

# Sustainability and Voluntary Certification in the Kenyan Tea Sector

Developing an action plan to address opportunities and challenges

REPORT OF THE MEETING HELD IN  
NAIROBI, KENYA, MARCH 6, 2019





## Workshop Partners

### INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) is an independent think tank headquartered in Winnipeg, Canada that delivers the knowledge to act. Established in 1990, IISD's mission is to promote human development and environmental sustainability. IISD's big-picture view allows it to address the root causes of some of the greatest challenges facing our planet today – ecological destruction, social exclusion, unfair laws and economic and social rules, and a changing climate. With offices in Winnipeg, Geneva, Ottawa, and Toronto, IISD's work impacts lives in nearly 100 countries.

The State of Sustainability Initiatives (SSI) is an international transparency and capacity-building effort aimed at improving strategic planning and sustainable development outcomes related to Voluntary Sustainability Standards (VSS). Over the past several years, through its work under the SSI, the IISD has established itself as the foremost reference for information on the characteristics and market performance of leading sustainability standards.

### TEA DIRECTORATE, KENYA

The Tea Directorate is a department of the Agriculture and Food Authority (AFA). The general mandate of AFA –Tea Directorate, as guided by the Crops Act 2013 and AFA mission, is to develop, promote, and regulate the tea industry in Kenya for profitability and sustainability.

The Directorate is mandated to license tea manufacturing factories; to register buyers, brokers, packers, management agents and any other person dealing in tea; and promote Kenyan tea in both local and the international markets.

### KENYA PRIVATE SECTOR ALLIANCE (KEPSA)

KEPSA is the private sector apex and umbrella body set up in 2003 to bring together the business community with a single voice to engage in and influence public policy for an enabling business environment. The Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA) is a limited liability membership organization. With over 500,000 direct and indirect members organized through business membership organizations and corporate members, KEPSA is a key player in championing the interests of the Kenyan business community in trade, investment, and industrial relations.

### SUSTAINABLE INCLUSIVE BUSINESS (SIB), KENYA

Sustainable Inclusive Business – *the Knowledge centre* is an initiative of KEPSA Foundation supported by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Nairobi. Established in 2015, the knowledge centre aims to be a neutral platform that empowers, supports and connects businesses to reduce their carbon footprint, while increasing their positive impact on the environment and society by facilitating dialogue, sharing knowledge, building partnerships, and providing business support. Sustainable Inclusive Business focuses on four main thematic areas: people, the redefinition of businesses' value, biodiversity, and the circular economy. Sustainable Inclusive Business has actively promoted the circular economy through workshops, round table meetings, matchmaking events, and recently through its involvement in the First National PET Forum and subsequently the Blue Economy side event on Marine Plastics.



## Executive Summary

Voluntary Sustainability Certification (VSC) has grown rapidly in Kenya over the past decade, driven by significant buyer demand for Rainforest Alliance (RA) certification. This development has been coupled with rapid growth in participation in the Fair Trade and the former UTZ programs (now merged with RA), a dynamic that has brought opportunities and challenges for the tea sector. To address these issues, the facilitating organizations (Kenya Tea Directorate, Sustainable Inclusive Business/KEPSA, and the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD)), through the support of the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) convened key representatives from all segments of the Kenyan tea value chain for a multistakeholder meeting of the sector, held on March 6, 2019, in Nairobi, Kenya.

The meeting's objective was to identify key challenges related to VSC and collectively define strategies to address them. It was designed as a workshop, and also focused on the issue of developing credible data collection and sharing systems related to VSCs' performance and how sharing such information efficiently can strengthen the entire sector.

The workshop built on a national consultation the Tea Directorate led in the sector, which concluded that the multiplicity of VSCs is a critical issue that must be addressed. From that consultation, it was recommended that a national Tea Sustainability

Standard be developed, preferably linked to a regional sustainable agriculture standard and benchmarked to international standards.

The workshop also presented the results of a needs assessment on VSCs in the tea sector that IISD conducted in the fall of 2018, which identified a series of benefits and challenges, along with related recommendations designed to maximize VSC benefits. These recommendations included: policy support; information sharing, especially on VSC costs, benefits, and impacts; improved training opportunities; and support for market development and access. The recommendations also identified the development of concrete tools, such as a Multiple Certification Internal Control Management Guide; mapping standards to national strategies and policies to strengthen VSCs' value as a tool for implementing sustainable development strategies; building comprehensive, conditioned incentive packages, directed in particular toward smallholder producers; and developing information sharing systems on VSCs to allow all stakeholders to have the credible, independent information they need to make decisions on VSCs.

Ms. Jane Ngige, who led the creation of a very successful Kenya GAP (Good Agriculture Practice standard) in the flower sector, gave recommendations on how a comprehensive national standard, benchmarked against international standards (GLOBAL GAP), could empower the Kenyan tea

sector and create a framework to guide sustainable development, while also marketing the product internationally. The workshop also included Rainforest Alliance's presentation on impacts of VSCs and a high-level, multistakeholder panel session that focused on key challenges of VSCs for the sector, such as costs, lack of market uptake, multiplicity of standards, limited smallholder capacity to meet documentation requirements, etc. The workshop also emphasized the need to work together as a sector to confront these issues, and included breakout sessions where working groups brainstormed various recommendations. These were centred on creating national standards, building capacity of stakeholders to address and manage VSCs, and sharing information throughout the supply chain.

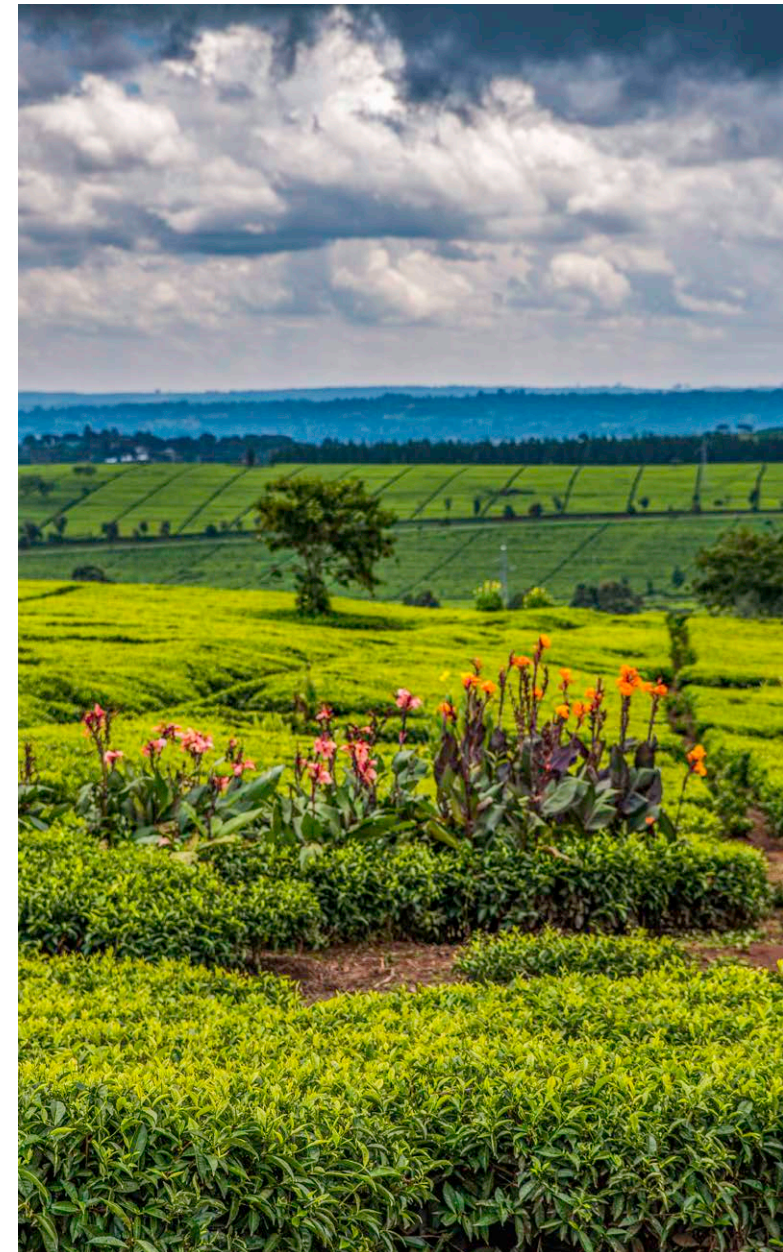
The meeting was an opportunity to discuss these assessments and confirm responsive actions.

