



# BASIC SET

## Biodiversity Criteria

for the Food Sector



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## BASIC SET OF BIODIVERSITY CRITERIA FOR THE FOOD SECTOR

### Introduction / Preamble

The following Basic Set of Biodiversity Criteria is a fundamental part of the German association „Food for Biodiversity“. It was developed in cooperation with representatives of food companies, agriculture, food standards, scientific institutions and environmental organisations.

**The Basic Set is not a new „Biodiversity Standard“!** Rather, food standards and companies should compare their specifications with the Basic Set and – if necessary – revise their own criteria and/or integrate additional criteria and measures.

The agreement of the association to implement the Basic Set of Biodiversity Criteria is a major contribution to halting the dramatic loss of biological diversity and related ecosystem services. In addition, unfair competition to the detriment of the environment and nature will be avoided. The overall goal is to improve the biodiversity performance of the entire food sector.

All actors of the food sector are encouraged to implement the requirements and measures of the Basic Set or to promote and support the implementation:

- Agricultural enterprises and producer associations
- Voluntary standards at international, national and regional level
- Companies in the food industry with their own procurement specifications
- Associations of the food sector
- Political decision makers responsible for agricultural legislation, policies, programs and subsidies.

The implementation of the Basic Set ensures a fundamental protection of existing biodiversity on agricultural land, creates potential for more habitats and species and helps to avoid or reduce negative impacts of agricultural practices on biodiversity (VERY good agricultural practice).

Standards sometimes have different geographical focuses, are product-specific or are aimed at large producers or small farmers; food companies have specifications for regional and global supply chains. For this reason, the basic criteria have to be adapted where necessary to the geographical or product-specific conditions or to the framework conditions of small farmers (e.g. agriculture in Europe or in the tropics, certification of smallholder cooperatives). It is essential, however, that these adjustments do not lead to a dilution of the objectives of the basic criteria or measures.

High environmental and social standards are an investment in the future. However, just like the protection of biodiversity, they are not available for free. Responsible implementation results in costs. These should not be imposed on the farmer alone. All actors along the supply chain, right up to the food producer or retailer, must bear an appropriate share of the costs or losses. This is part of the corporate responsibility and duty of care towards producers and biodiversity as a valuable public good.

### Requirements for standards / companies and for farms

The Basic Set contains two levels. The first level clarifies requirements for a standard or the procurement guidelines of a company. Overarching aspects of biodiversity conservation are introduced to standards and companies. An example would be the implementation of a Biodiversity Action Plan in existing procurement requirements and criteria catalogues. The time frame for implementing these criteria refers to how quickly a standard or a company should incorporate them into its own systems.

The second level deals with concrete requirements for agricultural enterprises. Here, the criteria for standards and procurement guidelines are formulated, focusing on agricultural production and aiming to avoid negative environmental impacts of agricultural practices and to protect ecological structures. In many cases, this level builds up on the first level. The implementation time frame of this level refers to the implementation of the proposed measures on the farm after the standard or company has stipulated these measures. **To check the implementation of the measures, key figures and indicators were defined and listed in the table.**

#### **Further development and accompanying program to the Basic Set**

The members of the association Food for Biodiversity will regularly update the Basic Set, taking into account new findings, legal requirements and practical experience. Furthermore, the sector initiative sets up an accompanying program to achieve a broad implementation of the Basic Set. This includes further training and technical support for farmers, attractive incentives for farmers to improve their biodiversity, a favourable political framework and consumer awareness.

Now is the time to act quickly and comprehensively if the dramatic loss of biodiversity is to be halted. The players of the sector initiative encourage all those involved in the food industry to take action: by implementing the requirements from the Basic Set and by becoming a member of the association themselves.

#### **Recommendations for effective criteria for the protection of biodiversity**

The Basic Set is based on the „Recommendations for effective criteria for the protection of biodiversity in standards for the food sector and procurement guidelines of food companies“. You can download the publication under the following link:

##### **English version:**

<http://www.business-biodiversity.eu/en/recommendations-biodiversity-in-standards>

##### **German version:**

<http://www.business-biodiversity.eu/de/empfehlungen-biodiversitaet-in-standards>

## **ROADMAP FOR IMPLEMENTING THE BASIC SET**

- The members of the association would like to make a concrete contribution to achieving the 2030 biodiversity targets.
- In order to do so, the members commit to implementing the Basic Set of Biodiversity Criteria (at least 95% of the criteria relevant for a raw material) in as many as 3 pilot projects on biodiversity-relevant focus raw materials. These pilot projects will be completed within a maximum of three years after joining.
- The members aim to implement pilot projects jointly where possible. Members from NGOs, science and associations support the implementation. The members implement high-quality pilot projects in one or more regions. As many focus raw materials as possible should be covered via the pilot projects in order to generate a high level of experience in the sector initiative. The members are willing to share the information and experiences from the pilot projects in the sector initiative.
- Within three years of the establishment of the association, the Basic Set of Biodiversity Criteria will be reviewed and, if necessary, revised based on the experience gained from the pilot projects.
- After three years, the members of the association agree on more far-reaching goals to implement the Basic Set beyond the pilot projects (additional raw materials, additional regions, etc.).

