING & LEATHER
- CHEMICAL INDUSTRY
- OTHER NON-FOOD INDUSTRY
- WHOLESALE & RETAIL, INC. AGENTS & BROKERS
- HOTELS & RESTAURANTS
- TRANSPORT & STORAGE
- OTHER (SOCIAL) SERVICES

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT IN 2023



31 December 2023

FSSC DIGITAL SOLUTIONS

The FSSC Assurance Platform includes over 34,000 audit report uploads annually, which is a considerable amount of valuable data. FSSC aims to transform this data into management information to support and share with our key stakeholders.

As FSSC takes information security very seriously, we are preparing to be ISO 27001 certified for Information Security Management Systems in 2024. Through FSSC's Digital Solutions, we intend to create more transparency for the consumer goods industry, drive behavior through key performance metrics, and improve trust. We co-create solutions with our partners to support the industry in adopting management information based on data, which is vital for continuous improvement within an organization's facilities and the related supply chain. Our main objective is to successfully introduce and grow the range of FSSC Digital Solutions tailored for the industry.

The Assurance Platform is a secure digital solution that enables transparency and informed decision-making for organizations in the consumer goods industry. FSSC On-Site is the service plan as part of our Assurance Platform that we launched in March 2023.

Key features for organizations that subscribe to FSSC On-Site include:

- Receive automatic FSSC certificate status updates.
- Create a tailored Certified Organization overview.
- Integrate with any application through an API sharing Certified Organization data.



In March, FSSC published a newsflash to our partners concerning the FSSC On-Site subscription release. We informed the industry about the FSSC On-Site service plan through our quarterly public newsletters and FSSC Insights webinars.

FSSC PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS

INTERNATIONAL ACCREDITATION FORUM

The International Accreditation Forum (IAF) has continued to play a crucial role in helping FSSC provide trust to the consumer goods industry. The IAF offers Accreditation Bodies the continued assurance that FSSC-licensed Certification Bodies comply with the relevant Scheme requirements.

During our annual gathering at the FSSC Insights Event in June 2023, Accreditation Bodies and the Foundation discussed an innovative data-driven assurance methodology for the future FSSC Integrity Program.

FSSC has applied to IAF seeking the endorsement of the new FSSC 24000 Scheme as a sub-scope of the Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (MLA). Once IAF members have endorsed the FSSC 24000 Scheme as a sub-scope, Certification Bodies can require accreditation by an Accreditation Body recognized under the IAF MLA sub-scope for their FSSC 24000 certification activities. This process is similar to the earlier endorsement achieved for the FSSC 22000 Scheme Version 6.

Accreditation provides assurance and trust in third-party certification through reliable and consistent audits. It verifies that our licensed Certification Bodies deliver certifications with appropriate Accreditation Body oversight in a globally harmonized manner.



During 2023, the IAF User Advisory Committee (UAC) elected new leadership, for which FSSC became involved in the Vice-Chair role. In addition, the newly created IAF Sustainability working group has also asked UAC to become involved in a co-convenor capacity, resulting in active FSSC involvement to help shape the future of sustainability assurance schemes.

As a first step, a multi-stakeholder group consisting of IAF, IIOC, IQNet, TIC Council, UNDP, and ISEAL aligned to issue a joint statement on delivering sustainability assurance through effective standards and accredited conformity assessment. This collaborative effort addresses urgent sustainability challenges by emphasizing the vital role of consensus-based standards and accredited conformity assessment in driving positive impact.

INTERNATIONAL STANDARDIZATION ORGANIZATION (ISO)

As a non-profit organization with certification Schemes that align with the ISO management systems approach, Foundation FSSC has been provided with Liaison status by the ISO. This status offers global implementation feedback to be shared during standardization meetings.

