



# ProTerra Standard

Social Responsibility and Environmental Sustainability

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Interpretation for Europe

# 1. Introduction

The ProTerra Foundation's mission is to be a global network of businesses supporting more sustainable agricultural practices, in the food and feed supply chains, where relevant the conversion to non-GMOs and full respect of workers and communities' dignity. We envisage a world where all stakeholders contribute to the protection of biodiversity by switching to sustainable production, conserving natural resources and ensuring that local communities are treated with dignity and respect.

We recognise that in many parts of the world, there is a significant gap between the reality and sustainable agricultural practices and food/feed production, while in other parts of the world practices can exceed the general benchmark. Therefore, regional interpretations may be necessary to help businesses engage and ultimately implement over time a sustainable approach to their activities or to help stakeholders gain confidence in the practices associated with products coming from regions with a diverse reality than theirs.

ProTerra Foundation has issued its European Interpretation version of the ProTerra Standard aiming at supporting the improvement over time of the agricultural activity in and to help stakeholders gain confidence in products incoming their local markets.

ProTerra has four core aims, that have driven the development of this **EUROPEAN<sup>1</sup> Interpretation of ProTerra**:

- Foster good agricultural practices;
- Secure the supply of sustainably produced, traceable, non-GMO ingredients for feed and food;
- Protect the environment, and
- Promote that workers and communities be treated with dignity and respect.

1) Europe in the context of ProTerra is understood as the European continent therefore including all countries in this geographical location.

## 2. Implementation Approach

As mentioned, this regional interpretation aims at adjusting ProTerra requirements to the European commodity market and to the operational reality of producers in the diverse countries that are part of Europe.

The approach adopted by ProTerra is based on a risk evaluation of the different European countries. The risk is based on both the potential presence of GMOs in a crop and in the potential of negative environmental and social aspects of agricultural activity in a given European country.

Based on the specific result, a set of ProTerra principles, criteria and indicators are selected and against which these producers and / or farms will be assessed. Ultimately where there is a reduced level of risk the scrutiny will be also reduced.

### 2.1

#### Qualitative Risk Approach

##### **GMO risk**

ProTerra European Interpretation GMO risk approach is based on the countries where the crop is coming from. This takes into account the approval or not of planting material within the different European countries, risk of contamination of fields (crosspollination or contamination by wind transport for example). ProTerra takes into consideration the risk criteria established in the *Richtlinie zur Definition der "Gentechnikfreien Produktion" von Lebensmitteln und deren Kennzeichnung* (Guideline on the Definition of "GMO-Free Production" of Food and its Labelling) published in the Austrian Codex Alimentarius, IV edition (published with decree reference BMGFJ-75210/0014-IV/B/7/2007 from 6 December 2007, as amended on 9 September 2010).

Farms are therefore assigned a production area risk level based on their geographical location (risk of origin)<sup>2</sup> and associated GM risk. Classification is as follows:

- **No Risk (NR)** EU countries: national bans on the cultivation of all GM crops approved for cultivation in the EU, non-EU countries: no GM varieties approved for cultivation: AUT, BEL, BIH, CHE, CYP, DEU, DNK, EST, FIN, FRA, GBR, GRC, HRV, HUN, IRL, ITA, LTU, LUX, LVA, MLT, NLD, NOR, POL, SRB, SVN, SWE;
- **Low Risk (LR):** risk is related to geographical origin: RUS (Nenetsia, Komi-Permyak, Sverdlovsk, Chelyabinsk, Orenburg), TUR (European part);
- **Medium Risk (MR):** risk of GM contamination with other crops; concerns countries where the cultivation of GM crops is not prohibited and contamination of the target crop may therefore occur: BGR, CZE, ESP, PRT, ROU, SVK;
- **High Risk (HR):** risk of contamination with GM crops as these are cultivated in this country or were cultivated there up until two years ago, or because the situation is unclear: BLR, MDA, UKR.

### ***Environmental and social risks:***

ProTerra European Interpretation applies the risk approach defined in *amfori* BSCI's Country Risk Classification most recent publication. The risk classification of countries relies on the Worldwide Governance Indicators (6 dimensions of governance identified by the World Bank). These determine the level of risks related to governance in sourcing countries. Countries are classified as either **risk countries** or **low-risk countries**.

For details and results please refer to the current version of the Country Risk Classification issued by *amfori* BSCI.

2) Albania (ALB), Austria (AUT), Belarus (BLR), Belgium (BEL), Bosnia and Herzegovina (BIH), Bulgaria (BGR), Croatia (HRV), Cyprus (CYP), Czech Republic (CZE), Denmark (DNK), Estonia (EST), Finland (FIN), France (FRA), Germany (DEU), Greece (GRC), Hungary (HUN), Iceland (ISL), Ireland (IRL), Italy (ITA), Kazakhstan (KAZ) (European part), Latvia (LVA), Lithuania (LTU), Luxembourg (LUX), North Macedonia (MKD), Malta (MLT), Republic of Moldova (MDA), Montenegro (MNE), Netherlands (NLD), Norway (NOR), Poland (POL), Portugal (PRT), Romania (ROU), Russian Federation (RUS) (Nenetsia, Komi-Permyak, Sverdlovsk, Chelyabinsk, Orenburg), Serbia (SRB), Slovakia (SVK), Slovenia (SVN), Spain (ESP), Sweden (SWE), Switzerland (CHE), Turkey (TUR) (European part), Ukraine (UKR), United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (GBR).

# 3. Applicable ProTerra requirements under the European Interpretation

All current and valid ProTerra documents are fully to be considered as part of the European Interpretation, **except** were specifically referred to in this document.

