



One of COLEACP's key roles is promoting the integration of small-scale producers into the supply chain of local and regional retail networks, which are developing their own quality standards.



The Charter: the goal of a sustainability support programme

COLEACP has devised a Sustainability Support Programme. Its aim is to support businesses and organisations that voluntarily decide to commit to sustainable and inclusive development. This technical assistance and training programme is set to offer step-by-step guidance to its beneficiaries in developing their social and environmental responsibilities, leading to their commitment to an ethical charter. This Sustainability Charter centres on seven key principles.

Complying with the rules – The business or organisation must operate strictly within the law. It not only complies with national laws and regulations specific to businesses, but also actively fights against abuses such as corruption and plundering of property.

Demonstrating civic engagement – The business must be active in the local community, listening to it, working to support its wellbeing and, if necessary, providing it with assistance. This civic engagement must be reflected in its governance principles.

Respecting partners – The business or organisation must build relationships based on respect and transparency with its customers, suppliers, partners, investors and even its competitors. This entails, among other things, reasonable payment terms, systematic complaint handling and regular updates.

Being a good employer – The business or organisation must ensure decent working conditions for its employees and for the small-scale producers who work for it. This requires compliance with the regulations of the International Labour Organization, but also establishing a pleasant and respectful working environment, providing adequate equipment and training, and drafting detailed employment contracts.

Protecting the environment – The business or organisation must minimise its impact on natural resources, biodiversity and ecosystems. This entails, among other things, systematically evaluating this impact (particularly when developing new land) and taking appropriate measures to reduce it. This includes supporting initiatives for the conservation of the natural environment and respect for protected zones.

Ensuring high quality production – The business or organisation must guarantee safe, healthy and high-quality products. It respects regulations on food safety, hygiene, trade and pesticide residues, but also endeavours to meet the specific requirements of customers in these areas (standards, certifications, etc.), ensure good traceability, and prevent post-harvest losses and wastage.

Following good agricultural practices – The business or organisation must apply good agricultural practices based on the most up-to-date agronomic knowledge. This means making informed choices about varieties and techniques, and ensuring that these insights benefit small-scale producers. It also means using the most suitable and most sustainable energy, fertilisation and crop protection systems, ensuring hazardous substances (pesticides and fuels) are used securely, and preventing incineration when removing waste and clearing land.