



**Farm
Sustainability
Assessment**
BY SAI PLATFORM

Governance Framework

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1 Preface

The Farm Sustainability Assessment (FSA) is a toolset that is developed and maintained by the Sustainable Agriculture Initiative Platform (SAI Platform). The FSA consists of a range of tools as well as normative and guidance documents to guide their use, which can be applied separately and in connection to each other.

The purpose of the FSA is to drive relevant and demonstrable continuous improvement of on-farm environmental, social, and economic performance through supply chain collaboration and fostering a common understanding of sustainable agriculture.

The development and deployment of the FSA is governed through SAI Platform in accordance with this Governance Framework.

The FSA Governance Framework was approved by the SAI Platform Executive Committee. Any deviations from or changes to the requirements laid down in this Governance Framework must be approved by the Executive Committee.

The FSA Governance Framework will be reviewed and updated regularly, and at least every two years.

2 Objectives of the FSA Governance Framework

The FSA Governance Framework defines the FSA governance bodies, including their remit and responsibilities, and process requirements for adopting and discharging governance body members. The Governance Framework is intended to secure the following objectives:

- Maintain the integrity of the FSA in view of SAI Platform's vision and purpose and governing documents as well as the agreed purpose for the FSA.
- Ensure the quality, relevance and effectiveness of the FSA toolset and related support services by the SAI Platform Secretariat and selected third parties.
- Ensure sufficient engagement of SAI Platform member companies, users, and other affected parties in the development and deployment of the FSA.

- Provide strategic guidance to the SAI Platform Executive Committee on raising and allocating resources to develop and deploy the FSA.
- Provide solicited and unsolicited advice on the strategic direction and relevance of the FSA toolset development to the SAI Platform Executive Committee and the Secretariat.

3 FSA Governance Bodies

The FSA is managed by SAI Platform members through an agreed governance structure, as displayed in *Figure 1*.

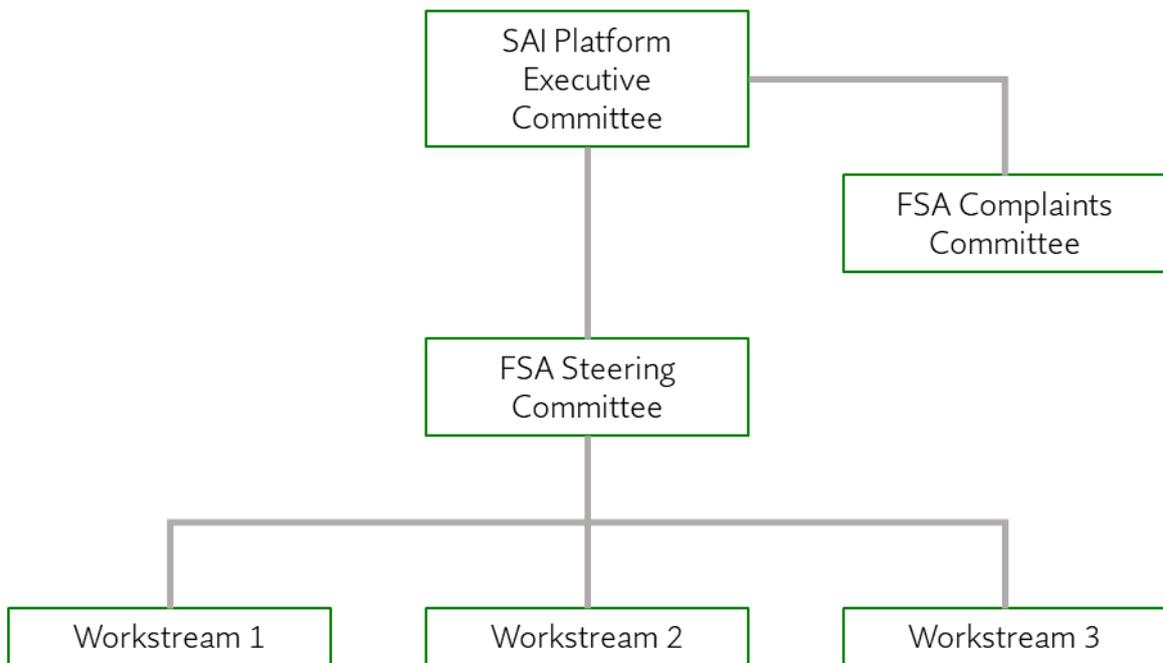


Figure 1: FSA Governance Structure

All SAI Platform members, as well as other users of the FSA and FSA service agents such as Verification Bodies and Benchmarking Consultants are part of the FSA Community of Practice. They are eligible to participate in the FSA Governance to varying degrees.

