PLATING UP PROGRESS

TOOLKIT

2020 VERSION 1

A guide for assessing food business performance
on health, sustainability and social inclusion

THE FOOD FOUNDATION

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1. Why food systems matter

Food systems are complex; responsible for approximately 30% of human-made greenhouse gas emissions[1], 70% of freshwater withdrawals[2], and key drivers of both terrestrial and marine biodiversity loss[3-5]. The livestock systems that contribute to many of these challenges also carry additional concerns around animal welfare and antimicrobial resistance. From a human health perspective, we are experiencing the dual global nutritional challenges of obesity and hunger in addition to high levels of micronutrient deficiencies[6].

We need an urgent transition towards healthy diets from sustainable food systems

Many people working in the food industry struggle to earn a living wage, and human rights abuses persist across the global food system[7]. Moreover, a third of the food that we produce is lost or wasted[8] and, if dietary shifts towards 'western style diets' continue, demand for food could increase globally by a further 50% by 2050[9]. While some progress is being made, the message is clear: we need an urgent transition towards healthy diets from sustainable food systems.

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1.2. Background to Plating up Progress

Plating up Progress aims to build a consensus around consistent metrics and transparent reporting mechanisms that allow for assessment of food industry progress in transitioning to a healthy, just and sustainable food system. These metrics can then be used to engage with stakeholders such as investors, companies, and policy makers to incentivise their uptake of these metrics and track progress towards more sustainable and healthy food systems.

In 2019, Plating up Progress **Part 1** and **Part 2** investigated health and sustainability related targets set by supermarkets, caterers and restaurants in the UK. This identified key gaps and made initial recommendations for metrics that could be used to measure food industry progress. Our **2020 analysis** of 26 major retailers, caterers, quick service and casual dining restaurants, found that food companies still have a long way to go before becoming future fit. For those unfamiliar with Plating up Progress, visit our **dashboard** to see the output of this work.

1.3. Why a toolkit?

As previously described, multiple nutritional, environmental and social issues are connected with our current food systems. These challenges are complex issues occurring globally, not just in the UK.

This toolkit is intended to help organisations replicate the 2020 Plating up Progress framework within their own countries in order to assess food companies' progress towards a healthier and sustainable food system. Consistent and transparent assessment is key in order to be able to track progress within the food industry, whilst also highlighting best practices and identifying gaps within specific sectors. This allows stakeholders to engage with the company, advocating for them to take action, and create targets within the areas that require further progress.

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2 OVERVIEW OF THE TOOLKIT

In the 2020 analysis we focused on food retailers, caterers, quick service and casual dining restaurants, looking at their current commitments, targets, and performance. However, this process can also be applied to manufacturers. Plating Up Progress is run in collaboration with the World Benchmarking Alliance (WBA), which aims to assess the global food and agriculture value chain via their **Food and Agriculture Benchmark**. Aligning with WBA allows this toolkit to help other organisations to create national spotlights that are also aligned with a global initiative. This toolkit will be adapted over time as our collaboration with WBA evolves.

2.1. Framework

Our 2020 framework focuses on three themes and ten core topics. Each topic contains a number of metrics. See **Figure 1** for an example of how the themes, topics and metrics fit together.

THEME: The three themes are health and nutrition, the environment, and social inclusion.