#### **Background:**

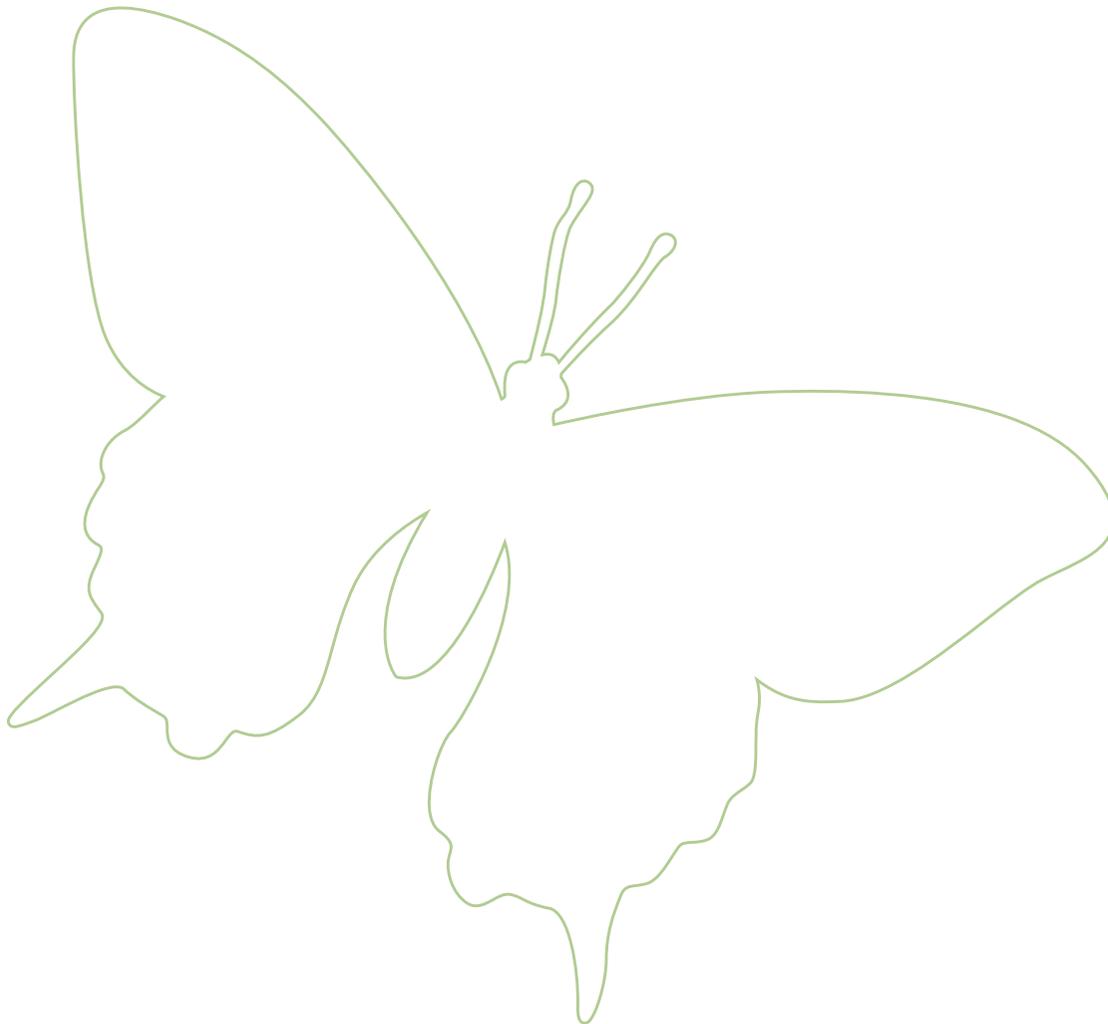
In order to determine the biodiversity-relevant focus raw materials, an approach is favoured that considers the importance for the company (e.g. volume) and the relevance for biodiversity. Relevance includes the protection of existing biodiversity as well as the creation of potentials for biodiversity in agriculture in Germany, Europe and on the international level. Existing databases, studies, hotspot analyses of companies and expert knowledge can be used to assess risks and opportunities.

#### **Procedure:**

- Participating companies and standards nominate their focus raw materials to the association Food for Biodiversity. The association compiles a list of all focus raw materials from the companies' point of view.
- A group of experts from the sector initiative assesses the relevance of the focus raw materials for biodiversity. This assessment is based on comprehensible criteria.