The ISO Sector Committee 17 (SC17) on *Management Systems for Food Safety*, led by Danish Standards, met in Singapore in 2023 to discuss the upcoming review of ISO 22000 (the food safety management system standard) and an ongoing revision of the ISO/TS 22002 series of standards specifying sector-specific pre-requisite programs. FSSC has been actively participating in several ISO working groups since 2016.

While adding food loss and waste requirements to FSSC 22000 Version 6, FSSC became involved in the ISO Sector Committee 20 on *Food Loss and Waste*, also led by Danish Standards. This new group focuses on delivering an ISO management system standard specifically for food loss and waste. In April 2023, FSSC representatives attended the group’s third meeting in Copenhagen, Denmark, to share our approach toward food loss and waste and ensure continued alignment between ISO and FSSC Scheme requirements.

“ FSSC has been actively participating in several ISO 22000 working groups since 2016. ”

WORLD PACKAGING ORGANIZATION

The World Packaging Organizaiton (WPO) is a non-profit, international federation of national packaging organizations offering auditor training through its membership. Since Version 3 of the FSSC 22000 Scheme, when FSSC added the packaging scope, auditors are required to take a course like those offered by WPO members worldwide.

During the November 2023 WPO board meeting in Cape Town, South Africa, FSSC obtained affiliate membership to strengthen the collaboration between the two like-minded non-profit organizations. Both organizations have agreed to focus on food safety, sustainability, education, and packaging.



VOLUNTARY THIRD-PARTY ASSURANCE PROGRAMS

Food safety is a shared responsibility between the food industry, competent authorities, and consumers. While the industry is mainly responsible for ensuring the safety of the food it produces, competent authorities oversee regulatory management and food safety control.



Over time, buyers in domestic and international markets demanded additional food safety requirements from the food industry, and voluntary Third-Party Assurance (vTPA) programs, commonly referred to as private food safety certification schemes, were introduced.

Implementing a vTPA program supports the industry in conforming with those additional food safety-related requirements. Additionally, the vTPA approach supports competent authorities to effectively fulfill their functions as an oversight body to guarantee consumer protection:

- The EU Regulation 882/2004–Official Feed and Food Controls was the first legal act that incorporated the use of data generated by vTPA for more informed decision-making. It enabled regulators to develop and test new data-driven approaches.
- In 2021, regulators adopted the Principles and Guidelines for the Assessment and Use of Voluntarily Third-Party Assurance Programs–CXG 93-2021 (referred to hereafter as the Codex guidance) during the 44th Codex Alimentarius Commission meeting.
- The Codex guidance integrates Certification Bodies’ criteria on conformity assessments and accreditation to reinforce the credibility and integrity of vTPA programs.

FSSC is the leading global, non-profit, and independent Scheme owner that provides trust and delivers impact to the consumer goods industry. As the owner of the FSSC 22000 Scheme for Food Safety Management Systems, FSSC supports the vTPA approach. With over 34,000 certificates, FSSC 22000 is the most widely applied vTPA program globally for processed food.

The Scheme supports competent authorities by independently verifying food safety management practices in the food industry through licensed Certification Bodies and its public register of Certified Organizations on the FSSC website.

In 2023, FSSC supported UNIDO in promoting the roll-out of vTPA in Africa by participating in their panel discussion during an event in Egypt. This was followed by the roll-out in the United Arab Emirates, where FSSC joined their panel discussion in Dubai.

GIVING BACK WITH UNIDO

UNIDO and Foundation FSSC signed a trust fund agreement in 2022 to promote food safety from farm to fork in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). The strategic partnership aims to develop robust food safety systems in selected LMICs through capacity-building activities to reduce the socio-economic impact of foodborne diseases.

Specified LMICs receive assistance in creating a food safety culture at different levels. The aim is to ensure that the food produced is safe for local consumption, from food safety practitioners and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to national food associations and food safety authorities.

In 2023, FSSC actively supported UNIDO in the following projects:

Strengthening certification services to enhance the export competitiveness of small and medium agribusinesses under the World Bank-funded Export Development Project in Mongolia.