TOPICS: The themes consist of ten core topics, which represent specific issues that needs to be addressed.
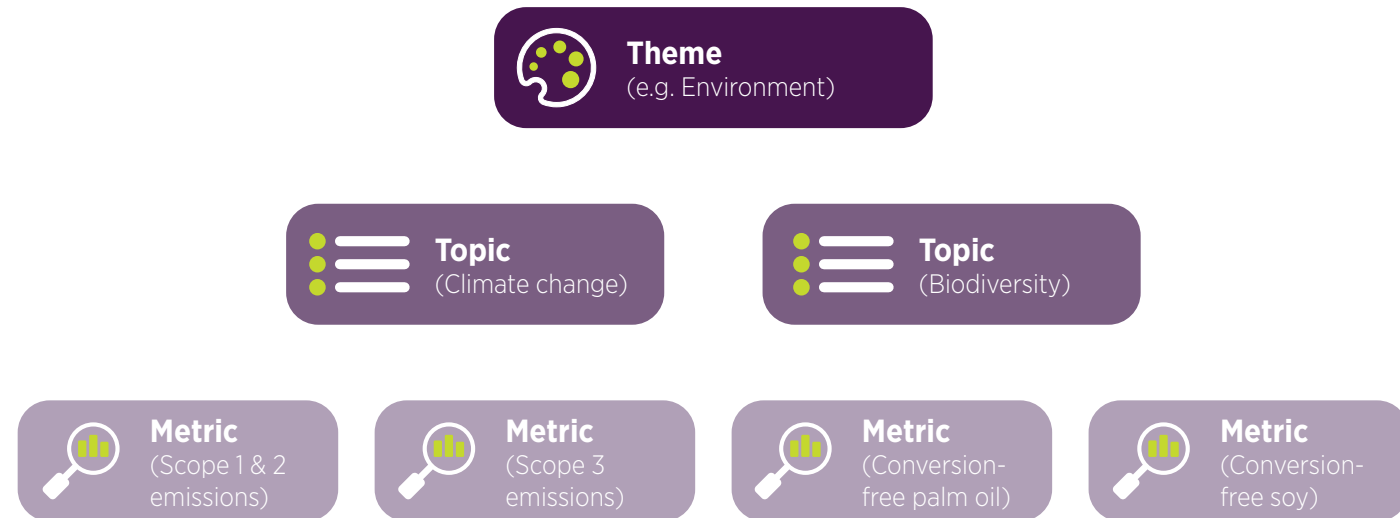
METRICS: For each topic we have multiple metrics designed to primarily assess a company's performance against quantitative targets and commitments, rather than just policies. Whilst policies are important, we need to see evidence of the actual transition in business practice terms of what food companies are buying and selling.

FIGURE 1: EXAMPLE OF THE PLATING UP PROGRESS FRAMEWORK:

Theme
(e.g. Environment)

Topic
(Climate change)

Topic
(Biodiversity)

Metric
(Scope 1 & 2 emissions)

Metric
(Scope 3 emissions)

Metric
(Conversion-free palm oil)

Metric
(Conversion-free soy)

Research has shown that we need to shift both how we produce food and what we consume. From a company's perspective, change is therefore about both the products sold and their supply chains. Hence, we have also categorised those metrics which are primarily related to the products a company is selling and those related to their supply chain. This will enable us to track where a company's focus is and where improvements can be made.

See **section 4.3** to see examples of the products vs supply on our **dashboard**.

See the **Appendix** for further details on the framework and a full list of metrics used in 2020.

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2.2. Data sources

Each company was assessed using information available within the public domain via:

› Benchmarks
› **Voluntary reporting and disclosure mechanisms, such as CDP**
› **Companies' own annual and sustainability reports**
› **Companies' own websites**

Priority was given to existing benchmarks and reporting mechanisms to leverage their previous work on methodology and data collection.

The main benchmarks and reporting mechanisms we use in the UK include:

› Access To Nutrition Initiative (ATNI); specifically the ATNI UK Supermarket Spotlight
› CDP, including disclosure on Climate Change, Water and Forests company questionnaires.
› Farm Animal Investment Risk and Return (FAIRR)
› Business Benchmark on Farm Animal Welfare (BBFAW)
› WWF Palm Oil Scorecards
› WWF Soy Scorecard, although the latest version was last updated in 2016.

Organisations replicating this work in other countries may need to use different data sources, depending on the benchmarks available that cover the companies within scope.

2.3. Suggested timescales

2.3.1. ANALYSIS TIMESCALES
Per company, we recommend allocating a minimum of 1.5 days for research and scoring. It was also valuable to allow time, bi-weekly, to review the analysis and identify any gaps in the desk-based research.