Mr. Muriithi, AFA Director General, issued a call for action, stating that "a collective action plan needs to be developed to address these challenges." Therefore, from the results of this workshop a collective action plan will be drafted and reviewed by the workshop participants and other key stakeholders to implement a collective and concrete response to the opportunities and challenges of VSC in the Kenyan tea sector.



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## Acronyms and Abbreviations

<b>AFA-TD</b>	Agriculture and Food Authority, Tea Directorate	<b>KEBS</b>	Kenya Bureau of Standards
<b>CB</b>	Certification Body	<b>KEPSA</b>	Kenya Private Sector Alliance
<b>EATTA</b>	East Africa Tea Trade Association	<b>KETEPA</b>	Kenya Tea Packers Limited
<b>EPC</b>	Export Promotion Council	<b>KTDA</b>	Kenya Tea Development Agency
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN	<b>KTGA</b>	Kenya Tea Growers Association
<b>FAST</b>	Finance Alliance for Sustainable Trade	<b>PO</b>	Producer Organization
<b>FOSS</b>	Flowers and Ornamentals Sustainability Standards (Kenya)	<b>QMS</b>	Quality Management Systems
<b>FT</b>	Fair Trade	<b>RA</b>	Rainforest Alliance
<b>FtF</b>	Farmer-to-Farmer (training)	<b>ROI</b>	Return on Investment
<b>GAP</b>	Good Agricultural Practice	<b>SIDA</b>	Swedish International Development Agency
<b>IIED</b>	International Institute for Environment and Development	<b>SMEs</b>	small and medium-sized enterprises
<b>IISD</b>	International Institute for Sustainable Development	<b>SSI</b>	State of Sustainability Initiatives Program
<b>ISO</b>	International Standards Organization	<b>TOT</b>	training of trainers
<b>ITC</b>	International Trade Centre	<b>UNFSS</b>	United Nations Forum on Sustainability Standards
<b>KFC</b>	Kenya Flower Council	<b>VSC</b>	Voluntary Sustainability Certification
		<b>WUR</b>	Wageningen University



## Introduction

### Background

Voluntary Sustainability Certification (VSC) has become increasingly important in international commodity sectors, as shown in the Kenyan tea sector, though its growing use has also come with challenges. Therefore, it is critical to identify and address the opportunities and challenges that VSC presents. A stakeholder consultation in the Kenyan tea sector identified several key issues, including costs of certification (fixed and variable), relevance of certification requirements to the local situation, effectiveness of auditing processes, interest in national standards and limited demand for certified product.

To understand the impact of VSCs and how to use them most effectively, credible impact data on the environmental, social and economic costs and benefits of these programs is needed. In addition, the methodologies used to collect this type of data must be sound and comparable, allowing for sharing data sets across the sector and having a comprehensive understanding of what works and what needs improvement. A better understanding of the key issues related to VSC is necessary for assessing income impacts, production and compliance costs, ways to access support services and affordable finance, the expansion of opportunities for women and young people, natural resource and environmental management guidelines, and VSC's

impact on poverty reduction. This information is essential for using VSCs to help achieve sustainable development objectives for the sector, particularly smallholder poverty concerns.

The following document presents the interventions from the various speakers and panel session, as well as the results of the initial needs assessments conducted by the Tea Directorate and IISD. It also includes feedback from the event's working group sessions. The conclusion outlines a series of next steps, which focus on developing a concrete joint action plan to address the challenges identified. The scope of these challenges will require a comprehensive, joint response from the sector's stakeholders.

### Workshop Objective

The workshop's overall objective was to discuss options for improving the Kenyan tea sector's sustainability and the benefits received by producers, while supporting national and sector sustainability strategies, by improving the effectiveness of VSC as a sustainable development tool. The meeting brought together the sector's key stakeholders to collectively identify and address challenges and opportunities related to VSC and to share effective and efficient methodologies to gather and share credible data and information.

The meeting's specific objectives were to:

- (a) Present the issue of VSC internationally and in the tea sector specifically.
- (b) Identify challenges and opportunities related to VSC in the sector and the information and capacity-building needs required to address them.





## Opening Session

### MR. ANTHONY MURIITHI, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF KENYA AGRICULTURE AND FOOD AUTHORITY

The workshop was opened by Mr. Anthony Muriithi, the Director General of the Kenya Agriculture and Food Authority, who acknowledged the value of this platform in bringing together tea industry stakeholders and partners to exchange and discuss ideas for ensuring the industry's sustainability and competitiveness.

He stated that the tea industry remains the country's leading socioeconomic driver, directly supporting livelihoods of over 684,000 farmers who are engaged in tea growing and over 5 million Kenyans that are directly and indirectly involved in the tea industry value chain. This subsector also accounts for 2 per cent of the country's gross domestic product and 8 per cent of total exports.

Despite the great contribution to the livelihoods of many farmers and to the economy, the tea sector continues to face various issues, which are currently being addressed. They include:

#### 1. **Multiplicity of international standards/ harmonization of standards**

Tea producers currently face multiple, costly international standards. These various international standards, as well as phytosanitary standards, KEBS and ISO certification programs, need to be harmonized, which the government is working to achieve.

#### 2. **Payment of 75 per cent of the auction price to farmers.**

The latest payments to farmers by the Kenya Tea Development Agency (KTDA) fully complied with the Tea Directorate's recommendation, and the levels of these payments will be sustained going forward. Plantations/estate companies buying green leaf from farmers have been asked to follow suit so that farmers see greater benefits. Farmer earnings are dropping significantly year by year due to higher labour, energy, and certification costs.

#### 3. **Value chain review**

Mr. Muriithi said that a study has been conducted across the value chain to identify specific challenges and opportunities. This will help ensure that these initiatives are implemented in an informed way, thus improving the industry's sustainability and competitiveness.