3.1 SAI Platform Executive Committee (ExCo)

This is the highest governing body of SAI Platform. The individuals on the ExCo represent their company and are elected through a statutory process.

The ExCo has the following responsibilities:

- Ensure the FSA Governance Framework is upheld
- Set purpose and direction of the FSA
- Approval of FSA normative documents (see Section 5)
- Set targets for the FSA and monitor progress against them
- Provide and allocate resources for the FSA
- Appointing members onto the FSA Steering Committee

The ExCo can delegate tasks to the FSA Steering Committee and the SAI Platform Secretariat.

3.2 FSA Steering Committee (SteerCo)

The SteerCo ensures strategic alignment of the development and deployment of FSA tools and services with member and industry needs and priorities. It supports the ExCo by providing advice and carrying out delegated tasks.

The SteerCo will exist of up to eight individuals representing the FSA Community of Practice and their companies. The maximum term for serving on the SteerCo will be two years, and members can serve a maximum of two consecutive terms. Members of the SteerCo must be working for a SAI Platform member company.

The SteerCo will choose a Chair from their midst by consensus. If no consensus can be reached, the Chair will be appointed through a closed vote that will be administered by the ExCo. The maximum term for a Chair is three years. The Chair must be a representative of a SAI Platform full member company.

The SteerCo will strive to take all decisions by consensus. If consensus cannot be achieved, the decision will be escalated to the ExCo.

The Steering Committee is responsible for:

- Overseeing and guiding the development of new FSA tools, documents, and services
- Recommending the FSA annual workplan and corresponding budget request to the ExCo
- Monitoring the implementation of the annual workplan and budget realization by the FSA Secretariat
- Setting up Workstreams to develop and maintain FSA tools, documents, and services
- Appointing members onto the Workstreams

3.3 FSA Workstreams

Workstreams develop proposals for FSA tools, documents, and services on behalf of the SteerCo. The remit and duration of a Workstream will be set out in a Terms of Reference approved by the SteerCo.

Workstreams exist of members of the FSA Community of Practice. Each Workstream has a 'champion' in the SteerCo to ensure maximum alignment with other workstreams as well as the SteerCo.

The Workstream will choose a Chair from their midst by consensus. If no consensus can be reached, the Chair will be appointed through a closed vote that will be administered by the SteerCo. The maximum term for a Chair is three years. The Chair must be a representative of a SAI Platform member company. The Chair of a Workstream will automatically be a member of the FSA SteerCo by default.

The Workstream will strive to take all decisions by consensus. If consensus cannot be achieved, the decision will be escalated to the SteerCo.

3.4 FSA Complaints Committee (ComCo)

The ComCo ensures competent and impartial handling of FSA-related complaints and grievances against SAI Platform or its service agents (Verification Bodies, Benchmarking Consultants).

The ComCo will work against a Terms of Reference that is approved by ExCo and will be independent in its judgement and recommendations. SAI Platform will accept the judgement by the ComCo as final and ensure swift and competent implementation of any recommendations.

Complaints and grievances will be escalated to the ComCo if the SAI Platform Secretariat is not successful in providing closure that is sufficiently acceptable to the complainant and / or the subject of the complaint. The complainant can always connect with the Comco directly if it feels its complaint is not adequately handles through comco@saiplatform.org. This email address will be included in the FSA Implementation Framework for this purpose.

The ComCo will exist of individuals who will make independent judgements based on their competences and experience, and without taking the interest of their employer into account. ComCo members will be appointed by the ExCo for a maximum period of four years. ComCo members can be recruited from inside and outside the FSA Community of Practice.

The ComCo will choose a Chair from their midst by consensus. If no consensus can be reached, the Chair will be appointed through a closed vote that will be administered by the ExCo. The maximum term for a Chair is three years.

3.5 Selection of Committee and Workstream Members

All Committees and Workstreams will be populated by way of appointment, except for the ExCo. SAI Platform will strive for equal and balanced access to these roles as well as maximum transparency on the appointment process and results.

3.5.1 Role description

Each position that is recruited for will have a role description, summarizing the expectations and desired characteristics of the candidate, such as:

- Expected tasks and activities, including meeting frequency
- Expected time expenditure to fulfil the role
- Duration of the appointment
- Desired competences and experience
- Required status: Full SAI Platform Members, all SAI Platform Members, FSA Community of Practice Members, Open to All
- Preferred organizational features

The role description will also contain a link to the relevant Terms of Reference and the Governance Framework. The role description will be agreed by the relevant Committee prior to publication, i.e. ExCo for ComCo and SteerCo and SteerCo for all Workstreams.