2.3.2. COMPANY FEEDBACK
Each company was given a month to fact-check our initial desk-based research, giving them the opportunity to share any further publicly available information with us before the final analysis was completed.

As 2020 was the first year of analysis, and companies' annual and sustainability reports are published at various times of the year, companies were also given the chance to update their performance on all the metrics six months after our initial research. However, the six-month update is not an essential step for other organisations looking to replicate Plating up Progress.

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3 ASSESSING WHAT 'GOOD' LOOKS LIKE

For some metrics, science-based targets are still evolving, and universally accepted targets do not yet exist; however, we do know the required general direction of travel. Therefore, this methodology prioritises the existence of a target, rather than making a subjective assessment of that target. Fundamentally, the top scores are intended to highlight whether a company has a clear target and if they are on track to meet it.

As a consensus around clearer targets develops within the topic areas, these will be incorporated into our evolving methodology. However, there are some metrics for which clear targets already exist:

> **100% of seafood should be certified to a higher sustainability standard that is MSC certified.**
> **Zero net land-use conversion targets should be used across a company's reliance on palm oil as a product or an ingredient, soy in animal feed, and beef.**
> **Climate change targets should, over time, become science-based.**
> **Companies should target a 50% reduction in food waste by 2030 across the value chain, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals 12.3.**

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T O O L K I T

3.1. Scoring guidelines

To capture both qualitative and quantitative metrics, we used two scoring guidelines with a points system.

For quantitative metrics with specific targets (e.g. targets for healthy food as % of total food sales), we have used the following guidelines:

› **The company has clear data referring to their impact and is on track to meet targets referring to the metric (3 points).**
› **The company has taken some action and has partial data on their impact and progress (2 points).**
› **The company recognises the issue but has only taken limited or isolated action (1 point).**
› **No evidence is found that a company recognises the issue (0 points).**

For more qualitative metrics such as those referring to policies (e.g. a clear policy on human rights and labour rights beyond tier one in the supply chain), we have used the following guidelines:

› **The company has clear policies or strategies relating to the issue (3 points).**
› **The company has taken action but lacks an explicit policy relating to the issue (2 points).**
› **The company recognises the issue, but no evidence is found that the company is making it a strategic priority though policies or actions (1 point).**
› **No evidence is found that a company recognises the issue as being important (0 points).**

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3.2. The Plating Up Progress approach to weighting

Our methodology does not yet weight metrics differently as this would imply a prioritisation of one issue over another. We could give the metrics on climate change a greater weighting than water for example, but this would primarily be a value-based decision and disregard the basic challenge that food system issues are both diverse and interrelated.

We have also avoided giving companies an aggregate score because this would mask where they are performing well and badly. So in this version of the methodology, we have only averaged the score on a topic level such as climate change or biodiversity.

3.3. Aggregating metrics scores for each topic

We used a traffic light approach for each topic by averaging the metric scores within that topic. For example, this is how we assessed climate change. Climate change was one topic with two metrics:

> **whether a company has targets for scope 1 and 2 emissions and**
> **whether a company has targets for scope 3 emissions.**

If a company has clear targets for scope 1 and 2 emissions and are on track to meet them, they will score 3 points. But if the same company lacks evidence that they are tackling scope 3 emissions, they will score 0 points for the scope 3 emissions metric. Their average score for climate change is the average for both scores: 3 divided by 2, which equals 1.5. This means the company is assigned a yellow traffic light score for climate change, as per the traffic light scoring approach below.

● **AVERAGE SCORE >2.4**
● **AVERAGE SCORE 1.5 - 2.39**
● **AVERAGE SCORE 0.7 - 1.49**
● **AVERAGE SCORE <0.7**

This approach allows us to credit where companies are at least transitioning towards healthy and sustainable business practices, but only allocates a green light to companies consistently performing well across all the metrics within a topic.