#### 4. **Collaboration**

The ongoing collaboration between the Tea Directorate and Export Promotion Council (EPC) to support small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the sector is encouraging. The promotion of SMEs in tea will facilitate young people's involvement. Mr. Muriithi noted that they are engaging with partners





who are willing to support the Kenyan tea industry by conducting studies on challenges and opportunities. These partners include the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD), the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), Sustainable Inclusive Business (SIB) and the International Trade Centre (ITC).

Mr. Muriithi further highlighted some of the key concerns involving Voluntary Sustainability Certification (VSC) as identified by the Tea Directorate through stakeholder engagement. They include:

- (a) Costs of certification (fixed and variable)
- (b) Relevance of certification requirements to the local situation
- (c) Effectiveness of auditing processes
- (d) Interest in developing national standards
- (e) Limited demand for certified product

Mr. Muriithi closed with a call to action, urging stakeholders to develop a collective action plan for tackling these challenges.



## Session 1. Voluntary Sustainability Certification in the Kenyan Tea Sector

### **MS. KARIN BOOMSMA, DIRECTOR, SUSTAINABLE INCLUSIVE BUSINESS (SIB)**

Ms. Boomsma, who served as the workshop facilitator, made an opening statement about the importance of sustainability in business, including in agriculture. She argued that agriculture must function sustainably for the benefit of all involved, and also ensure the sector's overall success. She emphasized that sustainable tea production is the future, and all stakeholders need to become directly involved in understanding sustainable business concepts and how to implement sustainable business

practices. Ms. Boomsma closed by stating that VSC can be an important tool to support businesses in reaching these goals.

### **MR. CHRIS WUNDERLICH, ADVISORY SERVICES COORDINATOR, IISD**

#### **What are Voluntary Sustainability Certifications (VSCs)?**

Mr. Chris Wunderlich, Advisory Services Coordinator at IISD, followed by introducing fundamental elements of VSCs to the participants. He highlighted that VSCs are initiatives mainly developed by



private bodies. These include commercial and non-commercial entities, as well as non-governmental organizations (NGOs), operating in multiple sectors of the economy that aim to promote economically, environmentally and socially sustainable production and trade practices. They are also used as communication tools to provide information to consumers as well as for business-to-business communication. While voluntary, they can become a market entry hurdle in practice. They focus on “Credence characteristics,” which are attributes that cannot be verified through examination of the product. These include production, processing, management, traceability, and environmental, social, and economic practices. VSCs are particularly prominent in the food and agricultural sector; but are also significant in textiles/clothing, toys, timber products, natural cosmetics, biofuels and electronics, among others.

VSCs are used to promote sustainable agriculture. Global interest in sustainable agriculture, and therefore VSCs, has been driven by:

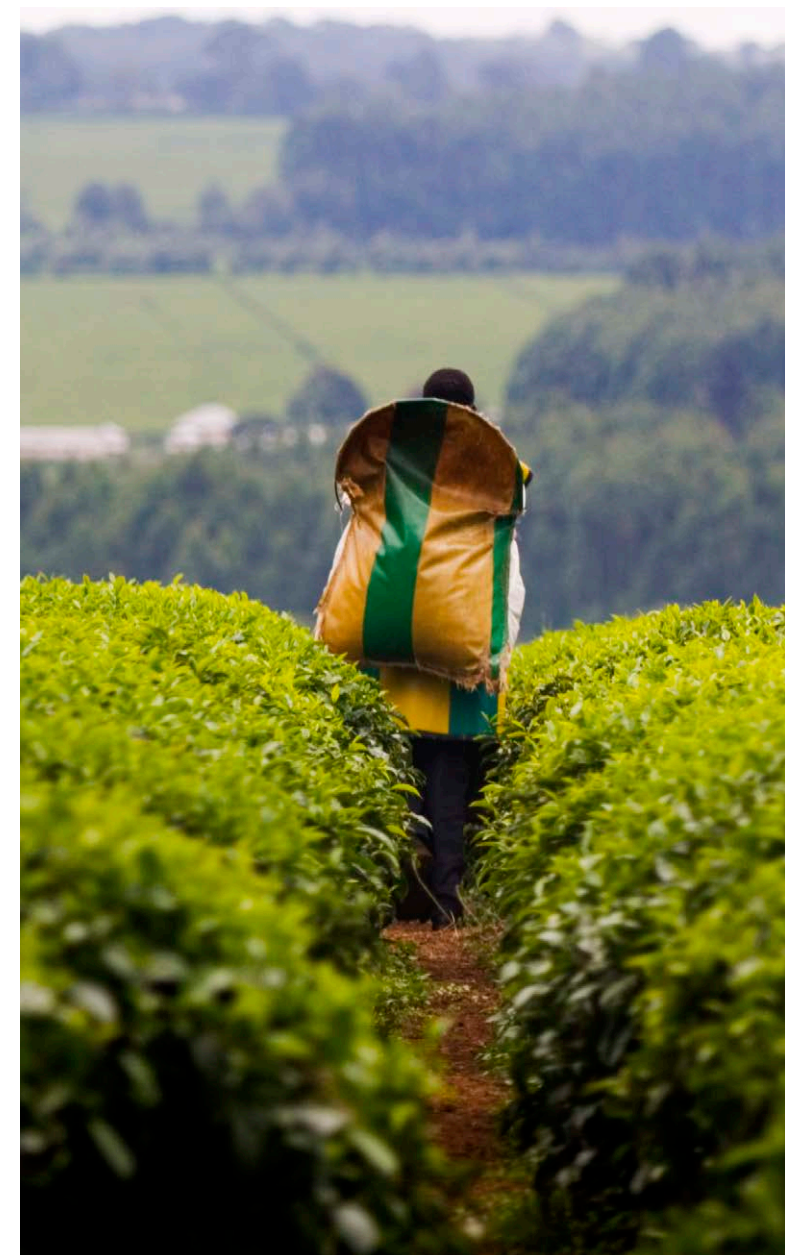
- Concerns over the negative environmental, social, and economic impacts of agricultural practices.
- Linkages between (sustainable) agriculture practices and their potential to address key public policy issues (i.e., climate change, water conservation, urban migration).
- Rapid market growth, further driven by major companies making large sourcing commitments for certified products.
- VSCs’ potential as a tool for supporting sustainable development.
- The comprehensive, multistakeholder approach that often underpins VSCs’ structure.

According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, the private sector is largely driven to embrace sustainability standards due to:<sup>1</sup>

- Positive impact on supply management (i.e., product quality, quantity)
- Pressure from shareholders or customers
- Buyer/sourcing requirements
- Pressure from NGOs or civil society
- Opportunities for co-financing
- Instances where they help avoid/address regulations
- Opportunity to improve relationships with key actors throughout the supply chain
- Potential savings and lower costs.

Following his remarks on drivers behind VSCs, Mr. Wunderlich stated that Voluntary Sustainability Certification is a growing and dynamic global reality that presents both clear benefits and real challenges. In the Kenyan tea sector, VSCs are clearly at scale and having impacts at many levels. Notably, VSCs’ objectives often parallel and/or complement national and sector strategies, and can serve as a potential implementation tool to support the achievement of sustainable development objectives at the national and international levels. Their benefits and challenges, particularly for smallholders, need to be properly addressed. This should be based on a participatory needs assessment.