The overall objective of the Export Development Project was to aid Mongolian SMEs in the non-mining sectors in strengthening their export capabilities and expanding access to export markets through improved compliance with market requirements. UNIDO’s partnership with FSSC in Mongolia supported, in particular, the vegetable supply chain through training for organic farmers from Selenge and Darkhan provinces. The training focused on food safety during each step of the supply chain from field to market, including production, storage, transport, and market.

“ Thanks to the contributions of FSSC, UNIDO continues to provide training, equipment and tools to reduce the socio-economic impact of foodborne disease where it is most needed. ”



Inclusive and Sustainable Development of the Tomato Value Chain in Egypt.

The project helps the tomato value chain by establishing and sustaining a Tomato Learning and Service Center (TLSC). UNIDO’s partnership with FSSC supported the TLSC through the following activities:

- Purchase of equipment for tomato processing and tools to set up laboratory activities.
- High-level capacity building - Train the Trainers - for food safety practitioners in the areas of good agricultural practices (GAP), good hygiene practices (GHP), and good manufacturing practices (GMP) related to the production and processing of tomatoes.
- Developing a technical guideline for food safety practices in the tomato processing industry. This guideline will improve tomato processors’ access to foreign markets since most barriers against Egyptian tomato products in international markets are related to food safety and standards.

Thanks to the contribution of FSSC, UNIDO continues to provide training, equipment, and tools to reduce the socio-economic impact of foodborne disease where it is most needed. FSSC will continue to donate funds and provide knowledge resources to support food safety capacity building for local production and consumption in those countries. Giving back is a key element to achieving FSSC’s vision of creating a better world, and the partnership with UNIDO forms an integral part of our giving-back strategy.

UN GLOBAL COMPACT: COMMUNICATION ON ENGAGEMENT (COE)

“

On behalf of the FSSC Management Board, I am pleased to reaffirm that we have maintained our support for and involvement in the UN Global Compact activities. We are proud of the progress we have made in 2023 with our humble contribution to help achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Aldin Hilbrands, CEO of Foundation FSSC

”

The *United Nations Global Compact Network Netherlands* aims to accelerate and upscale the positive impact of the Dutch business community on the SDGs to improve the lives of current and future generations. During 2023, the Netherlands Network has allowed us to continue participating in many activities to build capacity in the FSSC team on specific sustainability impact topics.

We participated in local gatherings to exchange opportunities and challenges in implementing the Living Wage concept in the supply chain. FSSC actively engaged in remote and interactive peer learning groups focused on relevant social and environmental impact areas such as human rights due diligence, gender equality, and climate action. These groups have formed a safe space to connect, share, and learn about critical sustainability issues and to expand our network of like-minded organizations.

Media organizations, employees, consumers, clients, partners, NGOs, and investors are increasingly taking note of the human rights impact. In response, organizations seek ways to actively respect human rights and prevent adverse human rights impacts while managing their reputation. In 2023, FSSC successfully participated in the UN Global Compact Business & Human Rights Accelerator Program.

This inspiring 6-month journey involved engaging with experts worldwide and participating in technical and peer-learning sessions. The program has enabled us to understand how to enhance our existing human rights due diligence processes and take meaningful action based on the UN Guiding Principles on Business & Human Rights and the Ten Principles of the UN Global Compact. As a starting point, the learning will help us enhance the applicable human and labor rights principles within our internal daily operations.

Regarding climate action and the environment, the UN Global Compact program emphasizes the importance of achieving carbon neutrality to meet the commitments of the Paris Agreement. It includes guidance on setting science-based plans for transitioning to net zero emissions by 2050.

At the 2023 FSSC Insights Event in Amsterdam, all main stakeholders gathered again to discuss strategic issues of common interest. FSSC's climate impact has started with reducing and compensating for our direct scope 1 Green House Gas (GHG) emissions. A commitment to become carbon neutral by 2030, also covering our scope 2 and 3 indirect GHG emissions, has been communicated, which is now being further worked out and implemented.