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DATA PRESENTATION

It is essential to present complex data in an intuitive and digestible format. Feedback from investors and companies has supported the need for analysis that is easy to understand. We used **Flourish**, a UK based interactive data visualisation tool which allows us to present our data in different formats and enables viewers to engage with the graphics. The graphics reflecting our findings are then embedded into the dashboard on our website.

For the **Plating up Progress 2020 dashboard**, we displayed the data in three different formats:

› **SPIDER DIAGRAM (4.1.)**

› **TRAFFIC LIGHT TABLE (4.2.)**

› **PRODUCT VS SUPPLY MATRIX (4.3.)**

These formats allow different focal points to be presented and highlighted in each diagram, for each company and for each sector. Having different methods of data presentation also allows us to identify which topics companies are failing to make progress against and to highlight best practices.
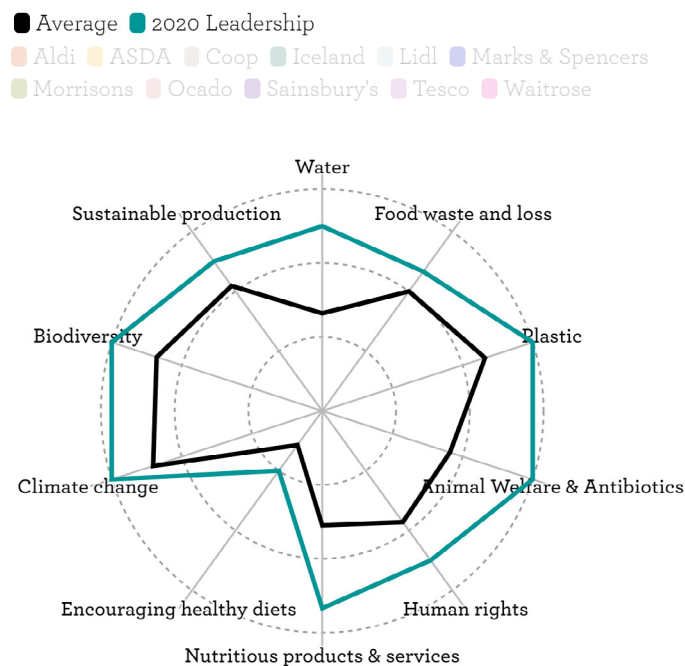
For each format we display the individual company performance, the average sector performance and, by taking the best performance from each metric, a profile showing 2020 leadership within each sector.

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4.1. Spider diagrams

The spider diagram is an effective tool to plot the score of all ten topics and the scores of each company in just one data visualisation. This allows us to easily identify where companies need to make more progress. It also means we are able to compare companies both against each other, and against the sector average and the leadership score for the sector as seen in **Figures 2-4**.

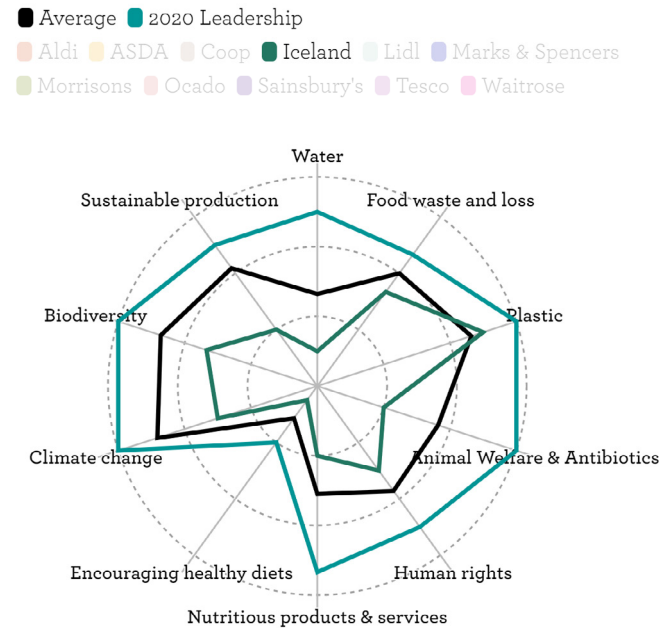FIGURE 2: THE SECTOR AVERAGE PROFILE VS 2020 LEADERSHIP PROFILE

⬛ Average 🟩 2020 Leadership
🟥 Aldi 🟧 ASDA 🟫 Coop 🟩 Iceland 🟩 Lidl 🟪 Marks & Spencers
🟩 Morrisons 🟥 Ocado 🟥 Sainsbury's 🟪 Tesco 🟥 Waitrose