## THE BASIC SET OF BIODIVERSITY CRITERIA

The Basic Set rests on two pillars. Part A comprises the criteria for improving the potential for biodiversity, ensuring the protection of existing biodiversity on agricultural land and creating room for more habitats and species. Part B includes criteria for VERY good agricultural practices. These contribute to avoiding and/or reducing negative impacts of agricultural practices on biodiversity. These two pillars are themselves made up of a diverse set of categories with associated criteria:



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## A. CRITERIA FOR IMPROVING THE POTENTIALS FOR BIODIVERSITY

### 1. BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLANS AT FARM LEVEL

A Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) includes measures around biodiversity protection on and around a farm. It contains a description of the initial situation / baseline, an overview of potential for improvement as well as smart goals for protecting biodiversity that can be monitored against implementation.

#### **Smallholder Farmers in the Global South**

To demand individual Biodiversity Action Plans from smallholders is neither practical nor effective. In a smallholder-environment, the standard / the company should request the agricultural cooperative to develop a BAP for affiliated farmers in the respective region (landscape approach).

#### **Smallholder Farmers in Europe**

In EU countries, smaller farms can develop and implement a BAP on the level of producer groups (landscape approach).

### 1.1. BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN

Requirements for standard organisations / companies	Immediately	In a year	Long-term in x years	Key figures / Indicators
<p><b>The standard organisation / the company</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>requests a Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) from the certified farms or suppliers.</li> <li>In this context the standard organisation / company makes quantitative, qualitative and operationalised specifications for the content of the BAP (e.g. share of ecological priority areas beyond the legal requirements, width of biotope corridors, selection of indicator species for monitoring).</li> </ul>				Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) based on survey and assessment of current situation with measures and time schedule in place? <b>yes / no</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>supports farmers in the development of a Biodiversity Action Plan; among others with                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>trainings and guidelines</li> <li>free provision of expert knowledge on aspects of biodiversity</li> <li>free provision of tools, such as the Biodiversity Performance Tool</li> <li>regular exchange of experience regarding biodiversity measures.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>requests a continuous improvement of the potential for biodiversity through the creation and protection of habitats/ecological structures, and the reduction of the negative footprint of agricultural activities on the environment.</li> </ul> <p>A continuous improvement is to be strived for until an optimum is reached. After that, the focus is on maintaining the status quo.</p>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>establishes regional average values and benchmarks (best in class) for biodiversity-relevant factors based on monitoring results. These serve as orientation for farm operators/companies/ standards for a regional comparison.</li> </ul>				

## 1.2. DESCRIBING THE BASELINE

The measures of the Biodiversity Action Plan relate to the baseline assessment of the farm and cover all major opportunities to protect and promote biodiversity. To describe the baseline, farm-specific data relevant for biodiversity are documented and mapped. In Germany this can be done in already existing farm maps, e.g. maps required to apply for subsidies.

Requirements for standard organisations / companies	Immediately	In a year	Long-term in x years	
<p><b>The standard organisation / the company</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• supports the farm operator in developing an overview of protected and endangered species by                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• free provision of expertise</li> <li>• organising exchanges between farm operators and nature conservation authorities</li> <li>• mediation in conflicts between species protection and production</li> <li>• compensation for loss of income (e.g. by reduced harvest).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>				
Criteria to integrate into existing standards and procurement specifications	Immediately	In a year	Long-term in x years	Key figures / Indicators
<p><b>The farm operator</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• documents all ecologically valuable structures / areas on the farm (own farmland and leased farmland) and in the immediate vicinity. These areas with high value include protected areas (e.g. nature parks, Natura 2000 areas), primary (natural) ecosystems or other biodiversity hotspots*, such as High Conservation Value Areas.</li> </ul> <p>* Every farm has areas where wildlife is more abundant than on average. These areas are considered hotspots of biodiversity on the farm. In Germany, these hotspots are not yet recorded on farm maps and descriptions and therefore need to be included manually.</p>				<p>Baseline report available, e.g. via recording the actual situation with the Biodiversity Performance Tool?</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>yes / no</b></p> <p>Map with ecological structures / areas on the farm and in the surrounding area?</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>yes / no</b></p>