THE 10 PRINCIPLES OF THE UN GLOBAL COMPACT

HUMAN RIGHTS	PRINCIPLE 1	Businesses should support and respect the protection of inter-nationally proclaimed human rights.
	PRINCIPLE 2	Businesses should make sure that they are not complicit in hu-man rights abuses.
LABOR STANDARDS	PRINCIPLE 3	Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining.
	PRINCIPLE 4	Businesses should uphold the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labor.
	PRINCIPLE 5	Businesses should uphold the abolition of child labor.
	PRINCIPLE 6	Businesses should uphold the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.
ENVIRONMENT	PRINCIPLE 7	Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges.
	PRINCIPLE 8	Businesses should undertake initiatives to promote greater envi-ronmental responsibility.
	PRINCIPLE 9	Businesses should encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.
ANTI-CORRUPTION	PRINCIPLE 10	Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.

FOUNDATION FSSC INTERNAL IMPACT

FSSC Values & Commitment	Impact Actions & Measurement of Outcome 2023	Global Compact Business Principle	SDG
FSSC is committed to the principle of equal employment opportunity for all employees and providing a work environment free of discrimination and harassment.	<p>FSSC has a Code of Conduct in place applicable to its employees.</p> <p>FSSC Management Team Gender Balance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Female: 6 (COO / Scheme & Integrity / HR / Learning & Development / Marketing & Communications)Male: 5 (CEO / CMO / Market Development / Digital Services / Operations) <p>FSSC employs a multinational team consisting of 43 employees of 20 different nationalities.</p> <p>FSSC has an externally validated and transparent remuneration policy to support equal pay for equal work.</p>	All Principles	<div><div>4QUALITY EDUCATION</div><div>5GENDER EQUALITY</div><div>8DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH</div><div>10REDUCED INEQUALITIES</div></div>
FSSC ensures that all team members are clear about the ethical behavior we expect of them.	<p>FSSC team members have signed a Code of Conduct in which they commit themselves to the Foundation’s values and conduct themselves ethically in their work.</p> <p>All new FSSC team members are trained by an induction plan.</p>	All Principles	<div><div>4QUALITY EDUCATION</div><div>5GENDER EQUALITY</div><div>8DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH</div><div>10REDUCED INEQUALITIES</div><div>13CLIMATE ACTION</div></div>
FSSC is committed to working with organizations whose values align with ours.	<p>FSSC has a Code of Ethics in place that covers ethical behavior expectations for all our partners and suppliers.</p>	All Principles	<div><div>5GENDER EQUALITY</div><div>8DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH</div><div>10REDUCED INEQUALITIES</div><div>13CLIMATE ACTION</div></div>
FSSC Employee Satisfaction	<p>FSSC has performed a Job Quality Survey in 2023. The survey aimed to gather overall employee satisfaction levels and identify areas for improvement in the work environment and company policies.</p> <p>The scope includes all FSSC employees and consultants and covers aspects such as job fulfillment, workplace culture, relationships with colleagues and management, work-life balance, and opportunities for growth and development.</p> <p>96% of participants in the survey rated an overall job satisfaction level of 8 or higher. The findings highlighted key action plans to enhance training development facilities and career development opportunities, promote cross-functional communication, strengthen team engagement, and promote health and well-being of team members within the organization.</p>	Principle 1,2,3,4,5,6	<div><div>3GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING</div><div>4QUALITY EDUCATION</div><div>5GENDER EQUALITY</div><div>8DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH</div><div>10REDUCED INEQUALITIES</div></div>