> **Figure 2** highlights the largest gaps between the sector average and 2020 leadership in the topics 'water', 'animal welfare & antibiotics' and 'nutritious products & services.' This indicates where companies can improve if they were to incorporate best practices for those topics.
> The spider diagram also shows that there is limited or a lack of evidence that all companies are taking action on the topic 'encouraging healthy diets.'
> Each company's score can be overlayed and compared against the sector's average and the 2020 leadership profile for the sector as a whole.

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FIGURE 3: THE SECTOR AVERAGE PROFILE VS 2020 LEADERSHIP PROFILE VS INDIVIDUAL COMPANY PERFORMANCES

FIGURE 4: COMPARING DIFFERENT COMPANY PROFILES

■ Average ■ 2020 Leadership
■ Aldi ■ ASDA ■ Coop ■ Iceland ■ Lidl ■ Marks & Spencers
■ Morrisons ■ Ocado ■ Sainsbury's ■ Tesco ■ Waitrose

■ Average ■ 2020 Leadership
■ Aldi ■ ASDA ■ Coop ■ Iceland ■ Lidl ■ Marks & Spencers
■ Morrisons ■ Ocado ■ Sainsbury's ■ **Tesco** ■ Waitrose

› **Figure 3** shows the company has taken clear action and provided data, performing better than average on the topic 'plastic' but overall performing less well than the sector average.

› Companies can also be compared against one another.

› **Figure 4** shows both companies are taking action on 'plastic', however, both are preforming poorly on the topic 'encouraging healthy diets.'

› In this example, one company is performance better than another across most topics, showing clear leadership.

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4.2. ## Traffic light scores

The companies' scores for each topic are also shown in a traffic light table, broken down by sector. This allows us to summarise quickly and easily the topics where each individual company is performing badly, and to compare between different companies. For example, **Figure 5** indicates that 'encouraging healthy diets' is a topic where all the companies are making the least amount of progress. Whereas 'climate change' is a topic where all companies assessed have either taken some action or are on track to meet their targets.

