

The UK Soy Manifesto

This Manifesto is a collective industry commitment to work together to ensure all physical shipments of soy to the UK are deforestation and conversion free (cut-off date of January 2020 at the latest), fully implemented immediately where possible and no later than 2025.

Signatories commit to work together to achieve this goal and request that their suppliers adopt the same commitments and incorporate these requirements within commercial contractual requirements. All signatories commit to publicly disclosing on their progress annually.

This Manifesto is about action. Working together across supply chains to develop joined up, pragmatic implementation plans, building on existing industry activity and best practice.

The Manifesto also complements existing soy initiatives. In the UK it provides a framework through which industry can meet the goal of the UK Roundtable on Sustainable Soya and aligns with the objectives of the developing UK livestock sector plans. This links and aligns with the activity of the Consumer Goods Forum Forest Positive Coalition, Soy Working group, who are exploring similar action on a multinational scale through their public soy roadmap. It supports actions companies are likely to need to take to comply with forthcoming UK due diligence legislation. At a European level the Manifesto aligns with the goal of the French Soy Manifesto, other European national sustainable soy initiatives and the broader goal of the European National Soy Initiatives (ENSI) group.

The focus of the Manifesto is targeted to deliver deforestation and conversion free soy to the UK, but with the aim to influence and support a broader transition in global supply chains.

The intention of this Manifesto is not to exclude countries, trade routes or soy farmers from UK supply chains but to support all stakeholders throughout the supply chain to work towards deforestation and conversion free soy supply chains. It will provide a platform through which signatories can be signposted to a broader set of complementary actions they can engage in, for example supporting transformational change at a landscape or jurisdictional level in key producing landscapes/countries.

The Manifesto recognises that in the transition to sustainable soy production and consumption (of which sourcing physical deforestation and conversion free soy is one element), broader, systematic change beyond the scope of this Manifesto will be required including the move to more plant-based diets and the use of alternative protein sources.

The UK Government supports the objectives of the Manifesto:

“The UK Government welcomes the leadership role UK companies are taking to drive the transition to deforestation-free soy supply chains through the UK Soy Manifesto.

Ensuring sustainable supply chains that protect landscapes and create positive outcomes for all actors in the supply chain is important to the UK and to meeting our global climate ambitions. In support of these objectives, UK Government is establishing a new due diligence obligation through the Environment Bill.

The UK Government also commits to continue to work with partner producer and consumer governments critical to soy supply chains to ensure that the enabling environment is established to support shared objectives, including through our co-leaderships of the COP 26 Forests, Agriculture and Commodity Trade Dialogue.

Initiatives like the manifesto can complement these efforts to increase transparency and bring about the needed industry leadership that will prove vital in meeting our climate and environment objectives.”

How is this Manifesto different?

This Manifesto marks a new approach to this challenge by:

- Setting out expectations of the different actors along the supply chain, from trader to retailer, ensuring greater individual accountability whilst acting together.
- Instead of focusing on individual supply chains the Manifesto will raise the baseline for the whole of UK industry, supporting all companies to act and create a mass market movement towards physical supply chains of deforestation and conversion free soy.
- Linking and aligning with the French Soy Manifesto and other sustainable soy initiatives across Europe (e.g., Netherland, Denmark), to increase our leverage, strengthen our collective market signal and provide a level playing field across markets.
- Ensuring greater transparency in the way we monitor and report on progress against these commitments and in doing this bring greater clarity to the scale of the risks, where we should focus our collective efforts and progress against our collective goal.

Why do we need to act?

Time is running out to halt the devastating impacts of human activities on our planet. The most recent (2021) [Report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change \(IPCC\)](#) is clear: *“global warming of 1.5°C and 2°C will be exceeded during the 21st century unless deep reductions in carbon dioxide (CO₂) and other greenhouse gas emissions occur in the coming decades.”*¹

Deforestation and land use change driven by agricultural expansion account for 13% of the world’s greenhouse gas emissions, and commodities such as soy, beef, palm oil and timber are key global drivers.² Protecting forests is also critical to halt the loss of global biodiversity and to protect the rights and livelihoods of indigenous communities and forest peoples. The UK’s own consumption of soy is contributing to this picture: an estimated area of 1.2 Mha is required to meet the UK’s annual demand for soy.

