

Claims Framework

Communications Guidelines for Enveritas Verified Supply Chains

Version 1.5
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SUMMARY

Enveritas helps companies make truthful, independently-verified sustainability claims about products they purchase.

We created this framework so partners can highlight different aspects of their sustainability efforts. Just as we don't believe there is a single sustainability objective for all producers, we don't believe there should be a single sustainability claim for all buyers.

Framework Components

Our framework includes three components that partners can use to formulate credible claims:

1. **Traceability.** Claims about where a specific quantity of a product (e.g. coffee, cocoa) has been grown, processed, stored, and shipped.
2. **Sustainability.** Claims about the product's compliance with sustainability requirements, achievement of best practices, or performance related to specific social, environmental, and economic criteria.
3. **Improvement.** Claims about actions taken in response to sustainability results and improvements in performance scores over time.

Claiming "Responsibly Sourced per Enveritas Standards"

For buyers to claim a purchase is "Responsibly Sourced per Enveritas Standards", Enveritas needs to have verified traceability and sustainability for the product and, in cases where not all Enveritas' critical requirements are met, the improvement activities happening in the supply chain.

It is acceptable to use "Ethically" or "Sustainably" instead of "Responsibly" in formulating such claims.

Equivalence Claims

Buyers may have additional requirements for traceability and sustainability performance that they wish to report on. Enveritas currently offers two additional pathways for buyers to demonstrate "equivalence" with other reporting initiatives:

1. Enveritas Gold: The highest level of traceability and sustainability performance is met and any unmet, non-critical requirements are being addressed through a time-bound improvement plan.
2. Enveritas Green: Traceability and sustainability performance are verified, and all unmet requirements are being addressed through a time-bound improvement plan.

Custom Claims

We also support partners in making custom claims (e.g., "deforestation-free", "improved farmers' productivity", etc.). This document includes our guiding principles for data used to help companies substantiate and approve those types of claims.

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1. PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

Enveritas recognizes the importance of publicly communicating the scope and progress of sustainability efforts. Enveritas helps companies make truthful, independently-verified sustainability claims about products they purchase. This document explains how.

Our claims framework is intended to help partners formulate, substantiate, and communicate honest claims that are powered by Enveritas' verification. We provide instructions for making "Responsibly Sourced per Enveritas Standards" claims on qualifying purchases. We also provide guidelines for making equivalence and custom claims, which partners can substantiate with Enveritas' data but require approval to communicate publicly.

As a Version 1, we do not expect this document to address every possible case or potential sustainability claim. This document will evolve as we learn together with our partners.

2. CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS

Several terms that are mentioned repeatedly in this document are defined below.

- **"Verification"**, as defined by the ISO, is the process of using objective evidence to confirm that specified requirements have been met. Whenever specified requirements have been met, a verified status is achieved.¹

In the context of Enveritas' work, verification is the process of collecting objective evidence to confirm if requirements related to traceability, sustainability, and improvement have been met for a given purchase.

- A **"sustainability claim"**, as defined by ISEAL, is a message used to set apart or promote a product, process, business or service with reference to one or more of the three pillars of sustainability: social, economic, and/or environment.²

In this context, it is a message used by a company regarding their partnership with Enveritas to verify and improve practices in the supply chains they purchase the product from.

- A **"scorecard"** is the output of Enveritas' verification process. It is the primary document generated by Enveritas used to help companies as they substantiate a sustainability claim about a specific volume purchased.

A complete scorecard contains all relevant information about the size and nature of the supply chain or sourcing region, the status of sustainability practices and compliance scores, data collection methods, and, where applicable, changes in sustainability scores observed over time.

Successful **verification** enables a partner to have data to evaluate, substantiate, and make a **sustainability claim** about their coffee purchases. The data used to substantiate **sustainability claims** is aggregated into one or more **scorecards**. A **scorecard** is the primary output of **verification** and is always linked to a specific volume of coffee purchases.

¹ ISO 9000 (Quality Assurance) definitions, available [here](#).

² ISEAL Claims Good Practice Guide, available [here](#).