FIGURE 5: TRAFFIC LIGHT SCORES ACROSS ALL TOPICS FOR EACH SUPERMARKET

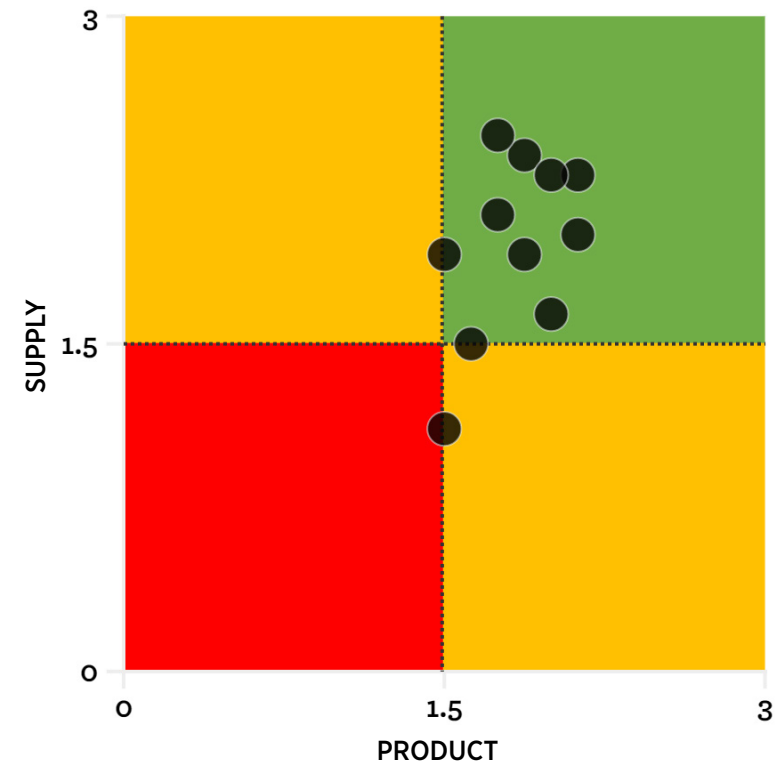| Company	Nutritious products & services	Encouraging healthy diets	Climate change	Biodiversity	Sustainable food production	Water	Food waste & loss	Plastics	Animal welfare & antibiotics	Human rights
2020 Leadership	🟢	🟠	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟢	🟢	🟢
Aldi	🟡	🔴	🟢	🟡	🟢	🟠	🟡	🟡	🟡	🟡
ASDA	🟠	🔴	🟢	🟡	🟡	🟡	🟡	🟡	🟡	🟡
Coop	🟠	🟠	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟡	🟡	🟡	🟢
Iceland	🟠	🔴	🟡	🟡	🟠	🔴	🟡	🟢	🟠	🟡
Lidl	🟡	🔴	🟡	🟡	🟡	🔴	🟡	🟡	🟡	🟡
Marks & Spencer	🟡	🟠	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟡	🟢	🟢	🟡
Morrisons	🟠	🔴	🟢	🟡	🟡	🟠	🟡	🟢	🟡	🟡
Ocado	🟠	🟠	🟡	🟡	🟡	🔴	🟡	🟡	🟠	🟡
Sainsbury's	🟡	🟠	🟢	🟡	🟡	🟢	🟡	🟢	🟡	🟡
Tesco	🟡	🔴	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟡	🟡	🟢	🟢	🟡
Waitrose	🟠	🔴	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟠	🟡	🟢	🟢	🟡

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4.3. Product vs supply chain matrix

As mentioned earlier we also assessed whether companies are more focused on healthy and sustainable products or on their supply chain sustainability. Metrics were categorised as 'product focused' or 'supply chain focused' and the scores for each category were averaged and plotted on a matrix diagram. This shows whether companies are making progress with sustainable products, sustainable supply chains, or both (the colour coding is a visual tool used to distinguish the general direction of the company's focus rather than an indication of a company scoring multiple green traffic lights). For example, a company plotted on the:

› top right-hand corner indicates better performance on metrics related to both product and supply chains.
› bottom left-hand corner indicates no evidence or limited progress
› top left-hand corner indicated better performance on metrics related to supply chains.
› bottom right-hand corner indicated better performance on metrics related to products.

This matrix is being further developed in collaboration with others and will evolve in the next iteration of this toolkit.

FIGURE 6: EXAMPLE OF THE PRODUCTS VS SUPPLY MATRIX

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4.4. Individual company profiles

We make individual company profile scorecards publicly available on the dashboard, including the data visualisations, fully traceable evidence we used in our analysis, and a summary of the company's performance.

We have found the company profiles to be useful for both investors and companies. Investors can see a top-level picture of where progress is being made and where improvements are required for the companies they invest in. Companies can use the data for internal purposes and to help build a case for new actions and initiatives.

All Plating Up Progress data visualisations are publicly available on the **Plating up Progress dashboard**. This provides a comprehensive snapshot of a company's progress towards becoming a healthy and sustainable business in a digestible format.

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5 ONGOING ENGAGEMENT AND IMPROVEMENT

5.1. Engagement with companies and investor

We use the dashboard to engage with companies and investors to highlight where companies are performing well and badly. The intention is to encourage investors to set expectations for companies to change, and to use the dashboard as a mirror for the companies themselves to understand where they are in their transition.

During the 2020 engagement process with investors and companies, 9 of the 26 companies responded with updated information that subsequently improved their profiles on the dashboard. This engagement is an ongoing process and in future versions of the toolkit we intend to include the lessons we have learned through this and, where relevant, case studies on how it can lead to change.

