



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations

May 2023

BUILDING RESPONSIBLE  
GLOBAL VALUE CHAINS  
**FOR SUSTAINABLE  
TROPICAL FRUITS**

## **ACTION REPORT**

### **WELCOME!**

The FAO led project “Building responsible global value chains for the sustainable production and trade of tropical fruits”, also known as the Responsible Fruits Project, works with businesses, farmer organizations and other actors in the avocado and pineapple value chains. Our goal is to improve business performance by helping these two value chains be more sustainable and resilient.

**The project team has now reached over 203 organizations, which have been participating in different activities including peer learning, working group sessions and technical discussions.**

The project team continues to support the private sector in the avocado and pineapple industries to address sustainability and resilience challenges, with a focus on those prioritized by project participants. Following is an update on selected activities since November 2022.



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## PROJECT ACTIONS

### Building value chain resilience

From October to December 2022, the project prepared a detailed study (including surveys and bilateral consultations) on the resilience performance and capacities of the avocado and pineapple value chains. A [validation workshop](#) was organized on 6 December 2022 to present and discuss the results from the study with avocado and pineapple companies and associations in the Dominican Republic, Ireland, Malaysia, the United Mexican States, the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the United States of America. The event served to confirm the main findings, including the main shocks and risks faced by the two industries; the constraints value chain actors face to improve their capacity to bounce-back after a shock and to prepare, adapt and transform in view of emerging challenges. Companies also exchanged experiences and ideas on the strategies and practices that they are taking to address future risks.

The feedback received in the validation workshop was incorporated in the final report, which will be published in May. Findings from the study also fed into the development of the technical guide on Climate Change Adaptation (see below).

The project is preparing two commodity-specific briefs to highlight the main challenges each sector faces to enhance their resilience, as well as the resilience capacities the industries have to respond, adapt and prepare to future shocks. In collaboration with the International Tropical Fruit Network ([TFNet](#)), the project will present the results to pineapple companies and producer organizations in the Asia-Pacific region in the second half of the year.



### Due diligence and voluntary standards

Due diligence can improve companies' business performance, increase sustainability, and strengthen resilience to external shocks. Due diligence is performed by companies to help them avoid activities along their value chains that have negative sustainability impacts. In many countries, newly passed or proposed laws require companies to carry out risk-based due diligence to identify and address actual and potential adverse impacts of their activities and those of their suppliers and business partners.

Many companies in the tropical fruit sector use voluntary sustainability standards to manage sustainability risks. However, their usefulness in supporting companies to carry out due diligence varies. The Responsible Fruits Project has therefore produced a guide titled [\*Gap analysis to support due diligence in the avocado and pineapple sectors\*](#). The guide helps companies compare voluntary sustainability standards and policies they use with the [\*OECD-FAO Guidance for responsible agricultural supply chains\*](#), which is the global benchmark for due diligence and responsible business conduct in the agricultural sector.

The gap analysis guide consists of a manual and a customized [\*\*Excel-based tool\*\*](#). The tool is free and easy to use. Once downloaded, it works offline and does not require an internet connection. The results are available only to the company using the tool. By completing the gap analysis, the company will obtain:

- an overview of the strengths and weaknesses of its internal policies
- guidance on prioritizing areas for improvement
- practical ideas on how it can carry out due diligence.

The Responsible Fruits Project team will organize tutorials to support companies that wish to use the gap analysis tool in May and June. Interested companies and producer associations are welcome to contact the team for more information.

## Climate Change

Work on the project's technical guide on Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) titled *"Adapting to climate change in the tropical fruit industry – a technical guide for avocado and pineapple producers and exporters"* is nearing completion with publication planned for the second half of 2023. The CCA guide has been developed through a consultative process with avocado and pineapple companies participating in the Responsible Fruits Project. A Working Group with interested companies and producer organizations was established last year, and three discussion sessions (reports are on the [project website](#)) with companies in Latin America and Asia identified climate risks and adaptation practices implemented in support of the production of avocados and pineapples. The final working group session for Latin America was held in April to present the draft guide and validate the adaptation practices to be included in the guide. The practices were endorsed, and additional information shared by companies will be incorporated into the final version of the guide under preparation. Once the guide is published, it will be presented in Southeast Asia with TFNet and elsewhere as opportunity arises. Details on these events will be shared in the future.

## Measuring carbon and water footprints in pineapple value chains

In response to a gap identified by industry participants and the growing interest of governments and consumers, the project is developing a technical guide on the measurement of carbon and water footprints in the pineapple value chain.

FAO has vast experience in this area, including work to [\*\*measure and reduce carbon and water footprints in the banana industry\*\*](#), based on a value chain approach. Since 2017, FAO and the World Banana Forum have validated the methodology and provided technical assistance in its use. As this tool is readily adaptable to suit the needs of other tropical fruit value chains, work has begun to adapt the methodology to the pineapple value chain. FAO has partnered with Gestarse S.A, following a public tender, to work with pineapple producers in Costa Rica to validate the methodology in the coming months. Once validated, the guide and methodology for the pineapple value chain will be published for everyone to use.