Criteria to integrate into existing standards and procurement specifications	Immediately	In a year	Long-term in x years	Key figures / Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• includes further farm-specific information in a second step, e.g.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• agriculturally used areas (grassland, permanent pasture, arable farming, permanent crops, livestock)</li> <li>• aquatic ecosystems (wetlands, peatlands, lakes, streams, rivers ...)</li> <li>• near-natural habitats such as                                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• fallow land</li> <li>• patches that are not used for agricultural purposes and have a green cover</li> <li>• boundary areas between fields, along roadsides, paths or water bodies</li> <li>• hedges, shrubs and trees</li> </ul> </li> <li>• existing biotope corridors.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>				<p><b>Map with</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• agriculturally used areas</li> <li>• near-natural habitats and ecological structures on the farm and in the surrounding area?</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>yes / no</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• describes the company-specific potential risks to biodiversity arising from agricultural activity as well as risks arising from the adjacent environment (e.g. busy roads, noise, pollution from untreated wastewater or (illegal) landfills). The farm operator also describes whether the farm has a direct or indirect influence on the reduction of such risks.</li> </ul>				<p>Biodiversity risk analysis?</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>yes / no</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the company is located in the neighbourhood of or in protected areas, it should have an overview of the protected and endangered species occurring in the region* . If necessary, it can involve experts for this purpose (e.g. nature conservation authority, regional NGO, scientific institution).</li> </ul> <p style="font-size: small; margin-top: 10px;">* Available e.g. from National Lists of Threatened Species, IUCN Red List, Annex II, IV, V of the Habitats Directive. In countries outside Europe, HCV areas are included.</p>				<p>Is the farm in or in the neighbourhood of a protected area?</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>yes / no</b></p> <p><b>If yes:</b> Does the farm management have an overview** of protected / endangered species in the region?</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>yes / no</b></p> <p>Is the farm in regular exchange with biodiversity experts, e.g. NGOs, nature conservation authorities?</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>yes / no</b></p> <p style="font-size: small; margin-top: 10px;">** <b>Evidence:</b> A list of species that occur in the region. There is no claim to completeness.</p>

### 1.3. SELECTION OF MEASURES

The Biodiversity Action Plan includes measures to protect and promote biodiversity on the farm. These measures are based on the initial situation (baseline) and evaluation of the risks and cover all main options for achieving this goal. In particular, the measures focus on reducing the identified risks.

Requirements for standard organisations / companies	Immediately	In a year	Long-term in x years
<p><b>The standard organisation / the company</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• supports the farm operator in the selection of measures, e.g. by                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• fact sheets with the description of measures</li> <li>• guidelines with measures for specific regions</li> <li>• guidelines with measures for certain cultivation practices</li> <li>• free provision of experts / nature conservation consultants.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>			

#### 1.3.1. MINIMUM SHARE OF NATURAL AND SEMI-NATURAL HABITATS

The standard organisation / the company requires a share of natural and semi-natural habitats beyond the legally required minimum share, as well as specifications for the quality of these areas.

Requirements for standard organisations / companies	Immediately	In a year	Long-term in x years
<p><b>The standard organisation / the company</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• requires a minimum proportion of semi-natural habitats and ecological structures on farms that goes well beyond the legal requirements.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the EU member states, a minimum share of 10% of semi-natural habitats on the entire farm area is mandatory (status 2020).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• rewards the areas of semi-natural habitats and ecological structures on farms beyond legal requirements, e.g. by bearing a proportion of the costs and loss of earnings.</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• defines quality criteria for semi-natural habitats and ecological structures with the help of experts and/or by using the Biodiversity Performance Tool* .</li> </ul> <p>* This requirement is a challenging task and cannot be realised for all near-natural habitats. Nevertheless, standards and companies should develop quality aspects for the most common habitat types in key sourcing regions.</p>			

### 1.3.2. CREATION OF BIOTOPE CORRIDORS

Criteria to integrate into existing standards and procurement specifications	Immediately	In a year	Long-term in x years	Key figures / Indicators
<b>The farm operator</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>connects the natural and semi-natural habitats on their own land by means of biotope corridors. Buffer zones can also be used as biotope corridors.</li> </ul>				Interconnected habitats (in %)  <b>Evidence:</b> Biotope corridors are plotted on the map with ecological structures / areas on the farm.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ensures that – as far as possible – their natural and semi-natural habitats / ecological structures are connected to directly adjacent natural and semi-natural habitats.</li> </ul>				Habitats on the farm interconnected with habitats in the surrounding area (number)  <b>Evidence:</b> The biotope corridors are plotted on the map with ecological structures / areas of the farm.

### 1.3.3. PRESERVATION OF GRASSLAND

Criteria to integrate into existing standards and procurement specifications	Immediately	In a year	Long-term in x years	Key figures / Indicators
<b>The farm operator</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>must not plough up permanent grassland.</li> </ul>				Met?  yes / no
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>must not convert permanent grassland into arable land.</li> </ul>				Met?  yes / no
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>has a management plan for grazing.</li> </ul>				Management plan for grazing in place?  yes / no

### 1.3.4. CREATION AND MAINTENANCE OF NATURAL HABITATS

Requirements for standard organisations / companies	Immediately	In a year	Long-term in x years
<b>The standard organisation / the company</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>creates a catalogue of measures for the creation of regionally typical ecological structures in combination with measures to support indicator species.</li> <li>International standards / companies with an international supply chain should start with the development of a catalogue of measures for the most important sourcing regions.</li> </ul>			

Requirements for standard organisations / companies	Immediately	In a year	Long-term in x years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provides a method for prioritising measures which takes the diversification of semi-natural habitats into account in order to obtain the highest nature values.</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>sets up a monitoring system of the implemented measures:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>finds out which measures are implemented and with what frequency</li> <li>identifies hurdles / challenges in the implementation of the measures.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>supports the implementation of effective measures with incentives and professional expertise.</li> </ul>			