5.2. Ongoing improvements

As Plating up Progress evolves, we aim to:

› Improve the assessment of products vs supply chains.

› Be fully aligned with WBA to have a consensus for a global assessment and national spotlights.

› Further develop this toolkit as we develop the metrics and the way in which companies' performances are scored and displayed.

› Incorporate successful engagement case studies which can be replicated in other countries.

› Adapt the toolkit to take into account different priorities in other countries where for example some nutrition, environment or social issues may be more prevalent.

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7 APPENDIX

Theme	Health and Nutrition	SDG	Product or Supply Chain
TOPIC	**NUTRITIOUS PRODUCTS & SERVICES**		
Metric	Target for sales-weighted % increase in menu/ products meeting agreed nutritional standard	2,3,12	P
Metric	Target for increase in fruit & veg as % of food procurement	2,3,12,13	P
Metric	Target for % of protein procurement from animal & plant-based foods	2,3,12,13	P
TOPIC	**ENCOURAGING HEALTHY & SUSTAINABLE DIETS**		
Metric	Company has clear policy on relating to healthy choices for children (for retailers we used the ATNI Supermarket Spotlight results)	2,3,12	
Metric	Company promotes healthy choices through price promotions (for retailers we used the ATNI Supermarket Spotlight results)	2,3,12	
Metric	Company have clear policy relating to marketing healthy vs unhealthy food (for retailers we used the ATNI Supermarket Spotlight results)	2,3,12	
Metric	Target for % of menu or products with intuitive health labels (ideal 100%) (for retailers we used the ATNI Supermarket Spotlight results)	2,3,12	P

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Theme	Environment	SDG	Product or Supply Chain
TOPIC	**CLIMATE CHANGE**		
Metric	Target for scope 1 & 2 emissions reduction (Science-based target)	12,13,15	
Metric	Target for scope 3 emissions reduction (Science-based target), specifically food in supply chain	12,13,15	S
TOPIC	**BIODIVERSITY**		
Metric	Target for zero net land-use conversion through company's reliance on palm oil as a product or an ingredient.	2,12,13,15	S
Metric	Target for zero net land-use conversion through company's reliance on soy as in animal feed.	2,12,13,15	S
Metric	Target for zero net land-use conversion through company's reliance on beef.	2,12,13,15	S
TOPIC	**SUSTAINABLE FOOD PRODUCTION PRACTICES**		
Metric	Target for % of wild-caught or farmed fish & seafood certified to higher sustainability standards	12,14	
Metric	Target for % of products produced under sustainable production practices and monitoring.	2,12,13,15	S
TOPIC	**WATER USE**		
Metric	Target for water use reduction in operations	6,12	
Metric	Target for reducing % of food sourced from water stressed regions.	6,12	S
TOPIC	**FOOD WASTE**		
Metric	Company has policy to help customers reduce food waste of purchased products	3,12,13,14,15	P
Metric	Target for % reduction in operational food waste	3,12,13,14,15	P
Metric	Target for % of suppliers being engaged to reduce food waste in supply chain	3,12,13,14,15	S

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Theme	Environment	SDG	Product or Supply Chain
TOPIC	**PLASTICS**		
Metric	Target for % plastics packaging that is recyclable.	12	P
Metric	Target for reducing single-use plastics without creating a food waste risk	12	P
TOPIC	**ANIMAL WELFARE & ANTIBIOTICS**		
Metric	BBFAW tier position or Target for % of animal products certified to high animal welfare standards	12	S
Metric	Target for zero supply chain use of antibiotics as a prophylactic or growth promoter	12	S

Theme	Human rights	SDG	Product or Supply Chain
TOPIC	**SOCIAL INCLUSION**		
Metric	Company recognises the need for a real liveable wage for all employees	1,2,3,5,8	
Metric	Target for % of supply chain engaged to ensure human rights and labour rights, beyond tier one.	1,2,3,5,8	S

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