## Peer-learning technical webinars

To date, the project has organized twelve events for peer learning and sharing of good practices. To facilitate open discussion, the summary report for each event follows the Chatham House Rule — discussion is not attributed to specific individuals — except for the main presenters who have consented to share information in advance.

Summary reports on the following topics are available on the [project's publications webpage](#):

1. Climate change mitigation strategies and carbon footprinting (June 2021)
2. Due diligence and OECD-FAO Guidance for responsible agricultural supply chains to address business risk (July 2021)
3. Eliminating deforestation and forest degradation (October 2021)
4. Baseline survey results (December 2021)
5. Reducing agrochemical use and meeting maximum residue levels (February 2022)
6. Water efficiency, sustainability and productivity (April 2022)
7. Adapting to climate change: What this means for the pineapple and avocado industry (June 2022)
8. Biodiversity and climate change (September 2022)
9. Resilience and climate change adaptation for Africa and Asia (November 2022)
10. Benefits of reducing post-harvest loss and waste (November 2022)
11. Soil health and land degradation (January 2023)
12. Findings of the Technical Guide on Climate Change Adaptation (April 2023)



## UPCOMING EVENTS

The project team is organizing research, technical support, peer-learning and other capacity development activities now and in the coming months, including:

- A technical webinar on European Green Deal and its possible impacts on the avocado and pineapple sectors (in May; the date will be confirmed shortly)
- Individual and group tutorial sessions with companies on the gap analysis tool
- A technical webinar on innovative and inclusive approaches to soil mapping
- Launch of the climate change adaptation guide in Southeast Asia in partnership with TFNet

## USEFUL RESOURCES FROM OTHER SOURCES

- The **AGRINFO programme**. Launched in February 2023, it is designed to keep low- and middle-income countries up to date on new EU policies, regulations and standards with potential impacts on all agri-food value chains. It is funded by the EU and implemented by COLEAD.  
<https://agrinfo.eu/>
- The **Initiative for sustainable Agricultural Supply Chains (INA)**. INA is an association of players from the private sector, civil society and government, who aim to achieve greater sustainability across global agricultural supply chains and to improve the living conditions of smallholders. The initiative focuses on deforestation-free supply chains and living income across eight commodities.  
<https://www.nachhaltige-agrarlieferketten.org/en>
- The OECD-FAO Guidance is a feature framework in the **EU Farm to Fork Strategy's Code of Conduct for Responsible Business and Marketing Practices**. The Code of Conduct is one of the first deliverables of the Farm to Fork Strategy and an integral part of its action plan.  
[https://food.ec.europa.eu/horizontal-topics/farm-fork-strategy/sustainable-food-processing/code-conduct\\_en](https://food.ec.europa.eu/horizontal-topics/farm-fork-strategy/sustainable-food-processing/code-conduct_en)
- New information resources on **due diligence to prevent deforestation** are available from FAO on the [agricultural supply chains and deforestation webpage](#) and the [OECD-FAO Advisory Group on RBC](#) webpage.
- **International symposium on tropical fruits 2023** organized by the Tropical Fruits Network (TFNet), tentatively scheduled for 3-5 October in Guangzhou, China. For updates please visit TFNet's website: <https://www.itfnet.org/>.
- Webinar on **recent developments in the pineapple industry** organized by the TFNet, scheduled for 7 September. For updates please visit TFNet's website: <https://www.itfnet.org/>.

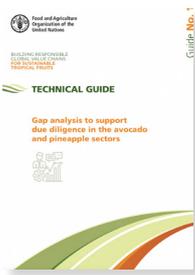
## RECENT PROJECT PUBLICATIONS



### Technical brief Gap analysis tool to strengthen the management of sustainability risks in tropical fruit value chains

This two-page technical brief provides an overview of the gap analysis guide and tool. It introduces how the guide and tool can help companies, producer organizations and others improve their due diligence to reduce business risk and meet certain market requirements.

<https://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/cc2734en>



### Technical guide Gap analysis to support due diligence in the avocado and pineapple sectors

The technical guide provides detailed information to help compare voluntary sustainability standards and policies with international expectations on due diligence. In doing so, companies, producers and other actors can strengthen their due diligence processes and be more confident in meeting requirements for responsible business conduct.

<https://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/cc4149en>



### Excel tool Gap analysis tool to support due diligence in the avocado and pineapple sectors

The Excel-based tool accompanies the gap analysis guide. Once downloaded, it works offline and does not require an internet connection. The results are available only to the user, which ensures total confidentiality. By completing the tool, users can compare standards and corporate policies with the [OECD-FAO Guidance for Responsible Agricultural Supply Chains](#) and prioritize areas for improvement in dealing with sustainability risks.

[https://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/est/STF/GAP\\_TOOL\\_\\_EN.xlsx](https://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/est/STF/GAP_TOOL__EN.xlsx)

## GET IN TOUCH

Responsible Fruits Project

[Responsible-Fruits@fao.org](mailto:Responsible-Fruits@fao.org)  
<https://bit.ly/responsible-fruits>

Markets and Trade Division - Economic and Social Development stream

[www.fao.org/markets-and-trade](http://www.fao.org/markets-and-trade)

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