Criteria to integrate into existing standards and procurement specifications	Immediately	In a year	Long-term in x years	Key figures / Indicators
<p><b>The farm operator</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>only uses seeds of regionally native species for field margins and flower strips. The natural development of linear structures and habitats without active planting and seeding is allowed.</li> </ul>				Area of field margins / flower strips (m <sup>2</sup> ) Evidence of site-typical seed? yes / no
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>implements maintenance measures for linear ecological structures (e.g. pruning of hedgerows, clearing / cleaning of drainage channels) and other activities in adjacent areas in a manner that minimises damage as much as possible for habitats, flora and fauna.</li> </ul>				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hedges (linear meters)</li> <li>Native species in the hedges?</li> </ul> yes / no  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of native plant species in the hedges</li> <li>Plan for maintenance of habitats and ecological structures in place?</li> </ul> yes / no
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>does not fertilise or apply pesticides on natural and semi-natural habitats and linear ecological structures.</li> </ul>				Pesticides and/or fertilisers on natural / close to nature habitats or other ecological structures? yes / no  If yes: On what % of the land? If yes: Does the farm have a plan to avoid the application of pesticides / fertilisers?

### 1.3.5. SPECIAL MEASURES FOR THE PROTECTION OF SPECIES

Requirements for standard organisations / companies	Immediately	In a year	Long-term in x years	
<p><b>The standard organisation / the company</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>supports the farmer in protecting endangered and protected animals and plants by                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>free provision of experts for consultation</li> <li>mapping and monitoring</li> <li>regular exchange with the nature conservation authorities</li> <li>incentives for the protection of species and proportionate takeover of the costs and loss of earnings.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>prohibits the use, upbringing and planting of genetically modified organisms (GMOs).</li> </ul>				

Criteria to integrate into existing standards and procurement specifications	Immediately	In a year	Long-term in x years	Key figures / Indicators
<p><b>The farm operator</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>identifies protected and/or endangered species of flora and fauna if they occur on the farm area and takes action to ensure their protection. The measures include both direct protection measures and a nature-friendly adaptation of the agricultural practices.</li> </ul>				List of protected and endangered animal and plant species present on the farm land? <p style="text-align: right;"><b>yes / no</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>avoids practices that interfere with or put in danger protected / endangered animals. This includes activities such as logging trees or trimming hedges during the mating / nesting season of birds or mowing grassland during times when bees are active.</li> </ul>				If protected / endangered species are present, does the BAP include measures to protect these species? <p style="text-align: right;"><b>yes / no</b></p>
				Planning for the maintenance of habitats and ecological structures in place? <p style="text-align: right;"><b>yes / no</b></p>

## 2. PROTECTION OF PRIMARY (NATURAL) ECOSYSTEMS, SEMI-NATURAL HABITATS AND PROTECTED AREAS

Requirements for standard organisations / companies	Immediately	In a year	Long-term in x years	
<p><b>The standard organisation / the company</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>prohibits the conversion of primary (natural) ecosystems (e.g. tropical rainforest, savannah, wetlands, peatlands) to farmland. A base year is defined.</li> </ul> <p>In the EU, only few primary ecosystems are remaining and the last existing ones are legally protected. In addition to national legislation, the Habitats Directive and its annexes also apply here.</p>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>supports and defines sustainable use of semi-natural ecosystems, protected areas and HCV areas – where the agricultural use is not explicitly prohibited by legislation.</li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>prohibits the new (reference year) drainage of peaty soils and the extraction of peat.</li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>supports the farmer, e.g. by                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>providing experts for free advice</li> <li>regular exchange with the nature conservation authority.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>				

Criteria to integrate into existing standards and procurement specifications	Immediately	In a year	Long-term in x years	Key figures / Indicators
<p><b>The farm operator</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>knows and respects any restrictions on land use in a protected area (e.g. nature parks Natura 2000).</li> </ul>				<p>Does the farm cultivate land in a protected area? <b>yes / no</b></p> <p><b>If yes:</b> Does the farm take into account the management plan of the protected area? <b>yes / no</b></p> <p><b>Evidence:</b> The farm manager knows the management plan and the relevant regulations.</p>