<sup>1</sup> Source: CIAT (2016).





## Results of VSC Needs Assessment: Benefits, challenges and needs regarding VSC

Building on the importance of a needs-based approach, Mr. Wunderlich continued his presentation by providing key results from a sector-specific needs assessment on VSC conducted by IISD in August–December 2018. The assessment involving approximately 80 key stakeholders in the Kenyan tea sector, and included individual interviews with key actors along with a questionnaire, the text of which is available in Appendix 3.

Interviewees and respondents also provided recommendations to address the needs identified; such as information sharing, capacity building, and the development of concrete tools. Along with presenting the key results from the assessment, Mr. Wunderlich stated that this information, along with the outcomes from this workshop, would form the basis of a joint action plan to address challenges and maximize opportunities in the tea sector through VSC.

**Summary of needs assessment results:** The following are key responses from the needs assessment interviews and questionnaire, grouped under the thematic areas used to structure the assessment:

- Benefits and challenges of VSC
- Information and support needs of different stakeholder groups
- VSCs' value as a policy tool and for addressing poverty alleviation
- Concrete tools and actions.

### 1. BENEFITS OF VSC:

- Improved market access:
  - Achieve competitive edge and differentiate product from other similar goods
  - Gain product acceptance by international buyers
  - Facilitate direct link/communication between farmers and consumers
  - Key for branding
- Increased competitiveness: stimulates innovation, improves professional management, ensure transparency and good governance (i.e., of farmer groups).
- Increased farmer awareness on economic, social, and environmental issues. This awareness can serve as a means to ensuring the adoption of environmental best practices, which can lead to environmental stability.
- Increased access to training and capacity building.
- Improved environmental, biodiversity conservation: sustainable resource management (efficient input use).
- Improved health and safety and social welfare.
- Motivated workers, who yield better productivity; improved worker remuneration.
- Effective risk assessment tool: facilitates analysis, intervention, and evidence-based communication.
- Mechanism to ensure multistakeholder, multi-issue integration.

### Challenges of VSC:

- **Prohibitive costs:** Need to create awareness of benefits of certification and address training and audit costs, certification fees, and short recertification cycles.
- **No tangible price premiums:** Investment costs not covered, meaning that farmers have to absorb investment costs with no clear return on that same investment.
- **Standards implementation not always viable:** Criteria do not always apply to local situation. *Documentation requirements are not practical for smallholders.*
- **Slow adoption rates due to age, culture and education constraints:** VSCs not understood by farmers due to “top-down” approach. VSCs are often seen as “elitist,” especially by smallholders.
- **Multiplicity of certifications** causing fatigue.

### 2. INFORMATION AND SUPPORT NEEDS: POLICY-MAKERS

- Clear analysis of costs, benefits, and impacts through objective case studies.
- More information on benefits of improved market access, especially when country has export-led growth strategy. Benefits include sustained competitiveness and resource efficiency.
- More information on which legislation would be relevant to meeting certification criteria on worker safety and environmental conservation, protection of rainforests and biodiversity.
- Improved enforcement of government policies through regular training of staff. Engagement



with policy-makers should be through established systems and structures.

- Policy-makers should design and implement policies that support certification compliance, e.g., removal of eucalyptus, waste management, etc.
- Policy-makers can provide strategies and policies that can promote VSC while educating businesses on their use.

### 3. INFORMATION AND SUPPORT NEEDS: FARMERS

- More information on benefits, such as on premiums, better consumer/buyer loyalty, and more professional farm management. Information on fixed and variable costs is also important.

- Support on compliance and audit costs. This support should not be limited to the first year of certification.
- Better capacity for conducting cost-benefit analysis, which should be part of VSC training.
- Better understanding of VSC-related processes and requirements. Producer groups should work together so that all achieve sustainability, using farmer-to-farmer (FtF) and Farmer Clinic techniques.
- Greater information and capacity building through trainings, seminars, webinars, and mailings; farmers can best be reached through policy-driven initiatives and projects (*from the international to grassroots levels*).

### 4. INFORMATION AND SUPPORT NEEDS: PRIVATE SECTOR

- Better information on certification costs (audit and compliance).
- Greater awareness and understanding of what added value producers receive from compliance, and how to increase value while lessening the burden of compliance.
- Improved availability and access of all relevant information, publishing this material in the public domain.
- Greater support for openly and transparently implement certification schemes, avoiding duplication, competition and exploitation.





## 5. HOW POLICY-MAKERS CAN USE VSCs (1):

- Include VSC as a mandatory step in tea policy within sector and subsector policy frameworks and disseminated to county level.
- Set minimum quality standards as basis.
- Establish policy on conservation and sustainability-related courses in schools, colleges, and universities.
- Establish policy on housing and welfare of workers.
- Benchmarking national laws to standards so compliance equates to respecting laws.
- Continue/expand supporting research and marketing, as in the existing Agriculture Plan.
- Align development goals with standard requirements and enforce compliance, e.g., waste management and recycling/incinerators. Highlighted comment: “Lots of lessons learned on what works and what doesn’t from VSC implementation – can guide public service provision, e.g., extension services.”

## 6. HOW POLICY-MAKERS CAN USE VSCs (2):

- Work closely with certification promoters and beneficiaries: in the course of promoting VSC, policy-makers should collect impact data, e.g., on herbicides for economic planning and development.
- Develop results-oriented promotion of tea steered by knowledgeable tea personnel. Promote local consumption; encourage value-added tea for export through government subsidies.
- Develop a useful policy implementation tool covering the whole (or part) of any value chain, guided by local, regional and international relevant policies (i.e., medium-term investment strategy, Agriculture Sector Development Strategy, Agriculture Sector Growth and Transformation Strategy, and specific value chain policies, e.g., tea, coffee, horticulture).
- Key policies for VSCs to potentially align with:
  - Kenya Vision 2030; Agriculture Sector Transformation and Growth Strategy (ASTGS);
  - Big Four Agenda and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- Plan for tea sector so that production meets world demand.
- AFA strategic plan that promotes production, marketing and processing of scheduled crops.
- Highlighted comment: “However, only when certification standards and processes are well understood by all stakeholders, and they are meaningfully involved, can they be effective development tools and support sector/national strategy implementation.”

## 7. VSC AS A TOOL TO REDUCE SMALLHOLDER POVERTY:

- VSC can be an added-value proposition for small-scale farmers, leading to higher yields and better product quality. This can lead to improved farmer incomes and better access to European and other markets.
- Enhanced competitiveness with sustained premium returns on investment, access to financial catalysts.
- Improved resource use efficiency to reduce production costs: Replanting programs – led by the private/ and the public sector..
- Incorporation of corporate social responsibility (CSR) into tea companies’ strategic plans: For example, this could include activities that support community development, such as school construction, water projects, hospitals, and scholarships.
- Incentive packages to support compliance can also motivate farmers, in turn increasing efficiency and productivity.
- Train farmers on crop diversification, which can serve as an income-stabilizing and food-security practice.
- Make inputs affordable: promote safety standards and soil fertility practices to achieve maximum productivity.
- Go beyond certification through developing private/public support programs that improve farmers’ lives and livelihoods, improve village savings and loans, improved nutrition through crop diversification, planting trees (e.g., sold to factories as fuel wood).