In this way, the valid version of the ProTerra Standard with all its principles, criteria, indicators and definitions applies. In a similar way, are applicable the ProTerra Certification Protocol, the Guidelines and Requirements for the Use of the ProTerra Logo and Seal and any other valid documents that are part of the ProTerra certification scheme.

Considering the results risk evaluation, the following ProTerra Standard requirements are applicable (empty cells indicate that no indicator is applicable):

Table 2 - GMO risk and applicable ProTerra Standard requirements

Principle	No Risk	Low Risk	Médium Risk	High Risk
Principle 5 – No use of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs)	5.1.3 5.2.3	5.1.2 5.1.3 5.2.1 5.2.3	All indicators apply	All indicators apply
Principle 9 – Adoption of good agricultural practices			All indicators under 9.5 Management of propagation material	All indicators under 9.5 Management of propagation material
Principle 10 – Traceability and Chain of Custody	All indicators apply	All indicators apply	All indicators apply	All indicators apply

Table 3 - Environmental and social risks and applicable ProTerra Standard requirements

<b>Low risk Countries</b>	<b>Risk Countries</b>
<p>PRINCIPLE 1: Management system, Compliance with laws, international conventions and the ProTerra Standard (all indicators)</p> <p>PRINCIPLE 3: Responsible relations with workers and community (all indicators)</p> <p>PRINCIPLE 4: Biodiversity conservation, effective environmental management and environmental services (all indicators)</p> <p>Criteria 9.4 Documentation of agricultural production</p> <p>Criteria 9.6 Reduction of toxic and polluting materials</p> <p>Criteria 9.7 Management of agrochemicals and chemical residues</p>	<p>PRINCIPLE 1: Management system, Compliance with laws, international conventions and the ProTerra Standard (all indicators)</p> <p>PRINCIPLE 2: Human rights and responsible labour policies and practices (all indicators)</p> <p>PRINCIPLE 3: Responsible relations with workers and community (all indicators)</p> <p>PRINCIPLE 4: Biodiversity conservation, effective environmental management and environmental services (all indicators)</p> <p>PRINCIPLE 6: Pollution and waste management (all indicators)</p> <p>PRINCIPLE 7: Water management (all indicators)</p> <p>PRINCIPLE 8: Greenhouse gases and energy management (all indicators)</p> <p>PRINCIPLE 9: Adoption of good agricultural practices (all indicators)</p>

For the audit, the CB shall apply the set of principles, criteria and indicators that apply to **both** the GMO Risk (Table 2) and Environmental and social risks (Table 3).

## 4. Sampling Plan and Sample size

The sampling of farms (sample size definition) will be as per the requirements described below.

Table 4 –Sampling requirements based on GMO risk

<b>Risk level</b>	<b>Sampling requirements</b>
No Risk	Square root of the number of farms divided by 6 (minimum of at least 2 farms)
Low Risk	Square root of the number of farms divided by 4 (minimum of at least 3 farms)
Medium Risk	Square root of the number of farms divided by 2 (minimum of at least 4 farms)
High Risk	Square root of the number of farms (minimum of at least 5 farms)

Table 5 – Sampling requirements based on environmental and social risk

<b>Environmental and social Risk level</b>	<b>Additional requirements</b>
<i>Low risk Counties</i>	Square root of the number of farms divided by 2 (minimum of at least 4 farms)
<i>Risk Countries</i>	Square root of the number of farms (minimum of at least 5 farms)

The final sample size will be the value derived of the highest percentage that resulted from the comparison of the sample size based on GMO risk and the sample size for the environmental and social risk.

Numbers are always to be rounded upwards.

In all cases, the audited samples must be representative of a raw material, commodity, activity, area or jurisdiction. If there are known additional risks in specific areas, the CB may adjust the sampling method to increase the sample size and where adjustments are made, the CB shall document and explain in the audit report how and why adjustments have been made. The selection of the specific supplier shall be documented and presented in the Audit Report.

The verification of compliance with the ProTerra Standard for those suppliers not selected by the sampling rule (and therefore not visited) shall be carried out by the CB by reviewing the management system of the economic operator seeking certification. The management system shall be verified in relation to suppliers, including but not limited to reviewing internal audit programmes and contract terms and conditions.

In all cases:

- a) The criteria for defining a sample size for interviews (for human rights and labour issues) are the same. For the interview sample size and length, the CB should consider, as much as feasible, the guidance provided by SMETA and if applicable, GAFTA. Sample size selection shall be documented in the final audit report.
- b) In the next audit cycle, it is mandatory to select suppliers not previously visited until a full cycle of visits is completed.
- c) When planning for an audit, the CB shall always include the main site (headquarter) when sampling within a group (please refer to Multi-Site Certification of the Certification Protocol).

## 5. Stakeholder communication

The certification or communication related to the certification must clearly indicate the reference to ProTerra European Interpretation, the associated country of origin and the level risks considered. This will ensure a transparent communication with the stakeholder.

## 6. Benchmarking against other standards

ProTerra has rules for benchmarking against other sustainability criteria. The objective of benchmarking is to understand the level of alignment between standards and to define *recognition agreements* where possible. ProTerra embraces mutual recognition and synergies wherever applicable. These synergies aim towards the reduction of costs and complexity at all levels, reduce audit burden and encourage cooperation.

ProTerra benchmarking criteria and the current recognised Standards are detailed at the ProTerra Foundation webpage.

## Document Revision History

<b>Title</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Pages</b>	<b>Type of Document</b>
ProTerra Standard Social Responsibility and Environmental Sustainability - Interpretation for Europe V1.0	July 2019	1-7	Normative document, initial version.
ProTerra Standard Social Responsibility and Environmental Sustainability - Interpretation for Europe V2.0	September 2023	1-10	A complete revision of the Interpretation in connection with the revision of the ProTerra standard V4.1.