Businesses have much to benefit from leading the transition to sustainable supply chains and much to lose if left behind³. The Carbon Disclosure project (CDP) anticipates supply chain companies face \$1.26 trillion in revenue losses within the next five years due to climate change and deforestation.⁴

Despite increasing collaboration between civil society, soy buyers/users and Government, soy continues to be a driver of conversion in critical habitats such as the Cerrado and the Gran Chaco. Efforts by UK (and European) companies, platforms such as the UK Sustainable Soya Initiative, Cerrado Statement of Support (SoS) group, Soy Transparency Coalition and the Consumer Goods Forum Forest Positive Coalition are helping to drive change and develop the practical solutions needed but *a step change in the pace of progress is required*.

To meet these challenges the market needs to act collectively alongside actions by governments (producer and consumer), the finance sector, civil society, and other stakeholders.

¹ IPCC Sixth Assessment Report. Working Group 1 – The Physical Science Basis

² [State of the World’s Forests 2020 \(fao.org\)](#)

³ Global Resource Initiative Taskforce

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/876465/gri-taskforce-executive-summary.pdf

⁴ CDP Global Supply Chain Report (May 2021) <https://www.cdp.net/en/research/global-reports/transparency-to-transformation>

Signatory commitments

Manifesto signatories commit to support the transition to a deforestation and conversion free soy sector by making the following commitments. *For a detailed summary of these commitments see Annex A below.*

The Manifesto ways of working and definitions are aligned to the Accountability Framework.

1. Set a deforestation and conversion-free commitment with a cut-off date of January 2020 or earlier.

- The commitment should be supported by a publicly available, detailed action plan and fully implemented as soon as possible but no later than 2025.
- The commitments should apply to all soy supplied by the company (or used/embedded within products) for the UK market.

2. Ask direct suppliers to adopt and cascade the same commitment

- Seek direct supplier commitment to no-deforestation/conversion soy with a cut-off date (of no later than January 2020) and agree a transition plan to achieve this with a target date for full implementation as soon as possible but no later than 2025.

3. Integrate Manifesto commitments within direct supplier commercial contractual requirements, and support compliance

- Proactively engage and support direct suppliers towards compliance with the Manifesto goal and ensure that there are appropriate commercial consequences* for non-compliance.
- Proactively support industry-led solutions, particularly those that support mass market change where individual companies may have limited leverage and/or capacity for change.

Additional detailed guidance to support industry alignment to follow.

* Specific courses of action and triggers leading to commercial consequences will be determined by individual companies not the Manifesto, but the Manifesto commitments (including a cut-off date of 2020 at the latest should be fully integrated within all commercial contractual requirements and buying/procurement processes, either directly (e.g. Manifesto requirements written into supplier contracts) or indirectly (e.g. supplier contracts requiring compliance to separately documented buying policies including the Manifesto commitments). Signatory companies should have clear policies and procedures for how non-compliance will be addressed including the pathway back to compliance that rewards good faith and effective efforts by suppliers to work towards deforestation and conversion free soy.

4. Publicly disclosing progress

- Signatories will publicly report at least annually on progress towards the Manifesto commitments.
- Signatories agree that transparency is a requirement for entry into the UK market and commit to improved traceability and transparent reporting across supply chains.

5. Encourage harmonised monitoring, verification, and reporting by:

- Signatories will support the development of a Manifesto monitoring, reporting and verification (MRV) system, which will aim to provide: a public set of indicators to provide a baseline for UK soy supply chains risk and an understanding of high-risk sourcing areas to focus our collective efforts. The MRV system will provide a measurement of the collective progress of Manifesto signatory actions; and be a source of information for signatories to verify and corroborate their own supply chain risk assessments

A working group of Manifesto signatories and supporters, including the Stockholm Environment Institute, WWF-UK, 3Keel and Efeca will develop a concept note for the MRV system by November 2021, with a timeline to launch in early 2022. Ownership of the Manifesto itself and the supporting MRV system is to be confirmed, but likely supported by a neutral secretariat.

Annex A: Signatory commitments - detailed

For each of the four Manifesto commitments set out above, actions that apply to all signatories and to specific sectors/actors are set out below:

1. Set a robust conversion-free commitment with an explicit cut-off date of January 2020 at the latest.

All signatories

- The commitment should encompass both legal and illegal conversion, as defined by the Accountability Framework.
- The commitment should explicitly commit to eliminating deforestation and the conversion of other natural ecosystems from soy supply chains with a cut-off date of January 2020 or earlier (pre-existing or emerging sectoral or biome-wide cut-off dates that are earlier than January 2020 should be upheld)
- The commitment should be supported by a publicly available, detailed action plan and fully implemented as soon as possible but no later than 2025.
- Monitoring of the January 2020 cut-off date should be verified using the closest available, official national statistics on deforestation for the country of origin. For example, PRODES data (the official national statistics on deforestation for the legal Amazon in Brazil) measures on an annual cycle from July to August.