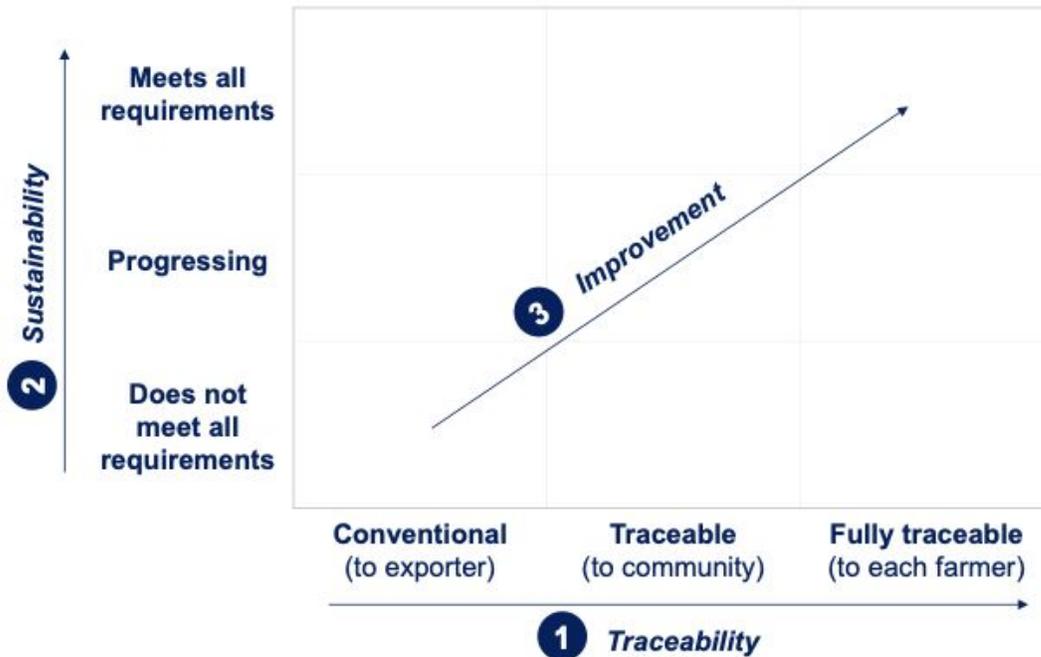
3. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Enveritas' framework for reviewing and supporting sustainability claims is guided by three principles.

1. Sustainability is a continuum	<p>We are founded on the principle that sustainability is a continuum, not a pass/fail outcome. If claims could only be made for coffees that are “100% sustainable” or “100% compliant”, then we fear we would be creating incentives to turn a blind eye to issues, to exclude or under-represent the most vulnerable farmer populations, and to dilute definitions of “sustainable” or “compliant”. Instead, we aim to create a verification platform that is inclusive of all farmers and performance levels.</p> <p>We will review partners' claims and commitments to ensure they uphold our objectives of inclusivity and continuous improvement.</p>
2. All farmers should be represented	<p>We understand that supply chains are dynamic and porous. Representing <i>all farmers</i> requires verifying the state of sustainability practices outside of traditional supply chain silos. Enveritas offers this through its “regional” verification product. Regional verification enables our partners to evaluate and support making truthful, independently-verified claims about purchases that come from supply chains that have limited traceability or farmer organization. It also forms the basis for giving context and benchmarking results from our verification of “known” (i.e., traditionally organized) supply chains.</p> <p>We will review partners' claims and commitments to ensure they offer both a realistic picture of the different levels of traceability that exist in their supply chains and a representative view of the farmers included in those supply chains.</p>
3. Verification is an enabler but not a substitute for engagement	<p>Verification results can make engagement more effective and effective engagement can improve sustainability levels. We also believe supplier engagement and improvement activities are separate processes that require separate competencies, quality controls, and incentives. Engagement in the form of projects, training, etc. can have a direct, long-term impact on sustainability scores and producer livelihoods.</p> <p>We will review partners' claims and commitments to ensure that messages regarding both verification participation and activities undertaken to improve sustainability performance are not conflated and do not raise concerns about independence.</p>

4. FRAMEWORK COMPONENTS

Enveritas provides three components that partners can use to formulate credible claims. Taken together, these create a flexible framework for monitoring and communicating a supply chain's performance over time, illustrated in the 3x3 matrix below.