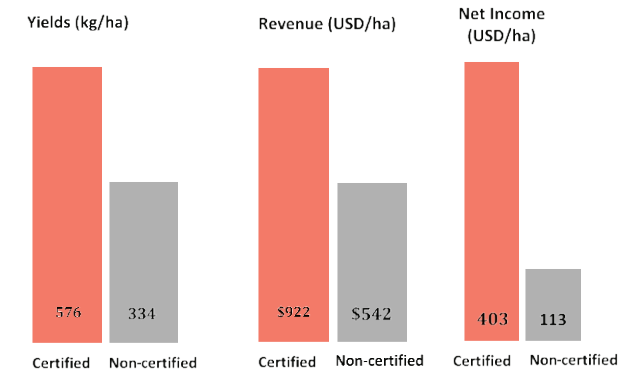


## Recommended actions and tools from respondents

Tools	Comments
Multiple Certification Internal Management System	<b>Strong support:</b> <i>Note: could reduce certification costs and time involved, while ensuring continuous improvement of identified risks and maximizing opportunities. This could also provide consistency in processes and procedures while strengthening a company's market position.</i>
National benchmarked standard	<b>Yes:</b> This will help the farmers remain in compliance with standards as they are aligned to the local conditions. A national benchmarked standard can level the playing field for producers.
Kenya Standard and/ or Geographical Indications (GIs)	<b>Yes:</b> These tools could be instrumental when creating a national brand. <i>(Note: Some respondents saw only GIs as important and said that a national standard already exists.)</i>
Comprehensive incentive package based on conditioned compliance agreements	<b>Strong support:</b> A comprehensive, multi-tiered incentive package developed by various key entities could build on Conservation International work, expanding beyond environmental services. <i>As a note of caution, if smallholders are unable to comply with conditionality, this could block needed incentives.</i>

### Additional Tools Recommended

1. **Incorporate VSCs in county and national government budgets**, as well as those of other relevant organizations, to support the creation of a VSCs revolving fund.
2. Merge certification bodies or allow for **cross-recognition of certificates and combined audits** to reduce audit fatigue.
3. Adopt **contract farming (CF)** as a business model that would complement the other tools.
4. Establish national **tea trading finance bank** to enable Kenyan exporters to access competitive trade financing.
5. Establish a **free zone for tea** with affordable energy and efficient VAT refund procedures.
6. Set up **real-time information management system** that links all actors to enhance transparency and fair trade.
7. Develop **sustainability improvement (maturity growth) tools** that producers can implement and use to monitor their progress.



**Figure 4. Economic impact of certification**

Source: Bennett, Francesconi, Giovannucci & Daitchman, 2012.

In Uganda, researchers studied 600 farmers who were RA-4C-UTZ certified, Fairtrade-Organic certified, or non-certified. RA-4C-UTZ certified coffee farms had a poverty incidence 20 per cent lower than the non-certified group, and household incomes about CFA 1 million (Uganda Shillings (about USD 280)) greater than non-certified. Price paid for coffee was similar across all farms. Researchers found the difference in income was due mostly to higher yield and steady input and labour costs (Akoyi & Maertens, 2017).

**b) Environmental Impact**

In Côte d’Ivoire and Ghana, three separate studies found that RA Certified cocoa farms applied water-related best management practices at higher rates than non-certified farms.

These practices include: creation of riparian buffer areas; safe agrochemical use and storage; and improved shade tree retention to counter erosion.

## Session 2. The Value of Standards by Rainforest Alliance

### MR. MICHAEL ORANG’I ONCHABO, EAST AFRICAN PROGRAM, RAINFOREST ALLIANCE

The next session focused on highlighting existing evidence of economic, social and environmental impacts of VSCs for farmers and the environment, as reported by Rainforest Alliance.

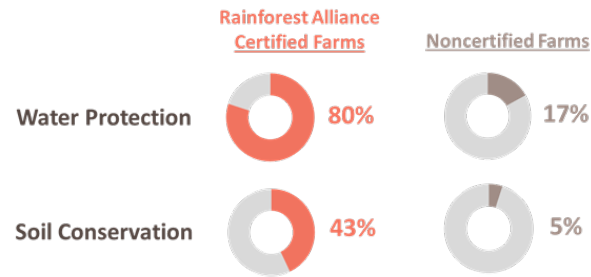
**a) Economic Impact: Increased yields, revenue and net income**

Research conducted in Ivory Coast compared socioeconomic indicators on 117 Rainforest Alliance certified and non-certified farms. Certified farmers observed significantly higher annual yields, revenues and net income.

67 per cent of certified farmers also reported that their economic circumstances had improved, while 75 per cent of the uncertified farmer group said that their circumstances had worsened.



Certified farms protect water and soil more than non-certified farms.



**Figure 5. Environmental impact**

Sources: Bennett, Francesconi, Giovannucci & Daitchman, 2012; Borg & Selmer, 2012; Addae-Boadu. 2014.

On adoption of water conservation practices on tea farms in Kenya, researchers compared tea farmers who had received training on the RA Standard and tea production best practices with farmers who had not received training. They found that significantly more farmers that had received training avoided the application of agrochemicals within 15 meters of water bodies and therefore concluded that Rainforest Alliance Certified farms have higher rates of adoption of water conservation practices (Waarts et al., 2012).

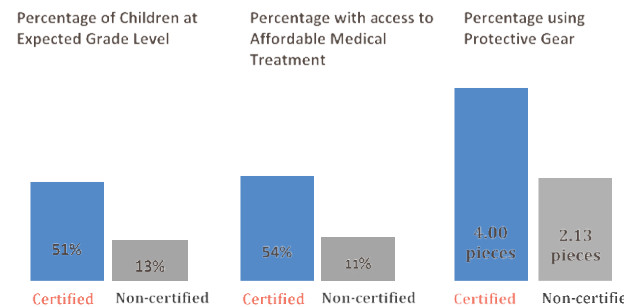
### c) Social Impact

There is evidence of higher social impact regarding access to health care, use of protective gear on farms and reduced child labour within certified farms.

In Kenya, a study of tea farmers who received training on best practices in the RA Standard

reported fewer ailments since receiving training, which they attributed to the safer use of agrochemicals.

A separate study conducted focus groups with farmers from RA Certified farms, who reported improved human and environmental health, including greater use of PPE, safety equipment in processing facilities, wash and sanitation facilities, and annual medical checks.



**Figure 6. Social Impact**

Source: Waarts, et al., 2012.





## Session 3. Sustainability and Voluntary Certification

### MS. JANE NGIGE, IISD CONSULTANT ON VSCs

In the next session, Ms. Jane Ngige provided fundamental and practical information on standards from her vast experience in the field, and made some comprehensive recommendations for Kenya to engage with and benefit from VSC at the national and regional levels.

### Relevant Examples of Challenges and Opportunities From the Kenyan Flower Sector

Mrs. Ngige said that the Kenyan tea industry faces challenges similar to those that affect other agricultural cash crop value chains in developing countries. She described how the Kenyan flower industry invested in creating a comprehensive industry standard, the Kenya Flower Council (KFC) Code of Practice, or KFC Silver (also known as Flowers and Ornamentals Sustainability Standards – FOSS). This process produced immense gains

for the industry. An independent assessment by the International Trade Center (ITC) deemed that the standard was one of the most robust at the global level in 2016, propelling it to international recognition. Compliance with the KFC Silver standard has become a branding tool, opening up highly competitive markets.