### 3. PROTECTION OF WATER BODIES; MANAGEMENT OF RIPARIAN STRIPS

Criteria to integrate into existing standards and procurement specifications	Immediately	In a year	Long-term in x years	Key figures / Indicators
<p><b>The farm operator</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>keeps a buffer zone of primarily native vegetation along each border of seasonal and permanent water bodies, hereby the minimum width of the buffer zones always exceeds the legal requirement. In the case of permanent water bodies, the minimum width of the buffer zone is not less than 10 meters.</li> </ul>				<p>Are there flowing waters and/or still waters on the farm? <b>yes / no</b></p> <p><b>If yes:</b> What % of the banks are protected with a buffer zone? <b>If yes:</b> What % of the buffer zone has a minimum width of 10 meters? <b>If too little</b> buffer zone exists, are measures being taken in the BAP to increase it? <b>yes / no</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ensures that inappropriate substances (such as oil, CPPs, CPP packing or containers, medicines, animal manure) are not disposed in rivers, streams or other surface or ground water.</li> </ul>				Evidence of responsible storage and disposal of substances and packaging

### 4. INVASIVE ALIEN SPECIES (NEOBIOTA)

Requirements for standard organisations / companies	Immediately	In a year	Long-term in x years
<p><b>The standard organisation / the company</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>informs auditors / certifiers and farm operators about invasive, alien species and measures for preventing their spread.</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>supports the farm operator via                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>free provision of experts for advice on dealing with invasive species</li> <li>regular exchange with the nature conservation authority</li> <li>etc.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>			

Criteria to integrate into existing standards and procurement specifications	Immediately	In a year	Long-term in x years	Key figures / Indicators
<p><b>The farm operator</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>identifies invasive alien species that appear on the farm and reports their presence to the responsible nature protection authority.</li> <li>takes measures to control or combat invasive alien species on the farm.</li> </ul>				<p>Have invasive non-native species been identified on farmland? <b>yes / no</b></p> <p><b>If yes:</b> Has the authority been informed? <b>yes / no</b></p> <p>Does the BAP include measures for control or abatement? <b>yes / no</b></p>

## 5. WILD COLLECTION

Requirements for standard organisations / companies	Immediately	In a year	Long-term in x years	Key figures / Indicators
<p><b>The standard organisation / the company</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>prohibits the use and gathering of threatened and/or protected plants and animals (see Red List of IUCN and CITES) and underlines that protected areas must not be impaired.</li> </ul>				
<p><b>The farm operator</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>complies with all state regulations (e.g. license for collection).</li> </ul>				<p>Documentation of compliance with government regulations available? <b>yes / no</b></p>



**B. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR VERY GOOD AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES FOR MORE BIODIVERSITY**

## 6. SOIL

### 6.1. FERTILISATION

Requirements for standard organisations / companies	Immediately	In a year	Long-term in x years	
<b>The standard / the company</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>supports the farm in establishing a humus balance, e.g. by                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>an experienced advisory service.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>				

Criteria to integrate into existing standards and procurement specifications	Immediately	In a year	Long-term in x years	Key figures / Indicators
<b>The farm operator</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>establishes nutrient balances according to a recognised method and documents all fertiliser applications and nutrient values of the fertilisers (at least N and P).</li> </ul>				Current nutrient balance and documentation available? <b>yes / no</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>carries out a humus balance on agricultural land. This is complemented by a humus inspection every six years. The humus balance should never be negative. In Germany, the balance method recommended by the LFL (Bavarian State Office for Agriculture) is used.</li> </ul>				Current humus balance available? <b>yes / no</b>  Negative result? <b>yes / no</b>  Humus analysis not older than six years? <b>yes / no</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>carries out an assessment regarding fertiliser requirements for specific fields, if necessary, with supplementary soil samples, prior to the application of essential amounts of nutrients*.</li> <li>complies with the maximum possible fertiliser rates according to the fertiliser requirement calculation.</li> </ul> <p>* e.g. fertiliser ordinance (N=50kg/ha; P=30kg/ha).</p>				Current determination of fertiliser demand? <b>yes / no</b>  Are fertilisers applied based on this input / output balance? <b>yes / no</b>

Criteria to integrate into existing standards and procurement specifications	Immediately	In a year	Long-term in x years	Key figures / Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>considers the nitrogen reference values issued by agricultural administrations (e.g. regional official advisory body in Germany) as the upper limit for nitrogen fertilisation. In addition, the farmer aims to improve the efficiency of the fertilisers used towards an optimal fertiliser management.</li> </ul>				Are measures implemented to optimise fertiliser management? yes / no  No more than one-third of total annual fertiliser is applied in the pre-emergence period? yes / no  Continuous reduction of nutrient surpluses in the last five years? yes / no

## 6.2. SOIL/EROSION

Criteria to integrate into existing standards and procurement specifications	Immediately	In a year	Long-term in x years	Key figures / Indicators
<b>The farm operator</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>keeps vegetation covering soil for as long as possible, at the least during the periods prone to nutrient leaching.</li> </ul>				Agricultural area with predominant land cover (share in %)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>carries out and documents erosion control measures in areas with a high risk of erosion.</li> </ul>				Erosion problems? yes / no  If yes: Documentation of measures against erosion? yes / no