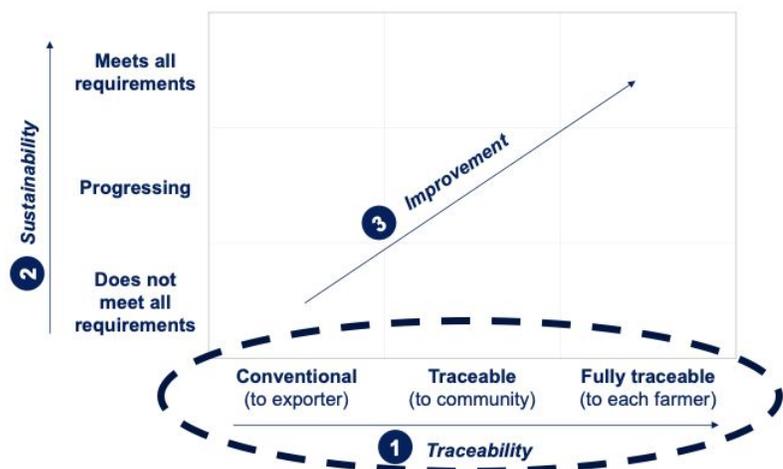
A purchase in the top right box represents a verified purchase that is “fully traceable” and that “meets all (critical sustainability) requirements”. A purchase in the bottom left box represents a purchase that “does not meet all (critical sustainability) requirements”, that does not have any improvement activities planned, and that lacks traceability beyond the exporter.

Each component is explained in more detail in the following sections.

4.1 Traceability

Enveritas verifies both the volume of product purchased and the level of traceability achieved by the supply chain.

For example, a claim related to “100% of purchases from Guatemala” requires evidence that all of the buyer’s purchases from Guatemala were verified.



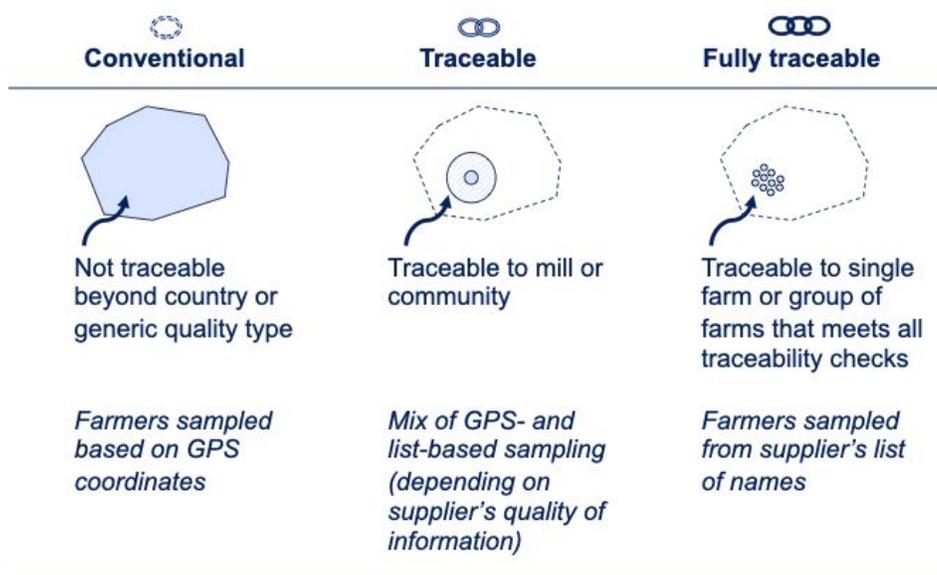
A claim related to “10,000 bags of fully traceable coffee” requires evidence that the buyer purchased 10,000 bags of coffee and that those purchases came from a supply chain meeting Enveritas’ “fully traceable” criteria.

First, Enveritas will reconcile the details of purchases submitted for verification with the buyer on an annual basis. The following protocols apply to substantiating quantities / percentages that have been verified:

- To make a claim about a specific quantity (e.g., “10,000 bags of coffee responsibly sourced per Enveritas standards”), the partner must provide each unique purchase ID (e.g. ICO) and/or purchase order number and its associated quantity. Enveritas associates each eligible purchase with an Enveritas-generated verification scorecard.
- To make a claim about a percentage of purchases (e.g., “80% of our cocoa purchases from Côte d’Ivoire were responsibly sourced per Enveritas standards”), the partner must adhere to the protocol above and also provide the unique purchase ID and/or purchase order numbers for non-verified quantities from the country or region of interest.
- To make a claim about the contents of a specific SKU or blend (e.g., “100% of coffee in our ‘Breakfast Blend’ is responsibly sourced per Enveritas standards”), the partner must adhere to the protocol above and provide the unique purchase ID and/or purchase order numbers for any non-verified quantities of product used in the SKU. Enveritas may also conduct or request third-party audits to provide additional assurance that a partner’s sources and uses of purchases are correctly reported and to guarantee physical traceability from purchase to packaging.

