

Sustainability standards and the SDGs: water and energy efficiency

A snapshot of ISEAL members' contribution

Research shows that **sustainability standards** can reduce the water and energy footprint of certified production in many sectors, **directly contributing** towards achieving **Sustainable Development Goals** (SDGs) 6 and 7.



SDG 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.



SDG 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.

Energy efficiency

The adoption of sustainability standards can significantly reduce the energy footprint of farming and fishing.



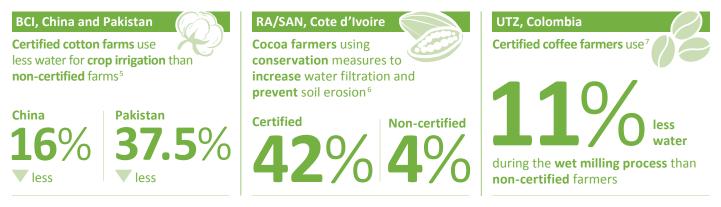
How?

Many **sustainability standards** require certified entities to **monitor** carbon use and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by **implementing** energy-saving plans. In addition, standards **limit** land conversions and **work** with partners to **improve** uptake of **energy-saving** technologies such as biofuels and renewables.



Water conservation and management

The adoption of sustainability standards can reduce the water footprint of agriculture, improve water management and **preserve** the quality of natural water bodies.



How?

Many sustainability standards require certified entities to measure usage and actively conserve water. Standards also **require** the preservation of natural water bodies through the **creation** of buffer zones, proper wastewater treatment and reduction of water pollution.

Partnering to address key challenges

Research indicates some challenges remain:

Scaling up of water management practices to watershed level	Improved water efficiency and pollution reduction	More resilient production systems to cope with changing climate patterns and resource availability	Stricter controls on land-use change and conversion for commodity production	Better measurement of carbon footprints and GHG emissions, especially in smallholder agriculture
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Standards are working together to address these issues. For instance, eight ISEAL members have established an Integrated Pest Management Coalition to promote common principles for integrated pest management and alternatives to pesticide use, share strategies and techniques, and create a training manual on worker health risks and using safety equipment.

ISEAL represents the global movement of sustainability standards.

To find out more about our members visit www.ISEALalliance.org For more evidence on the impacts of standards visit www.standardsimpacts.org

Data sources: Evidence in this summary is based on publicly available data and research produced by ISEAL members and others with specific references available in the endnotes. All evidence is specific to the standard, product and country/region stated with limited generalisability. The nature of evidence varies according to research design and methodology used and not all evidence presented here has a counterfactual. Where a comparison is made, the 'certified' refers to the standard in the sub-title.

List of acronyms used: LEAF: Linking Environment And Farming; RSB: Roundtable on Sustainable Biomaterials; ASC: Aquaculture Stewardship Council; BCI: Better Cotton Initiative; RA: Rainforest Alliance; SAN: Sustainable Agriculture Network

1. Source: LEAF. (2016). Delivering More Sustainable Food and Farming: LEAF's Global Impacts Report 2016. LEAF, UK. Figures from 2015. **2**. Source: Bonsucro. Outcome Report 2015. Bonsucro, London, UK. The data refers only to ethanol production, not sugar, and only for the year 2012. **3**. Source: Roundtable on Sustainable Biomaterials. (2015). Outcome and Evaluation Report 2015. **4**. Source: Nhu, Trang T., et al. (2016). Environmental impact of non-certified versus certified (ASC) intensive Pangasius aquaculture in Vietnam, a comparison based on a statistically supported LCA. Environmental Pollution (2016) 219: 156-165. LCA = life cycle assessment. From. https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Thomas_Schaubroeck/publication/309546139_Environmental_impact_of_non-certified_Versus_certified_ASC_intensive_Pangasius aquaculture in _Vietnam_a_comparison based on a statistically_supported LCA/links/S817082208ae90acb2410d8c.pdf **5**. Source: Better Cotton Initiative. (2015). 2014 Harvest Report. Geneva. From http:// bettercotton.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/FINAL-HARVEST-REPORT-2014-updated-2921.pdf. **6**. Source: Milder, J. C., & Newsom, D. (2015). 2015 Impacts Report: Evaluating the Effects of the SAN/Rainforest Alliance. Certification System on Farms, People, and the Environment. Alinforest Alliance. Form http://www.rainforest-alliance.org/sites/default/files/publication/pdf/SAN_RA_Impacts_Report.gdf. **7**. Source: García, C.; García, J.; Ochoa, G.; Mora, J. C. and Castellanos, J. F. (2014) Impact Evaluation of UTZ Certified Coffee Program in Colombia. (2008-2012). CRECE, Manizales.