### 6.3. CROP ROTATION (EXCLUDING PERMANENT CROPS / PERENNIAL CROPS)

Criteria to integrate into existing standards and procurement specifications	Immediately	In a year	Long-term in x years	Key figures / Indicators
<p><b>The farm operator</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>implements a crop rotation of at least four years on the same field in temperate climatic regions. This includes the cultivation of four main crops, as well as the cultivation of catch crops such as grasses, oilseeds or legumes (perennial or permanent crops are reserved).</li> </ul>				Minimum requirements met? <b>yes / no</b>  <b>Evidence:</b> An on-farm inspection, documentation, interviews with farmer / employees of the farm.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>cultivates at least three different main crops annually on the entire farm area. The most important main crop may not cover more than 75% of the total area of the farm. The two most important main crops must not cover more than 95% of the total area under crops. Legumes or mixtures containing legumes are grown on at least 10% of the area.</li> </ul>				Minimum requirements met? <b>yes / no</b>  <b>Evidence:</b> An on-farm inspection, documentation, interviews with farmer / employees of the farm.

## 7. PEST MANAGEMENT

Requirements for standard organisations / companies	Immediately	In a year	Long-term in x years
<p><b>The standard organisation / the company</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>prohibits the use of pesticides, which are harmful for beneficial insects, pollinating insects, amphibians or fish.</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>defines a negative list for pesticides (list of prohibited pesticides) and a strategy with a clear timeline for reducing active substances that are dangerous for biodiversity.</li> </ul>	For standard organisations	For companies	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>seeks to harmonise its own negative lists of pesticides with already existing lists from other standards and organisations.</li> </ul>			

Criteria to integrate into existing standards and procurement specifications	Immediately	In a year	Long-term in x years	Key figures / Indicators
<p><b>The farm operator</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• consequently implements Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and documents the measures taken. IPM includes the following steps to prevent and control arable crop diseases and pests:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Preventive measures in the areas of: crop rotation, sowing, soil preparation, varieties, seeds, fertilisation, hygiene, natural regulation and ecological infrastructure</li> <li>2. Infestation detection</li> <li>3. Use of economic pest-thresholds and other decision-making aids</li> <li>4. Preference of non-chemical disease, pest and weed control measures*</li> <li>5. Use chemical pesticides as specifically as possible and with the least side effects on human health, non-target organisms and the environment</li> <li>6. Apply lowest possible / necessary level of chemical measures</li> <li>7. Carry out resistance management</li> <li>8. Record applications of plant protection products and check their success.</li> </ol> </li> </ul> <p>* Use chemical agents only when non-chemical measures have not worked.</p>				<p>Regular training on IPM (at least one per year)? <b>yes / no</b></p> <p>IPM plan and documentation in place? <b>yes / no</b></p> <p>Application of the eight IPM principles? <b>yes / no</b></p> <p><b>If no:</b> How many principles are implemented? (number)</p> <p>Proportion of agricultural area where alternative weed control measures are applied to reduce herbicide use?</p> <p>Proportion of agricultural area where alternative disease and pest control measures are applied to reduce pesticide use?</p> <p>Reduction in chemical pesticide use since baseline report (year)? reduction in volume in %</p>

## 8. USE OF WATER

Requirements for standard organisations / companies	Immediately	In a year	Long-term in x years	
<b>The standard organisation / the company</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>expands the advisory service for farmers on efficient irrigation where there is no official service to advise farmers.</li> </ul>				
Criteria to integrate into existing standards and procurement specifications	Immediately	In a year	Long-term in x years	Key figures / Indicators
<b>The farm operator</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>obtains water for farming operations strictly legally. The amount of water consumed is plausible in terms of demand and does not exceed the withdrawal quantities permitted by the authorities.</li> </ul>				Valid permit to withdraw water? yes / no  Documentation of annual water withdrawal (in cubic meters)? yes / no  Total annual water withdrawal withdrawn (in cubic meters / year)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>documents the amount of water used for each irrigation in order to prove efficiency.</li> </ul>				Reduction in the average amount of water used per acre since baseline report (year) Indication in %

## 9. AGRO-BIODIVERSITY

Requirements for standard organisations / companies	Immediately	In a year	Long-term in x years	
<p><b>The standard organisation / the company</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>instigates or supports projects and initiatives to create market access for traditional crop varieties and livestock breeds. Certified farms/suppliers are motivated to grow traditional crop varieties and livestock breeds, e.g. through a bonus point system or other benefits.</li> </ul>				
Criteria to integrate into existing standards and procurement specifications	Immediately	In a year	Long-term in x years	Key figures / Indicators
<p><b>The farm operator</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>cultivates traditional varieties and/or breeds traditional livestock breeds.</li> </ul>				<p>Is the farm committed to the conservation of agro-biodiversity? <b>yes / no</b></p> <p>Number of rare / traditional varieties?</p> <p>Number of rare / traditional livestock breeds?</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>refrains from the use, breeding and planting of genetically modified organisms (GMOs).</li> </ul>				<p>Does the farm use genetically modified seeds / plants? <b>yes / no</b></p> <p><b>If yes:</b> What % of the total production is genetically modified?</p> <p>Does the farm use genetically modified livestock breeds? <b>yes / no</b></p> <p><b>If yes:</b> How high is the share of the total livestock? (in %)</p>

## 10. ANIMAL FEED

Global feed trade puts pressure on ecosystems worldwide. Standard organisations and companies in the food sector can have a mitigating effect on this.