Second, Enveritas will determine the appropriate level of traceability for the purchases submitted for verification. Depending on the level of traceability that is sought, Enveritas will request additional information, review documents, make site inspections, and conduct additional integrity checks with the buyer’s supply chain partners.

Enveritas currently considers three levels of traceability, as shown in the figure below. If a supply chain presents itself as “fully traceable (to each farmer)” but does not meet all Enveritas traceability requirements, then it retains the option to be verified as “traceable (to community)” level.

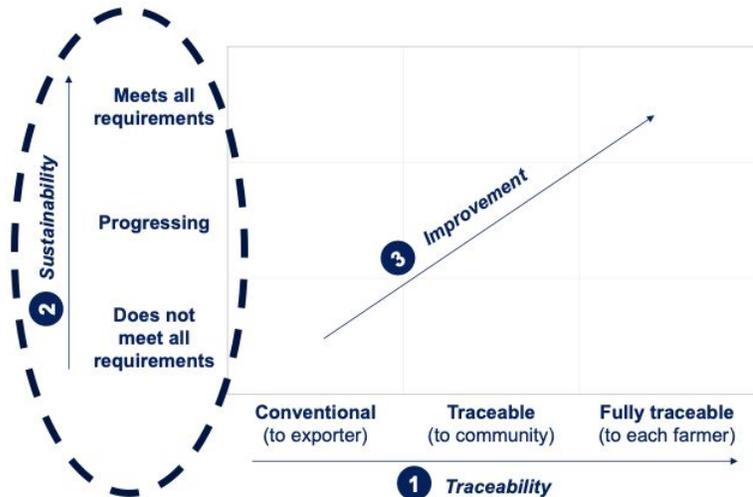


4.2 Sustainability

Enveritas verifies a supply chain's sustainability compliance with critical requirements, best practices, and specific social, environmental, and economic criteria.

For example, a claim that a coffee "meets all requirements" means that the supply chain is compliant with all of Enveritas' critical requirements and, where applicable, any additional equivalence requirements.

A supply chain that is classified at the "progressing" level may not currently meet all sustainability requirements but must be engaged in activities that meet the requirements for continuous improvement (described in the next section).



The terms "Compliant" and "Fully compliant" can be used instead of "Meets all requirements", and "Noncompliant" and "Not compliant" can be used instead of "Does not meet all requirements."

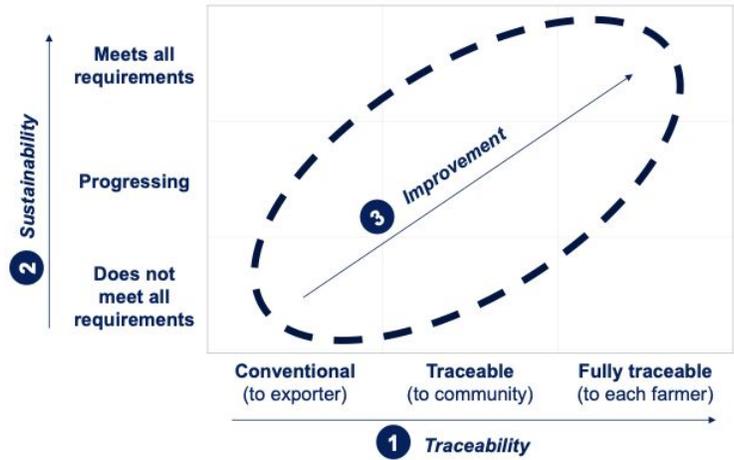
Sustainability levels are assessed through random sampling across a representative sample of farms (or mills). Enveritas generates scores to signify different levels of performance, as well as the margin of error and confidence level for the assessment. Enveritas produces a Scorecard that summarizes results for each verified purchase. The sustainability standards and criteria that Enveritas uses are available on [our website](#). Enveritas further classifies each sustainability criterion as either a critical requirement or a best practice. For equivalence claims, sustainability criteria that Enveritas classifies as best practice may be scored as critical requirements for reporting purposes.