Additional detailed guidance to support industry alignment to follow.

- The commitment should apply to all soy supplied by signatories (or products containing soy or embedded soy) to the UK market, including all own brand products where applicable.

2. Ask direct suppliers to support the implementation of these commitments

And

3. Integrate Manifesto commitments within direct supplier commercial contractual requirements, and support compliance

All signatories

- Ask that direct suppliers commit to no-deforestation/conversion with a cut-off date (of no later than January 2020) and agree a transition plan to achieve this with a target date for full implementation as soon as possible but no later than 2025. This expectation will be clearly communicated with suppliers in good time.

Additional requirements for consumer facing and business to business suppliers

- Proactively engage and support direct suppliers towards compliance with the Manifesto goal and ensure that there are appropriate commercial consequences* for non-compliance.

* Specific courses of action and triggers leading to them will be determined by individual companies not the Manifesto, but the Manifesto commitments (including a cut-off date of 2020 at the latest) should be fully integrated within all commercial contractual requirements and buying/procurement processes, either directly (e.g., Manifesto requirements written into contracts) or indirectly (e.g., contracts require compliance to separately documented buying policies including the Manifesto). Signatory companies should have clear policies and procedures for how non-compliance will be addressed including the pathway back to compliance that rewards good faith and effective efforts by suppliers to work towards deforestation and conversion free soy. *For more information, please refer to AFi guidance on [supply chain management](#).*

- Ensure Manifesto commitments are applied to non-UK direct suppliers of soy (or products containing soy or embedded soy) as well as those based in the UK, to ensure a level playing field.
- For those signatories selling/trading branded products, encourage branded suppliers to make similar commitments in line with the Manifesto.
- Encourage direct suppliers to adopt and apply Manifesto commitments within their broader sourcing policies, to soy supplied to other markets.
- Proactively support industry-led solutions, particularly those that support mass market change where individual companies may have limited leverage and/or capacity for change.

Additional detailed guidance to support industry alignment to follow.

Additional requirements for traders

- **Traders** commit to proactively engage with suppliers to support compliance through commercial action, in return for support from the downstream supply chain.

4. Publicly disclosing progress

All signatories

- Signatories will report at least annually on progress towards the Manifesto commitments
- Signatories agree that transparency is a requirement for entry into the UK market and commit to improved reporting across supply chains.

Reporting expectations for consumer facing companies and business to business suppliers

- It is expected that the detail of reporting will improve over time, as companies advance. A more experienced company might provide:
 - Size of soy footprint, location (sub-national if possible), and proportion which is verified deforestation and conversion free by volume and if possible, by hectares.
 - The soy traders present in the supply chain, including the percentage of total soy volume sourced from each trader, along with the company's efforts to engage with soy traders towards an effective industry-wide solution.

Reporting expectations for Traders

Traders are expected to provide the following:

- Total sourcing volume and hectares
- Hectares of deforestation or ecosystem conversion linked to operations
- Where volumes are traceable to a subnational sourcing area with a known deforestation/conversion risk, the attributed deforestation or conversion by sourcing area (hectares).
- Where volumes are not traceable, this should be reported as a volume with unknown deforestation/conversion risk.

Detailed reporting expectations are being developed through the Accountability Framework. Once finalised, this guidance will be shared, alongside further detail on the MRV system

5. Encourage harmonised monitoring, verification, and reporting by:

All signatories

- Support the development of a Manifesto monitoring, reporting and verification (MRV) system, which will aim to provide: a baseline for UK soy supply chains risk; an understanding of high-risk sourcing areas to focus our collective efforts; a measurement of collective progress of Manifesto signatory actions; a source of information for signatories to verify and corroborate their own supply chain risk assessments

A working group of Manifesto signatories and supporters, including the Stockholm Environment Institute, WWF-UK, 3Keel and Efeca will develop a concept note for the MRV system by November 2021, with a timeline to launch in early 2022.

Additional requirements for traders

- **Traders** should provide data into the monitoring, verification, and reporting system to enable the Manifesto to report collective progress on imported 'raw' soy. This will also support downstream signatories as well as traders purchasing soy from 3rd parties/indirect producers, to make their own assessments on the level of risk in their supply chain. By including this data in the MRV system we ensure all actors are using consistent, accurate information in decision making.