

Gold Standard launches social enterprise SustainCERT to mainstream SDG impact certification

SustainCERT's user-centric, tech-driven approach is designed to reduce barriers and add value to impact certification to scale action toward climate security and the Sustainable Development Goals

3 December 2018, Geneva, Switzerland - With demand for sustainable goods and sustainability claims on the rise, Gold Standard, the benchmark standard for climate and development interventions, has launched [SustainCERT](#), a social enterprise that will provide user-centric and tech-driven impact assessment for sustainability-minded businesses and investors.

While corporate climate commitments are increasing and impact investing is accelerating – companies and investors still face barriers to credibly and efficiently quantify and report on their social and environmental impacts. SustainCERT's flexible 'user-centric' approach to impact assessment can be customised to specific needs, driven by technology solutions to make the process efficient and scalable. The objective is to maximise the impact of every dollar spent in pursuit of sustainability to create real and measurable environmental, social and economic value.

SustainCERT will be the official certification body for [Gold Standard for the Global Goals](#), a next-generation standard to quantify and certify impact toward climate security and the Sustainable Development Goals. In addition to managing certification for Gold Standard's 1400+ carbon offset project portfolio, SustainCERT will focus new solutions on certifying climate and development impacts from corporate supply chain interventions and for impact investment funds for credible reporting. Business and impact investors can also choose to monetise their impacts through, for example, environmental markets, social impact bonds or other results-based finance mechanisms, as well as embedding sustainability attributes to earn premiums for goods and services.

Lisa Rosen, previously Gold Standard's Chief Operations Officer (COO), will act as Interim CEO until Marion Verles, who has been Gold Standard's CEO since 2015, will transition to take the helm at SustainCERT in the Spring of 2019. Verles states, "to catalyse the transformational change required to meet the ambitions of the Paris Climate Agreement and Sustainable Development Goals, we need a truly user-centric approach combined with disruptive technologies to make credible impact assessment simple so it can become business-as-usual." Gold Standard's first CEO, Michael Schlup, currently COO for impact investment firm Sail Ventures, will chair the SustainCERT Board of Directors.

Gold Standard is now recruiting for a new CEO to implement the strategy initiated by the Gold Standard Board and CEO Verles in 2015. Gold Standard's outgoing Chairman David Shelmerdine adds, "This move allows Gold Standard to focus innovating in standard setting to ensure the highest levels of rigour, while SustainCERT enables that rigour to scale."

First clients committed to using SustainCERT's new impact certification solutions for supply chains and impact investment funds include Danone, Mars, the Livelihoods Fund and BlueOrchard. Seed round investors include BlueOrchard, WWF Switzerland, and 1to4. The creation of SustainCERT was also supported by a grant from EIT Climate KIC.

"BlueOrchard as a pioneer in impact investing has been at the forefront of developing cutting-edge solutions for almost 20 years. We are therefore excited to join SustainCERT as investor and partner as it provides much-needed solution to increase the attractiveness and applicability of impact certification for large-scale investments," says Patrick Scheurle, CEO of BlueOrchard.

Eric Soubeiran, Global Nature, Human Rights & Water Cycle Director at Danone adds, “Our ambitious sustainability goals require a transformation in how food is grown – in this framework, the transparency consumers and stakeholders request is legitimate, with agile new ways to quantify and certify real GHG reductions.”

Gold Standard, a majority shareholder, will partner closely with SustainCERT to co-develop user-centric innovative solutions for credible impact certification to help scale contributions to climate security and the Sustainable Development Goals.

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About Gold Standard

Gold Standard was established in 2003 by WWF and other international NGOs as a best practice standard to ensure projects that reduced carbon emissions under the UN’s Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) also contributed to sustainable development. Its next-generation standard launched in 2017, Gold Standard for the Global Goals, allows climate and development initiatives to quantify, certify, and maximise their impacts toward climate security and sustainable development. Certification against the standard provides the confidence that these results are measured and verified, enabling credible tracking of progress toward the Paris Climate Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals. Gold Standard now has more than 80 NGO supporters and 1400+ certified projects in over 80 countries, creating billions of dollars of shared value from climate and development action worldwide.

www.goldstandard.org @cdmgoldstandard

About SustainCERT

SustainCERT is a mission-driven company committed to mainstreaming credible impact certification through user-centric, tech-driven solutions. SustainCERT is the official certification body for Gold Standard for the Global Goals – a next-generation standard to quantify, certify and maximise impact toward climate security and sustainable development. With customised certification pathways for a wide range of sustainability interventions, businesses and investors can easily embed SustainCERT impact assessment and assurance into their initiatives, whether a supply chain improvement, a sustainable product, or a large scale impact investment. This helps more accurately and efficiently quantify and report on the social and environmental impacts for higher credibility and recognition.

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