Business guidance *for deeper regeneration*

→ Socioeconomic chapter

Regenerative Agriculture Metrics – *guidance for business*

To accelerate regenerative agriculture and transition into agricultural models that work within planetary boundaries, it is essential to drive widespread value chain convergence on an integrated measurement architecture. This includes addressing and overcoming the key challenges to alignment: a lack of cohesion on definition and outcomes, fragmented and siloed data collection and reporting, a need to translate global frameworks into local action plans and a lack of inclusivity of farmers and Indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLC) in the process.

The World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) has prioritized strengthening corporate performance accountability systems for carbon, nature and equity. To this end, WBCSD has launched the Regenerative Agriculture Metrics (RAM) joint working group with the One Planet Business for Biodiversity (OP2B) coalition. This collaborative effort involves more than 50 members and 33 business-focused partners, representing more than 1,100 businesses. The group's goal is to drive widespread value chain convergence and align farm-, landscape- and global-level metrics with corporate reporting.

RAM members and partners recognize the need to measure environmental, social and economic outcomes for a holistic approach to regenerative agriculture. It is critical for industry to align at a metric level to measure these holistic outcomes for a consistent approach to regenerative agriculture.

World Business Council for Sustainable Development

op2b one planet business for biodiversity

Socioeconomic metrics *for regenerative agriculture*

Consistent with the growing consensus across current and emerging regenerative agriculture tools and frameworks, environmental outcomes should have an impact on five areas: **soil health**, **biodiversity**, **water**, **climate** and socioeconomics. RAM members and partners have aligned on three socioeconomic outcomes for regenerative agriculture: increased financial benefits, increased wellbeing, and increased social benefits. We identified key indicators and metrics to support implementation of the first outcome shown in Table 1. Additional indicators and metrics to support the other outcomes are included in the full socioeconomic chapter.

The increased financial benefits outcome is aligned with leading frameworks, including Regen10 and Textile Exchange, with connectivity with standards and regulation, including the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) and the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD).

OP2B's working definition of regenerative agriculture

Related to agroecological evidence and principles, regenerative agriculture is a holistic, outcome-based farming approach that generates agricultural products while measurably having net-positive impacts on soil health, biodiversity, climate, water resources and farming livelihoods at the farm and landscape levels. It aims to simultaneously promote above- and below-ground carbon sequestration, reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, protect and enhance biodiversity in and around farms, improve water retention in soil, reduce pesticide risk, improve nutrient-use efficiency, and improve farming livelihoods.

Table 1: Global-level outcomes, indicators and core metrics for socioeconomic-related outcomes of regenerative agriculture

Outcome	*Indicator*	*Core Metrics*
Increased financial benefits	**Farm net income**	Farm net income (LCU)/ha/year

Metric abbreviations:

- → LCU: local currency unit
- → ha: hectare

Implementing socioeconomic metrics

RAM members and partners highlighted key needs to enable the adoption of these socioeconomic metrics for regenerative agriculture. These include improved evidence base for practices and outcomes, guidance and opportunities for target setting – opportunities similar to the Science Based Targets Network (SBTN) have not emerged yet for socioeconomic topics. This guidance provides further detail on these needs and suggestions for how to address them collectively.

How to bridge the data disconnect from farm level to supply shed to global level

We are working to align farm-, landscape- and global-level metrics with corporate reporting to streamline how data travels across the value chain. We are doing this by establishing global-level metrics built on alignment with leading and emerging farm and landscape level tools and frameworks. In this way, the metrics developed through this group incorporate key farm- and landscape-level assessment while connecting to accounting, reporting and disclosure bodies to develop specific guidance for regenerative agriculture.

Remaining challenges

Gathering socioeconomic data is often difficult and costly. Data privacy and commercial interests can limit the collection of information, particularly regarding farmer net income at an aggregate level. Additionally, context specificity plays a significant role. Some metrics are particularly relevant in certain contexts but not in others. Therefore it can be challenging to define universal metrics for assessing socioeconomic outcomes of regenerative agriculture.

Policy asks

Support the move from practice-based policy to outcome-based approaches

Regenerative agriculture at scale requires agricultural policy to shift from prescriptive, practice-based policy to outcome-based approaches. A holistic, science-driven, outcome-based approach to regenerative agriculture can bridge the gap between stakeholders and empower farmers by being cost-effective, context-specific, transparent and measurable.

In regards to socioeconomic outcomes, it is especially important that policies reflect the unique local contexts of different farmers across geographies and farm sizes.

Support the alignment of data collection and reporting guidelines

Standardized data collection and reporting related to on-farm activities for socioeconomic data requires multistakeholder support to accelerate the transition to regenerative agriculture.

Governments can play a role by:

1. **Holding businesses accountable** for their commitments by strengthening and harmonizing reporting and disclosure regulations, incorporating on-farm activities into corporate transparency measures and implementing incentives to support improved socioeconomic outcomes.
2. **Empowering farmers**, through an inclusive policy on farm data, to actively collect and report data on socioeconomic outcomes in their on-farm activities by offering financial incentives, technical support and simplified data collection methods.
3. **Supporting research** that fills the existing gaps around measurement and quantification of socioeconomic outcomes – and modelling linking these back to farm-level practices – and aggregating the available data to make it publicly available in a readily usable form for businesses.

Moving forward - Call to action

This working group, representing over 1,100 businesses, will finalize and showcase all environmental, economic and social outcomes in December 2024.

This collective effort aims to foster alignment beyond the private sector, with the wider stakeholder space through the **Regen10** initiative. Regen10 is developing a farmer-centric guiding framework.

It is time to converge all efforts on how we measure, report and disclose on regenerative agriculture to allow for deeper regeneration. The private sector must align with other stakeholders to safeguard supply chain resilience and transition to agricultural models that operate within planetary boundaries. Join us!

Read the full report and contact Dana Rakha-Michalon at **rakha@wbcsd.org** to engage in this work.

DISCLAIMER

This publication has been developed in the name of WBCSD. Like other WBCSD publications, it is the result of collaborative efforts by representatives from member companies and external experts. A wide range of member companies reviewed drafts, thereby ensuring that the document broadly represents the perspective of WBCSD membership. Input and feedback from stakeholders listed above was incorporated in a balanced way. This does not mean, however, that every member company or stakeholder agrees with every word.

The report has been prepared for general informational purposes only and is not intended to be relied upon as accounting, tax, legal or other professional advice.

Contact Dana Rakha-Michalon at **rakha@wbcsd.org** to engage in this work.

About One Planet Business for Biodiversity (OP2B)

One Planet Business for Biodiversity (OP2B) is an international, cross-sectoral and action-oriented business coalition on biodiversity with a specific focus on regenerative agriculture. We are determined to drive transformational system change and catalyze action to protect and restore cultivated and natural biodiversity within agricultural value chains. The coalition focuses on scaling up regenerative agriculture, developing transparent outcome-based reporting for regenerative agriculture, advocating for positive policy for de-risking the transition for farmers and promoting crop and food ingredient diversification.

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About WBCSD

The World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) is a global community of over 220 of the world's leading businesses, representing a combined revenue of more than USD $8.5 trillion and 19 million employees. Together, we transform the systems we work in to limit the impact of the climate crisis, restore nature and tackle inequality.

We accelerate value chain transformation across key sectors and reshape the financial system to reward sustainable leadership and action through a lower cost of capital. Through the exchange of best practices, improving performance, accessing education, forming partnerships and shaping the policy agenda, we drive progress in businesses and sharpen the accountability of their performance.

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