4.3 Improvement

Enveritas verifies the appropriateness and scale of actions taken in response to sustainability results and improvements in performance scores over time.

Improvement-related claims can serve two purposes. First, they provide a mechanism for moving supply chains from the “does not meet all requirements” sustainability level up to the “progressing” level. Second, they give partners the ability to make custom claims about changes in results over time and comparisons to regional or country-level results.

For the first use case (moving a supply chain into the “progressing” category), Enveritas must verify that improvement activities comply with the Enveritas Continuous Improvement standard, which include provisions for the elements listed below.



Four continuous improvement elements



Supplier engagement

Roasters share verification results with suppliers on the ground at origin who set priorities and undertake initiatives to address issues (e.g., suppliers train farmers on occupational health and safety)



Collaborative initiatives

Industry, governments and civil society actors come together to promote alignment and progress on issues beyond any single roaster (e.g., Implement a new national policy on banned pesticides)



Farmer support

Roasters give directly to projects at origin that help address sustainability issues (e.g., agronomy training to raise incomes)



Progress transparency

Roasters set public multi-year goals for compliance improvement and track progress transparently over time (e.g., Goal to be 100% responsibly sourced within 5 years)

Improvements must be linked to requirements that have not been met. Improvement activities may address multiple requirements. Improvements should be time-bound, with timing a function of the prevalence and severity of the issue and the theory of change behind the improvement activities. For improvements that target critical requirements and have a time horizon of more than three years, a robust theory of change and monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) plan is expected.

If improvements are being made by suppliers or other types of interventions, then the expectation is that changes will be evident in verification results. Progress should be reviewed at least annually. If activities do not result in sufficient improvement within the desired timeframe, a new action plan must be developed

in order to remain in the “progressing” category. Enveritas reserves the right to conduct unannounced audits and request additional documentation from the buyer and its implementing partners if necessary to substantiate the appropriateness and scale of improvement activities.

For the second use case (making custom claims about improvements), the partner must first have a “commitment to improvement” that is shared with Enveritas. This requirement is intended to prevent spurious observations from being used as evidence of improvement. Examples of commitments to improvement include: “Increased farm productivity in X supply chain by Y% over Z years” or “Increase overall sustainability scores by X% across all supply chains by Year Y”.

These commitments do not need to be announced or communicated publicly, but should reflect a deliberate effort to prioritize and set improvement targets, and then be linked to actions and/or investments intended to deliver improvement. Enveritas will review the commitment language and determine if it can be substantiated by Enveritas verification results in future years. If the commitment is approved, then the partner may include their improvement claim alongside their verification claim. For example, “100% of coffee purchased for our ‘Earth Blend’ has been independently-verified, and we aim to have all our suppliers meeting at least 80% of Enveritas’ environmental criteria by 2025.”

Partners may also request to make a claim about the level of improvement that was observed over a period of time or relative to an appropriate regional or country-level benchmark. For example, “The incidence of minors engaged in dangerous work has reduced from X to Y% over the past Z years.”

It is important to emphasize that Enveritas’ verification results are not a complete substitute for MEL that is often associated with development projects. For instance, Enveritas does not ordinarily make any assessment about the execution of improvement activities (e.g., how many trainings were delivered).

5. MAKING PUBLIC CLAIMS

All verified purchases are given a scorecard, either delivered at the end of a verification cycle or on request from the buyer. Scorecards are required to substantiate sustainability claims. They contain relevant summary information about the size and nature of the supply chain or sourcing region, compliance levels for the applicable sustainability criteria, and the data collection methods used. The cover page of Enveritas’ scorecard provides information that can substantiate generic claims about verified volumes and sustainability levels achieved. For information that is required to substantiate custom claims or that is not shown in scorecards, partners may request additional written documentation from Enveritas or these requirements can be built into their verification agreement.

5.1 Generic Claim

Enveritas offers a generic claim for participating buyers: “**Responsibly Sourced per Enveritas Standards**”. For this claim, Enveritas needs to have verified traceability and sustainability for the product and, if not all critical requirements were met, the improvement activities happening in the supply chain.