Importantly, certification is conducted in-house, given that KFC is an accredited certification body. This service is shared with all members and funded by member subscription fees. The KFC standard meets all the requirements of 13 other industry standards. The KFC is also independently benchmarked to Global GAP. It was one of the first certification bodies to carry out audits with multiple certifications (multi audits), substantially reducing audit costs (see [KFC site](#) for a full overview).

### Focusing on Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) for Kenya

As an international set of benchmarks, Global GAP is a relatively accommodating generic standard, making it easier to incorporate into an enriched Kenya GAP scheme, encompassing the national legislation on social welfare, labour regulations, health and safety, environmental stewardship and weaving in cultural, national and regional needs for further enrichment.

A Kenya GAP as a national scheme should be complemented by comprehensive quality management system(s), containing criteria for service providers such as trainers and certification bodies. National standards should also incorporate specific market needs. The objective should be to establish



a strong Kenya GAP able to govern any agricultural value chain, and that could provide a source for specific value chain sub-criteria.

The ownership of the Kenya GAP scheme would need to be determined collectively by stakeholders. From the outset, government and farmers would own it jointly through their cooperative federation. Most importantly, a mechanism would have to be designed to guide the sustainable implementation and administration of the scheme.

To protect Kenyan market share for its high-quality tea, it is important to pursue a global agenda to ensure that good quality tea is always the drink of choice anywhere in the world. If this can be achieved, then market share will continue to grow and expand.

This process requires good governance. Government should ensure a level playing field is maintained and that requisite standards are met. These are important processes for the government to undertake because products sold internationally have a direct impact on the country's image. It is also important that farmers, particularly smallholders, are empowered through better awareness and productivity training, which would lead to better quality products and improved business management.

### Addressing Challenges

Ms. Ngige noted that challenges remain and new ones will emerge, making it vital to keep communication channels open at all times and to engage with and discuss matters concerning the sector with all key stakeholders. This will ensure an inclusive discussion that facilitates consensus building.

While there are many immediate challenges, these are not insurmountable, and the key will be in identifying and analyzing each challenge in terms of the level of risk. Stakeholders will then need to define which actions are priorities in responding to these risks. Industry, working closely with government, will need access to adequate resources to develop and execute sustainable short-, medium-, and long-term business plans that focus on product quality and productivity measures, environmental stewardship, sustainable resource use, good human resource practices and other relevant issues. Understandably, this process is time-consuming and challenging to implement in the beginning, but its successful execution will help ensure the industry's improved productivity and positive image.

One other significant challenge is the limited level of African countries' involvement in private and or public standard-setting forums, leaving them in the position of being standards takers. Strengthening countries' capacities could be a useful starting point to begin addressing this issue.

Ms. Ngige concluded her remarks by noting that understanding the potential of **Kenya GAP at the national and regional level** is important for both the tea sector and other agricultural value chains, as well as the country's development. It is therefore useful to consider an all-encompassing Kenya GAP, with sub-categories for specific value chains.





## Session 4. Implementation of Voluntary Sustainability Certification (VSC) in the Kenyan Tea Industry

### MR. WILLY MUTAI, AGRICULTURE AND FOOD AUTHORITY (AFA)

This session explored the status of VSC adoption in the Kenyan tea industry, as well as the main challenges that tea producers and states face when complying with VSCs. The session was based on findings from a study conducted by the Tea Taskforce in August 2015 and adopted the following year, which also highlights several recommendations to improve tea production performance. Implementation of recommendations began in 2017.

### Status of Adoption of VSCs in the Kenyan Tea Industry

Mr. Mutai stated that most tea producers and factories currently implement Rainforest Alliance, Fairtrade, UTZ, Kosher and ETP certifications. Tea producers have fully adopted these market-driven certifications progressively over the last 20 years. The current number of certifications are:

- 69 KTDA-managed tea factories are RA certified and 21 tea factories are Fair Trade certified.
- Other players combined have a total of 26 RA

certifications, 4 Fair Trade certifications, 3 Organic certifications, 6 UTZ certifications, and 2 Kosher certifications.

- Food safety management system (ISO 22000) stands at 75 tea factories.

### Challenges Faced by Tea Producers in Complying with VSCs

Among the challenges identified by the Taskforce Report are:

Multiplicity of international standards: there are several international, market-driven/voluntary certification standards including UTZ, Fair Trade, and Rainforest Alliance, among others. The tea industry is required to comply with these standards to access certain international markets.

High cost of implementing these standards, which often have duplicated requirements, given the similarities across standards.

Separate implementation of these standards is time- and effort-consuming.

### Recommendations

Based on these challenges, the Tea Taskforce proposed the following recommendations to Kenya's government:

Explore ways to harmonize VSCs, involving the key tea stakeholders, scheme owners, and certification agents. This will reduce implementation costs, including how much time needs to be invested in the process. It will also reduce duplication of requirements across these standards.



## Session 5. Panel Discussion: Challenges, Opportunities and Needs

The workshop then featured a high-level panel discussion, moderated by Mr. Wunderlich (IISD). Panellists discussed the challenges, opportunities and needs outlined by the previous speakers, as well as the working groups. This high-level multistakeholder panel stressed the challenges of certification costs, including audit fees and the time/resources needed for compliance. They also highlighted the challenges that producer groups face in complying with hefty documentation requirements, limited market access and uptake, multiplicity of standards, and the need for a sector-wide response to these issues. The panel was comprised of Ms. Rosemary Owino (Tea Directorate), Mr. Apollo Kiarie (KTGA), Mr. Edward Mudibo (EATTA), Mr. Kanja Thuku (KTDA), and Ms. Margaret Aleke (KEBS).



## Session 6. Working Groups: Results

The participants then formed four working groups to discuss the tea sector's challenges and what opportunities exist for stakeholders. Below are some of the challenges, proposed solutions and responsible actors as identified by these groups.



Challenge	Action/Solution	Actors
<b>Prohibitive costs of certification and implementation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Harmonize/merge/amalgamate certifications</li> <li>Adopt mutual recognition of certificates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Government of Kenya through the Ministry of Agriculture and the Tea Directorate</li> <li>Certification bodies</li> </ul>
<b>Multiplicity of standards</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create one national standard (that is benchmarked against international/regional standards)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Government of Kenya through the Ministry of Agriculture and the Tea Directorate</li> <li>Certification bodies</li> </ul>
<b>Lack of tangible benefits from certification (standards' effectiveness)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve awareness of certification's benefits</li> <li>Conduct cost-benefit and impact analysis of certification</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Producers</li> <li>Buyers</li> <li>Certification bodies</li> <li>Marketers</li> </ul>
<b>Top-down approach to implementation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create awareness of standards' benefits and roles of different stakeholders</li> <li>Ensure multistakeholder engagement in developing standards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All value chain actors</li> </ul>
<b>Lack of organizational, technical, and administrative capacity of producer groups regarding standards</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Train of trainers (ToT)</li> <li>Establish local capacity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Certification bodies.</li> <li>Extension agencies (private and public)</li> </ul>
<b>Forced adoption of standards</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore mechanisms to prevent that VSCs are "de facto" mandatory</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Certification bodies</li> <li>Local standards</li> <li>Marketers</li> </ul>