FOUNDATION FSSC INTERNAL IMPACT

FSSC Values & Commitment	Impact Actions & Measurement of Outcome 2023	Global Compact Business Principle	SDG
Engage with Global Compact Local Networks	FSSC participated in the UN Global Compact Network Netherlands, by joining the Peer Learning Groups Human Rights Due Diligence, Gender Equality and Climate Action.	Principle 1,2,6,7,8,9	<div><div>3GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING</div><div>4QUALITY EDUCATION</div><div>5GENDER EQUALITY</div><div>8DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH</div><div>10REDUCED INEQUALITIES</div><div>13CLIMATE ACTION</div></div>
Join the SDG Ambition Accelerator	FSSC’s Technical Manager Social Sustainability successfully completed the UN Global Compact Business & Human Rights Accelerator, together with other professionals from around the world, to advance human rights within FSSC.	Principle 1,2,3,4,5,6,10	<div><div>3GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING</div><div>4QUALITY EDUCATION</div><div>5GENDER EQUALITY</div><div>8DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH</div><div>10REDUCED INEQUALITIES</div></div>
Working in partnerships	<p>FSSC continued its membership of the IDH/ISEAL working group on the living wage.</p> <p>FSSC has signed a cooperation agreement with UNIDO to build capacity for food safety management in the supply chain.</p> <p>In 2023, the cooperation focused on two specific projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• An Export Development Project in Mongolia that in particular supported the vegetable supply chain;• A project in Egypt to support the Inclusive and Sustainable Development of the Tomato Value Chain, by purchasing laboratory equipment and tools and by capacity building for food safety practitioners related to good agricultural practices (GAP), good hygiene practices (GHP) and good manufacturing practices (GMP).	All Principles	All SDGs
FSSC Environmental Impact	<p>All FSSC employees and supporting partners received a green gift at the FSSC Insights Event in Amsterdam 2023, by donating a tree to create our FSSC Forest. In 2023 the FSSC Forest grew to 300 trees planted.</p> <p>FSSC Commuting & Travel policy encourages environmentally friendly traveling by supporting public transport for all employees.</p> <p>FSSC compensates all business travel flights booked by its travel agency that joins the Climate Neutral Group. In 2023, we have offset 50,12 tons of CO2 equivalents.</p>	Principle 7, 8, 9	<div><div>13CLIMATE ACTION</div></div>

FOUNDATION FSSC EXTERNAL IMPACT

FSSC Values & Commitment	Impact actions & Measurement of Outcome 2023	Global Compact Business Principle	SDG
FSSC 22000 Food Safety Management System Certification	<p>Ensuring safe food with 34,084 FSSC 22000 certificates facilitating food security and economic development.</p> <p>Provision of safe food for consumers worldwide, thereby minimizing food waste.</p> <p>FSSC 22000 Scheme version 6 has been launched on 1 April 2023 and will become effective from 1 April 2024. It includes new requirements on food waste that will result in GHG emission reduction.</p>	Principle 1,2,7,8,9	<div><div>1 NO POVERTY</div><div>2 ZERO HUNGER</div><div>3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING</div><div>8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH</div><div>12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION</div><div>13 CLIMATE ACTION</div></div>
FSSC 24000 Social Sustainability Management System Certification	<p>FSSC launched a new social sustainability certification Scheme in 2022 that will support organizations in implementing socially acceptable working conditions in the consumer goods manufacturing supply chain.</p> <p>FSSC has applied for the SSCI benchmark process for the FSSC 24000 Scheme. SSCI is the Consumer Goods Forum’s Coalition of Action for Sustainable Supply Chains, and FSSC successfully completed all the steps in the work plan in 2023 toward SSCI recognition.</p>	Principle 1,2,3,4,5,6,10	<div><div>3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING</div><div>4 QUALITY EDUCATION</div><div>5 GENDER EQUALITY</div><div>6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION</div><div>8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH</div><div>10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES</div><div>16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS</div></div>



FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT FOUNDATION FSSC:



WEBSITE

EMAIL

LINKEDIN

X

YOUTUBE