Generic claims are evidenced by the combination of the partner’s master agreement with Enveritas and associated purchase instructions (which specify the supply chain, purchase period, and quantity of purchases) and the verification scorecards (which are linked to those purchases). Additional documentation will be provided by Enveritas for products that successfully qualify for a “responsibly sourced” claim as result of improvement activities. The partner is responsible for the preparation of the purchase orders and any evidence of improvement activities given to Enveritas and used as the basis of the verification. This responsibility includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal

controls relevant to the preparation and presentation of the information given to Enveritas so as to ensure they give a true and fair view of the actual activities undertaken by the buyer.

Partners may also make the following claims because they are similar in spirit to the generic claim:

- “Ethically sourced (or purchased) per Enveritas standards”
- “Sustainably sourced (or purchased) per Enveritas standards”
- “Part of our responsible (or ethical or sustainable) sourcing program”
- “Towards our responsible (or ethical or sustainable) sourcing commitment”

ISEAL stresses that partners should not use the absolute statement “sustainable” in their claims. Being “verified” can be accompanied by a claim that the product / supply chain is “part of our sustainable sourcing program”. However, being “verified” should not be conflated with “meeting all critical requirements”.

5.2 Equivalence Claims

Buyers may have additional requirements for traceability and sustainability performance that they wish to report on. Enveritas currently offers two additional pathways for buyers to demonstrate “equivalence” with other reporting initiatives:

1. **“Enveritas Gold”**. The highest level of traceability and sustainability performance is met and any unmet, non-critical requirements are being addressed through a time-bound improvement plan.

Enveritas Gold



2. **“Enveritas Green”**: Traceability and sustainability performance are verified, and all unmet requirements are being addressed through a time-bound improvement plan.

Enveritas Green



These claims may be better suited for sector-wide reporting initiatives as they mirror expectations of traditional certification requirements.

5.3 Custom Claims

Enveritas can work with partners to provide data to support making custom claims that highlight unique aspects of sustainability performance in their supply chain, results over time, or specific achievements. This section includes our guiding principles for substantiating and approving these types of claims.

Claims about the integrity of the verification approach

Partners may wish to make claims about the integrity or level of rigor employed during Enveritas’ verification process. Enveritas includes relevant data quality indicators (e.g., sample size, margin of error, timing, etc.) in each scorecard it provides partners. Moreover, scorecards are only generated for purchases that have been verified in accordance with all of Enveritas’ verification protocols. (These protocols include statistical requirements related to margin of error and sample size, as well as methodological requirements related to timing / seasonality, back-checking, and GPS-tagging.) Thus, for any purchase to qualify fully or partially towards a buyer’s responsible sourcing targets, it must meet Enveritas’ high standards for data integrity and rigor.

Enveritas does not require partners to include statements about data integrity in public-facing claims. Quoting verification sample sizes and timing directly from scorecards does not require prior approval. For example, “100% of coffee purchased for our ‘Breakfast Blend’ is responsibly sourced per Enveritas standards. The social, environmental and economic sustainability practices were assessed at more than

1,500 producers in our supply chain last year.” Partners who wish to include additional language or data to highlight the rigor of the program may do so with prior approval from Enveritas.

Claims about improvement

Claims that reference specific improvements in scores or changes relative to a baseline should be planned separately with Enveritas, as they typically involve activities conducted over multiple years and additional parties (e.g., suppliers, NGOs, etc.). Section 4.3 describes how claims related to improvement activities and commitments are substantiated.

Special performance tiers

Partners may wish to make claims about relative performance levels or percentiles, e.g., “in the top 5% of all producers verified”. Such claims require prior approval from Enveritas to ensure accuracy and integrity.

5.4 Review of Custom Claims

Many of the sustainability claims that partners wish to use are “pre-approved” from a confidentiality perspective under the verification agreement between the partner and Enveritas. Claims that abide by those conditions do not require any additional approval by Enveritas for disclosure, however partners are responsible for ensuring the adequacy of their claims for the intended use. Other types of claims require review and approval by Enveritas before being used in communications materials. A company that does not have a valid verification agreement with Enveritas is not permitted to make any public claims about present or future work with Enveritas.

Enveritas has a representative working with each partner who can provide additional guidance about the process of reviewing and approving claims. The table below illustrates types of custom claims that can be considered pre-approved versus claims that need approval from Enveritas.