Opportunity	Action	Actors
<b>1. Market access retention</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Include mark of origin in the product</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Government and marketers</li> </ul>
<b>2. Branding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure better supply chain traceability for Kenyan tea</li> <li>Establish sustainable markets for Kenyan tea</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Producers</li> <li>Traders/importers</li> <li>Government agencies</li> </ul>
<b>3. Knowledge transfer from advanced tea regions and markets</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exposure for producers (especially smallholder farmers)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Producers</li> <li>Extension agencies</li> <li>Certification bodies</li> </ul>
<b>4. Alignment with national policies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Align standards with national policies to avoid the multiplicity of the same</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Government agencies</li> <li>Regulatory bodies</li> <li>Certification bodies</li> </ul>
<b>5. Creation of Kenyan tea standards</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Informed by the multiple standards, industry actors supported by the Ministry of Agriculture should create their own standards, benchmarked against international standards. This will allow for better managing and benefiting from existing certification systems.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>KEBS</li> <li>Ministry of Agriculture</li> <li>Tea Directorate</li> <li>Producers</li> <li>Marketers</li> </ul>



## Key Insights and Recommendations from the Workshop

The following is a summary of the key recommendations from different stakeholder groups presented during the event.

### Actors

#### Government(s), national and county

### Key Insights & Recommendations

- Develop strong Kenyan standards for the tea sector, thereby addressing the challenge of multiple standards.
- Harmonize existing standards. The Director General of the AFA mentioned that the government is exploring ways to address this:
- “The concern of the tea sector is the multiplicity of international standards (Ethical Tea Practices and Quality) that tea producers are undergoing. The current status is that the tea sector has multiple and costly international standards, along with phytosanitary standards, KEBS and ISO certification programs. The Government has set ways to intervene by exploring ways to harmonize the standards. This is an initial step to negotiate with the various standards bodies” - Mr. Anthony Muriithi, Director General, Agriculture and Food Authority.
- Benchmark standard against international standards to maintain and expand market access.
- Work with producers, marketers, and other value chain actors to ensure product traceability across the value chain and establish sustainable markets for Kenyan tea.
- Regional coordination could bring value and savings by having common standards for the East African Community, making tea from the region more competitive globally and increasing producer incomes.
- Creation of a National Food Policy that incorporates all crops, including tea. The policy would provide guidelines on management, farming, marketing, and distribution of these crops. This would contribute to food security in line with the President’s Big Four Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



Actors	Key Insights & Recommendations
<b>Certification and certification bodies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Address multiplicity of certifications.</li> <li>• Address prohibitive costs of acquiring and renewing certifications, as well as their implementation.</li> <li>• Raises awareness of roles and benefits of standards/certification among producers and ensure multistakeholder engagement in development of standards.</li> <li>• Make clear the sustainable development benefits of certification by having certified farms report positive economic, social and environmental impact.</li> <li>• Address gap between what certification and sustainable standards can deliver and what is expected from them. Certification alone cannot deliver certain impacts, such as improving farmers' livelihoods beyond lifting them out of poverty and assuring companies have access to social risk-free commodities. While certification falls short of expectations, its benefits and impact on farmer practices are often overlooked.</li> <li>• Widen the recertification timeframe, making process more affordable for producers.</li> <li>• Address the issue of smallholder marginalization due to high certification costs and the perception that certifications do not target the "high-hanging fruits."</li> <li>• Examine the possibility of creating a multiple-certification internal control system guide to lower the transaction costs needed to comply with various certifications, basing this guide on the criteria of the Kenya Standard.</li> </ul>

Actors	Key Insights & Recommendations
<b>Producers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embrace good agricultural practices by adopting Voluntary Sustainability Certification (VSC). VSCs help address issues such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legal and institutional frameworks</li> <li>• Productivity and sustainability</li> <li>• Financial and good governance reporting systems</li> <li>• Worker welfare/ social accountability, occupational health and safety</li> <li>• Environment protection and conservation</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Work closely with marketers and government agencies to market the good aspects of Kenyan tea, e.g., the fact that this tea is grown organically, free of pesticides.</li> <li>• Promote and encourage consistency of produce throughout all producing areas and season.</li> </ul>
<b>All stakeholders</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage in a multistakeholder roundtable session to address issues affecting the tea sector, including those relating to VSCs. A National Coordination Unit should be created and steered by the public and private sector to find lasting solutions.</li> </ul>



## Conclusion and Next Steps

Despite their high acquisition costs, Voluntary Sustainability Certifications are strongly embraced by the Kenyan tea sector, with the main stakeholders (certification bodies, producers, government agencies traders, etc.) seemingly agreeing that certification standards have benefits for the tea value chain. However, the multiplicity of these standards and the cost of acquiring them appear to be the biggest challenges, which were raised by all four working groups during the workshop.

Therefore, there is a need to convene a stakeholders' forum, led by the private and public sector, to address these issues. Like the Kenyan flower sector, stakeholders can develop credible and acceptable voluntarily sustainability certifications to better manage the existing ones in the market. Certification bodies need to educate producers, especially smallholder farmers, on the value that these the standards bring. While most Kenyan tea farms are certified and produce tea free of pesticides ("organic by default"), the marketing does not appear to highlight that fact. Kenyan tea stakeholders should work together to brand and market the tea in the global market. The sector can also benefit from regional cooperation by developing common standards and/or co-branding of tea.

In closing, Mr. Wunderlich outlined the next steps for this work in the short and medium terms (with projected delivery dates):

- First, this workshop report will be shared with the participants. Presentations will also be shared in PDF forms, with their links integrated into this report.
- IISD will prepare a draft action plan based on the needs assessment and workshop results, featuring recommendations for concrete, collective actions to address the challenges identified. The draft will be shared with the participants of the workshop and other key stakeholders for their review, feedback, and approval, with the goal of building consensus for action.  
*(Date: May 2019)*
- The final action plan will then be presented to the stakeholders in either a virtual or in-person meeting, to confirm roles and responsibilities and specific next steps for implementation.  
*(Date: June, depending on format and stakeholder availability)*

Mr. Wunderlich also reiterated that the majority of the stakeholders said during the consultations that they support a multistakeholder platform as a mechanism to address these issues collectively. This support was confirmed by the workshop. Key areas for collective action that participants emphasized include:

- Identifying and addressing challenges
- Communicating along the supply chain the value of VSCs (especially to producers and policy-makers)
- Identifying and informing producers about certification processes, costs and impacts
- Working together to lower certification costs and gain more control over the standard setting and implementation processes at the national and regional level

The multistakeholder platform, which will include workshop participants, will be tasked with revising, validating and implementing this action plan.