Vacancies and role descriptions will be communicated within the FSA Community of Practice, in the *My SAI Platform* space on the SAI Platform website and through appropriate online social media.

3.5.2 Promoting representation and diversity

SAI Platform aims to ensure that the Committees and Workstreams represent the FSA Community of Practice to the maximum extent. It furthermore promotes diversity between Committee and Workstream Members, as multiple perspectives will make our tools, documents, and services more relevant and acceptable to farmers and businesses worldwide.

SAI Platform will mention the desire for diversity in role descriptions in general terms, showcasing the individuals who are currently on the Committee or Workstream.

In addition, SAI Platform will include the desired characteristics of the organisations being recruited to the Committee or Workstream, based on an analysis that will include the following features:

- Sector relevance
- Geographic relevance
- Position in (relation to) the value chain
- Organisation size

3.5.3 Preventing conflicts of interest

All Committee and Workstream members will act within the scope of the SAI Platform Anti-Trust Statement and the SAI Platform Code of Conduct.

All Committee and Workstream members will give priority to achieving the purpose of the FSA and the objectives of the Governance Framework as outlined in Section 2. If a member's ability to do so is compromised by the interest of his or her organization, the member must exclude himself or herself from the conversation and decision-making process.

4 Accountability and transparency

SAI Platform aims to ensure maximum accountability between Committees and Workstreams as well as to members and key stakeholders.

4.1.1 Meeting pre-reads

Pre-reads for each Committee or Workstream meeting, including an agenda and minutes of the previous meeting will be sent to the members of the Committees and Workstreams at least one week prior to the meeting date.

4.1.2 Meeting minutes

Minutes will be made for all meetings by the SAI Platform Secretariat. Minutes will at least include decisions, the rationale for these decisions and an action list. It will be clear from the minutes who were in attendance of the meeting. Minutes will be brought to the Committee or Workstream for approval.

4.1.3 Record keeping

SAI Platform will store all pre-reads and minutes of all meetings in a central location. All minutes and pre-reads of the FSA Steering Committee and the Workstreams are available to members upon request. Minutes of the ExCo and the ComCo may be shared at the discretion of these committees.

4.1.4 Annual Report

The Secretariat will publish a report at least once a year to report progress against key performance indicators and to provide an overview of FSA developments. This report will be downloadable from the *My SAI Platform* space on the SAI Platform website. The Secretariat will present the main highlights of the annual report in a webinar that is open to all members of the FSA Community of Practice.

5 FSA Normative Documents

The root language of the FSA is English, in line with that of SAI Platform. The following FSA documents are classified to be normative, regardless of their version number.

AUDIT CONTROL POINTS	Mandatory control points for auditors, available for the Self-Assessment Questionnaire and the FSA Management System.
BENCHMARKING PROTOCOL	Process and requirements for achieving benchmark equivalent and benchmark aligned status against the FSA.
CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT MODULE	Requirements for Continuous Improvement Plans at Farm Management Group level.
FMG AUDIT GUIDANCE	Auditor guidance for performing a verification assessment of a Farm Management Group.
IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK	Guidance for implementing the FSA in accordance with verification requirements.
GUIDE FOR MAKING FSA STATEMENTS AND CLAIMS	Guidance on making public FSA-related Statements and Claims.
SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE	Self-Assessment to assess farm performance level, including the Red and Amber Plant Protection Product list.
STAND-ALONE FARM AUDIT GUIDANCE	Auditor guidance for performing a verification assessment of a Stand-Alone Farm.
THIRD PARTY VERIFICATION SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS FOR FSA VERIFICATION BODIES AND AUDITORS	Organisational and competency requirements for Verification Bodies and Auditors.

6 Glossary of Terms

AFFILIATE MEMBER	Member organization of SAI Platform with affiliate member status.
COMCo	FSA Complaints Committee.
ExCo	SAI Platform Executive Committee.
FSA COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE	All SAI Platform members, practitioners of the FSA as identified through the SAI Platform CRM systems and the FSA Community of Practice LinkedIn group.
FULL MEMBER	Member organization of SAI Platform with full member status.
SAI PLATFORM	Sustainable Agriculture Initiative Platform. Membership organization with its seat in Geneva, Switzerland.
SECRETARIAT	Work organization of SAI Platform
SERVICE AGENT	Organisation providing FSA-related services on behalf of SAI Platform or through a Licensing Agreement with SAI Platform.
STEERCo	FSA Steering Committee