Requirements for standard organisations / companies	Immediately	In a year	Long-term in x years	
<p><b>The standard organisation / the company</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>continuously increases the proportion of sustainably produced animal feed.</li> </ul> <p>The FEFAC listing can serve as a guide for standard systems that prohibit the use of genetically modified feed.</p>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>prohibits the use of genetically modified feedstuff.</li> </ul>				
Criteria to integrate into existing standards and procurement specifications	Immediately	In a year	Long-term in x years	Key figures / Indicators
<p><b>The farm operator</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>is continuously improving towards feedstuff autonomy. Feed not originating from the farm itself should come from the farming region.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In Germany, feed qualifying as regional has to come from within a radius of 100 km around the farm.</li> <li>In other European countries or globally, the radius for feedstuff intake is defined by the standard / company.</li> </ul> </li> <li>connects livestock to the farm's own forage area.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For intensive livestock farming systems, the maximum livestock unit (LU) is 2.0 / ha.</li> <li>For extensive livestock farming systems, the maximum livestock unit (LU) is 1.4 / ha.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Farms with higher stocking densities have to reduce livestock units to reach the corresponding maximum level within a certain time. Farms with lower stocking densities should maintain these lower densities.</p> <p>* Fleischatlas 2018, Daten und Fakten über Tiere als Nahrungsmittel; 2. Auflage; Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung, BUND, LE MONDE diplomatique</p>				Proportion of on-farm feed? (in %) Proportion of feed from the region? (in %)
				Livestock stocking rate in LU / ha For values above LU 2.0 / ha or LU 1.4 / ha: Is there a plan to reduce the stock? yes / no In which year should the reduction of the stock be achieved?

## 11. TRAINING

	Key figures / Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The company management regularly (at least once per year) participates in further training on aspects of biodiversity.</li> </ul>	Regular training courses? yes / no  How often do the trainings take place? <b>More than once a year? Annually?</b>  Continuing education certificate available? yes / no
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employees are trained regularly (at least once a year) on aspects of biodiversity.</li> </ul>	Regular training courses? yes / no  How often do the trainings take place? <b>More than once a year? Annually?</b>  Continuing education certificate available? yes / no



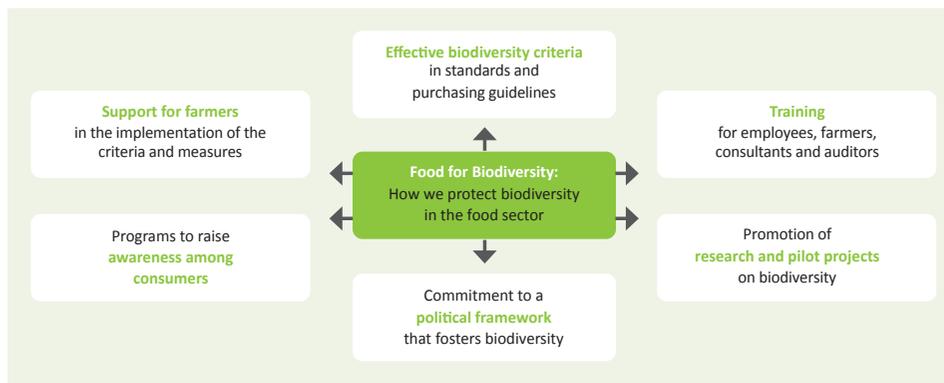
### AN ASSOCIATION FOR ONE OF THE GREATEST CHALLENGES OF OUR TIME

By founding the Food for Biodiversity Association in March 2021, representatives of companies, associations and standards from the food industry are making an ambitious statement: They want to make a decisive contribution to the protection of biodiversity and against the extinction of species.

The members commit to implementing measures that anchor the protection of biodiversity in the food industry and its upstream value chains.

### OUR GOALS AND MEASURES

Based on an ambitious voluntary commitment, the stakeholders are working together to achieve these goals and measures.



### FOOD FOR BIODIVERSITY: BECOME A MEMBER!

The association welcomes the support of organisations from the food industry:

- Producers, retailers and their associations
- Suppliers, producer groups and agricultural associations
- Standards and certification organisations

Non-governmental organisations and institutions from the fields of science and education committed to the protection and promotion of biodiversity in the food industry are also invited to become members. In addition, there is the possibility of a supporting membership for organisations committed to the goals of the association.

[www.food-biodiversity.de](http://www.food-biodiversity.de)





## CONTACT



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