Component	Purpose	Pre-approved claims	Claims that need approval
TRACEABILITY	To enable a claim about a quantity or percentage of purchases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A specific quantity of product that is responsibly sourced per Enveritas standards, e.g., “15,000 bags” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A percentage of product from a country or used in a blend/SKU verified, e.g., “90% responsibly sourced per Enveritas standards”
SUSTAINABILITY	To enable a claim that a certain level of sustainability performance has been achieved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An overall score, e.g., “85% meets all critical requirements” A pillar-level score, e.g., “Meets 100% of environmental requirements” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A specific standard or criteria score, e.g., “95% no child labor” A compliance-related claim not explicitly stated on a scorecard, e.g., “free of child labor”
IMPROVEMENT	To enable a claim that improvements in sustainability score have been made over a period of time and/or will be tracked going forward	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-specific targets for improvement, e.g., “Working with our partners to address child labor” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specific targets, e.g., “Aim to improve yield by 20% over 3 years” Specific improvement-related results, e.g., “Eliminated forced labor from our supply chain over 3 years”

OTHER (DATA INTEGRITY)	To enable a claim that a rigorous, statistically-robust verification process has been followed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The sample size, e.g., “500 farms surveyed” ▪ Timing of verification work, e.g., “conducted during Feb/Mar of the last coffee harvest” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The size of the producer population, e.g., “buying from 1,000 small farms” ▪ Confidence level and margin of error
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6. USAGE RIGHTS, RESTRICTIONS, AND HANDLING OF IMPROPER CLAIMS

Partners are encouraged to communicate their sustainability progress to internal stakeholders and the public. The following sections provide additional guidance to partners for communicating claims that have been formulated and reviewed in accordance with the guidelines in the previous sections.

6.1 Use of the Enveritas Name and Services

Partners with active verification agreements and approved claims are welcome to highlight their work with Enveritas and may use the following language about Enveritas in public-facing claims:

- Responsibly Sourced per Enveritas Standards
- Sustainability verification by Enveritas

Partners may also provide descriptions about Enveritas that include the following phrases:

- An independent (or impartial) third-party
- A nonprofit (or not-for-profit or nongovernmental) organization
- A sustainability verification (or assurance) platform

6.2 Use of the Enveritas Logo

Rights regarding the use of the Enveritas logo and other brand assets shall be specified in the verification contract or a separate agreement with the partner.

6.3 Use of Enveritas Scorecards and Other Deliverables

Scorecards are confidential property of Enveritas. This is signified by a disclaimer on all scorecards that states who and when the scorecard was prepared for. Copies of scorecards cannot be shared with other parties without written approval from both parties. Some verification agreements may provide guidance and prior approval for sharing a simplified scorecard or snapshot of scorecard results with producers who participated in verification.

At this time, partners are not able to share Enveritas-generated scorecards or other deliverables (such as online dashboards, including screenshots) in any public-facing communications.

6.4 Minimum Content Requirements to Make On-pack Claims

If partners would like to make on-pack claims or use the Enveritas name on-pack, then the percentage of verified product used in the SKU must either be (a) 100%, or (b) 50% or greater, and with a scaling plan in place to reach 100% in the next five years. In the latter case, the percentage of verified content must also be included on the on-pack claim.

6.5 Improper Claims

The use of claims that are not approved by Enveritas may lead to termination of the verification agreement between the partner and Enveritas and exclusion from future verification work or other appropriate action at Enveritas' discretion. Misuse of the Enveritas name or logo or any trademarked property of Enveritas may result in legal action.

The interpretation of this document is at the sole discretion of Enveritas. In the event of disputes resulting from the interpretation or application of this claims framework, Enveritas aims to find an amicable solution or settlement with the concerned party.

6.6 Modifications

Enveritas reserves the right to modify, update, revise or amend this document at any time. In the event of modification, partners will be informed immediately and given sufficient time to make any required changes to their claims or methods of substantiating claims. Typically, changes will be expected to take effect at the start of a partner's next annual verification cycle.

6.7 Disclaimer

Client is solely responsible for evaluating and determining the adequacy of any support and substantiation for its claims. Substantiation standards evolve, depend on nature of claim, and may differ in each country. The Client/Partner has the obligation to ensure that the claims are fully substantiated for the intended use in each relevant country where the claim will be displayed.

6.8 Further Information

For further information or questions about Enveritas' claims framework, contact info@enveritas.org.