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## Annex 1. List of Participants

Edward Mudibo	<b>East Africa Tea Trade Association</b>	Atif G	<b>AL NOOR FESAL and Co. Ltd</b>
Apollo Kiarie	<b>KTGA</b>	Paul Tiony	<b>SIREET OEP CO Ltd</b>
Willy Mutai	<b>AFA-TD</b>	Joseph Kamau	<b>ITC/STAN AFRICA</b>
Raymond Cheruiyot	<b>FINLAY (K)</b>	Leonard Korir	<b>Kaisugu</b>
Margaret Aleke	<b>KEBS</b>	Jeremiah Mungathia	<b>KETEPA</b>
Jane Ngige	<b>IISD</b>	Joseph Wagurah	<b>Ethical Tea Partnerships</b>
Felicity Kagui	<b>Nyayo Tea Zone</b>	Collins Cheruiyot	<b>Kuresoi Tea Factory</b>
Richard Kiriui	<b>Nyayo Tea Zone</b>	Moses Omusolo	<b>Standard Group</b>
Alex Nene	<b>KEPSA</b>	Agatha Ngotho	<b>Star Newspaper</b>
John Ngulu	<b>KaviranaEst Ltd</b>	Divinah Maturi	<b>Control Union</b>
Amar Gudka	<b>Evergreen Tea Factory</b>	Rosemary Owino	<b>AFA-TD</b>
Bernard Kiseve	<b>AFA-TD</b>	Nicholas Waltathu	<b>People Daily</b>
Kanja Thuku	<b>KTDA</b>	Charles Chirchir	<b>Chebango</b>
Michael Orongi	<b>Rainforest Alliance</b>	Monica Osuna	<b>AFA-TD</b>
Lydia Kimani	<b>MPS Jane</b>	Chemutai Betty	<b>AFA-TD</b>
Julius Nganga	<b>Rainforest Alliance</b>	James Ngugi	<b>AFA-TD</b>
Anthony Muriithi	<b>AFA-TD</b>	Christine Kalui	<b>KEBS</b>
Rono Jackson	<b>Mau Tea Coop Society</b>	Karin Boomsma	<b>SIB/KEPSA</b>
Boniface Kiprotich	<b>Unilever Tea Kenya Ltd</b>	Llyord Gitau	<b>SIB/KEPSA</b>
Stanley Kirui	<b>Kabianga Tea Ltd</b>	Pracksidis Wandera	<b>SIB/KEPSA</b>
Alfred Soi	<b>Mbogo Tea</b>	Sussy Wanjala	<b>SIB/KEPSA</b>
Marion	<b>CBS CPN</b>		
Nina Carman	<b>WUR- Wageningen University</b>		
Christopher Saina	<b>SIREET OEPCO Ltd</b>		
Benard Soi	<b>Kuresoi Tea Factory</b>		



## Annex 2. Workshop Agenda

Time	Activity	Details
8:15 am – 9:00 am		Registration & Tea
9:00 am – 9:02 am	Prayers	
9:02 am – 9:10 am	Opening	Opening remarks by Ministry of Agriculture or Director General (AFA) & Tea Directorate <b>Mr. Anthony Muriithi</b>
9:15 am – 9:25 am	Keynote	Keynote by IISD
9:30 am – 9:40 am	Sustainability Standards – National and Regional	Kenyan and East African Experience, <b>Ms. Jane Ngige</b> Standards Expert (former co-coordinator, Kenya Horticulture Council)
9:40 am – 9:50 am	Information and challenges of VSC internationally and in Kenya Tea	Summary of Tea Directorate Working Group on Sustainability Certification (Tea Directorate) – <b>Mr. Willy Mutai</b>
9:50 am – 10:15 am	Summary of presentation and needs assessment related to VSCs in tea (IISD)	Reflections and interactive Q&A, open discussion session on challenges and opportunities by <b>Mr. Christopher Wunderlich</b> , IISD
10:15 am – 10:45 am	The value of standards for supplier capacity building, marketing and total value chain strengthening (research)	Rainforest insights (quality/data/need for standard and research) + Reflection of Buyers: from Buyers Association

Time	Activity	Details
10:45 am – 11:15 am	<b>Tea Break</b>	<b>Hotel</b>
11:15 am – 12:00 pm	Panel session: Stakeholder Challenges, and obstacles opportunities, needs	Certification experiences and challenges related to stakeholder group and information/support need: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tea Directorate: Marketing Department <b>Ms. Rosemary Owino</b></li> <li>KTGA CEO <b>Mr. Apollo Kiarie</b></li> <li>KTDA Marketing Manager <b>Mr. Kanja Thuku</b></li> <li>EATTA CEO <b>Mr. Edward Mudibo</b></li> <li>KEBS: Representative <b>Ms. Margaret Aleke</b></li> </ul>
12:00 pm – 12:30 pm		Discussion and assessment of key challenges, obstacles and opportunities
12:30 pm – 12:45 pm	Creating Working groups	
1:00 pm – 2:00 pm	<b>Lunch Break</b>	<b>Hotel</b>
1:45 pm – 2:30 pm	Working groups	Challenges and information needed for VSC implementation; recommendations for actions and solutions
2:30 pm – 3:00 pm	Results	Groups present results



Time	Activity	Details
3:00 pm – 3:30 pm	Next steps	Next steps for addressing challenges and opportunities as the basis for a joint action plan (IISD)
3:30 pm – 3:35 pm		Tea Directorate
3:35 pm – 4:00 pm	<b>Tea Break</b>	<b>Hotel</b>
<b>Guests depart at their own pleasure</b>		

## Annex 3. Questionnaire (short version): Needs Assessment on Voluntary Sustainability Standards and Certification in Kenya

This questionnaire is designed to ascertain your views on the information and support needs of key stakeholders regarding sustainability certification in the Kenyan tea sector. Your responses will form the basis of a multistakeholder meeting (March 6, 2019) and an action plan. These will both be designed to provide the necessary information and support for making sustainability certification a more effective development tool in achieving national strategic plans, avoiding its more negative aspects, and providing real and concrete benefits to producers.

The following six questions are designed to identify your experiences, concerns and the information/support needs related to Voluntary Sustainability Certification and Standards (VSC). The questions are only a guide, please provide any other additional comments you believe important.



Questions:	Your Responses:
Your Name:	
Your Title:	
1. In your experience, what are the benefits of Voluntary Sustainability Certification (VSC)?	
2. What are the challenges or negative aspects of Voluntary Sustainability Certification (VSC)?	
3. What information and/or support needs regarding VSCs do the following actors/groups have and what are the most effective ways to communicate to each: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy-makers (public sector)?</li> <li>• Producers?</li> <li>• Specifically, smallholder producers and producer groups?</li> <li>• Private sector (buyers, traders, etc.)?</li> </ul>	
4. How can policy-makers use VSC as a tool to fulfill development plans? What are the most important national, sectoral, and sub-sectoral plans for the agriculture sector? For the tea sector? (i.e., Vision 2030, AFA Strategic Plan, etc.)	
5. In the specific case of the tea sector in Kenya, how can VSCs be used and/or improved to reduce poverty among smallholder producers and producer groups/ companies?	

Questions:	Your Responses:
6. In meetings, some specific tools were recommended to address challenges with VSC, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple Certification Internal Management System</li> <li>• National (benchmarked) Kenya Standard and/or Geographical Indications (GIs)</li> <li>• Comprehensive incentive package based on conditioned compliance agreements</li> </ul> What is your opinion of each of these potential tools? Are they valuable to you? Would you participate in their development (i.e., providing input, suggestions, validation, etc.). What other tools would you recommend as important?	

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