

# NEPCon Strategy

2020-2025

October 2019







# About NEPCon

NEPCon (Nature Economy and People Connected) is an international non-profit organisation.

We work with businesses, NGOs and governments on developing solutions to major global challenges such as deforestation and climate change.



**250+** staff and a wide network of partners and consultants



For over **25** years, we have worked to support **better land management** and **business practices** that **benefit people, nature and the climate**.

We do this through **innovative projects, capacity building and sustainability services**.



Operate in **6** continents with Headquarters in Copenhagen, Denmark



**25+** legal entities covering service delivery and project activities all over the world



# About NEPCon



Deliver **sustainability services** in **forestry, agriculture, responsible sourcing, biomass, carbon footprinting, and tourism**

in more than **100** countries



We focus on providing **high-quality services** and offer services under **well-recognised schemes** and schemes that **we own**. We also help develop and improve the systems we work with.



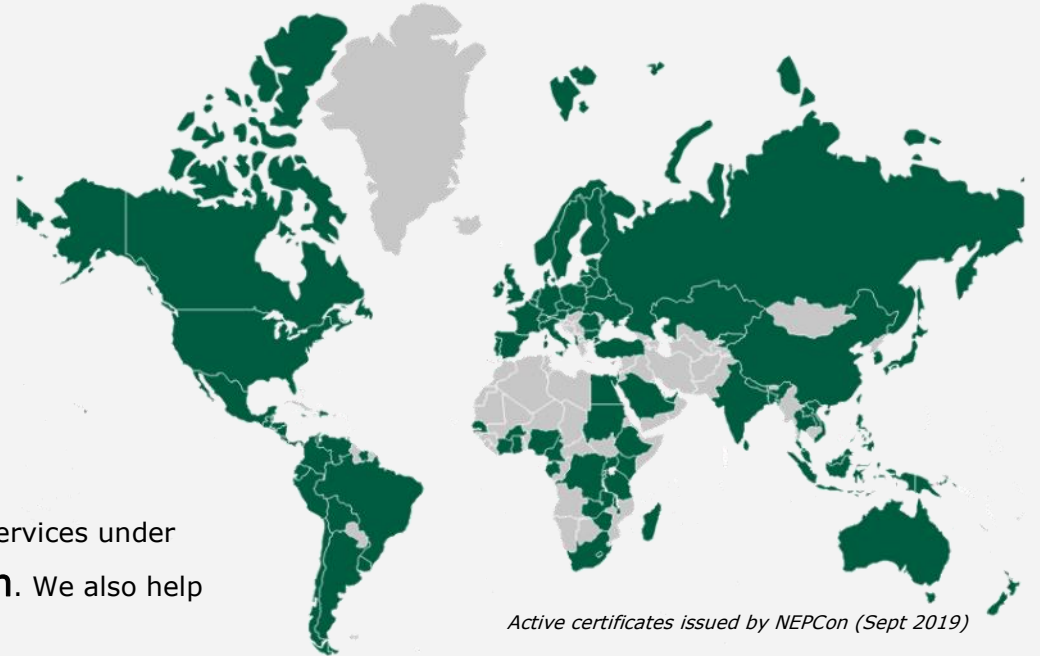
We have implemented **120+** **non-profit projects** on natural resources management.



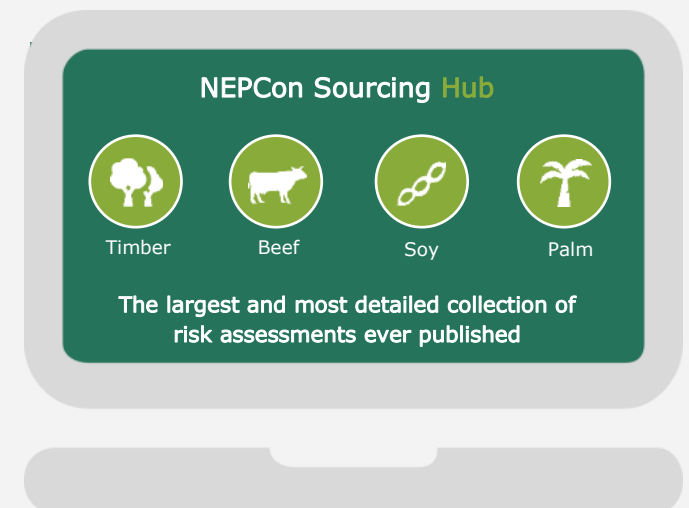
We have contributed to the **establishment** of **100+** **protected areas** and the **development** of **65** **management plans** for natural areas.



We make our **risk assessments, tools** and other **information** **freely available** on the **NEPCon Sourcing Hub** at [www.nepcon.org/sourcinghub](http://www.nepcon.org/sourcinghub)



*Active certificates issued by NEPCon (Sept 2019)*





# Vision

A world where  
human choices  
ensure a  
sustainable  
future





# Mission

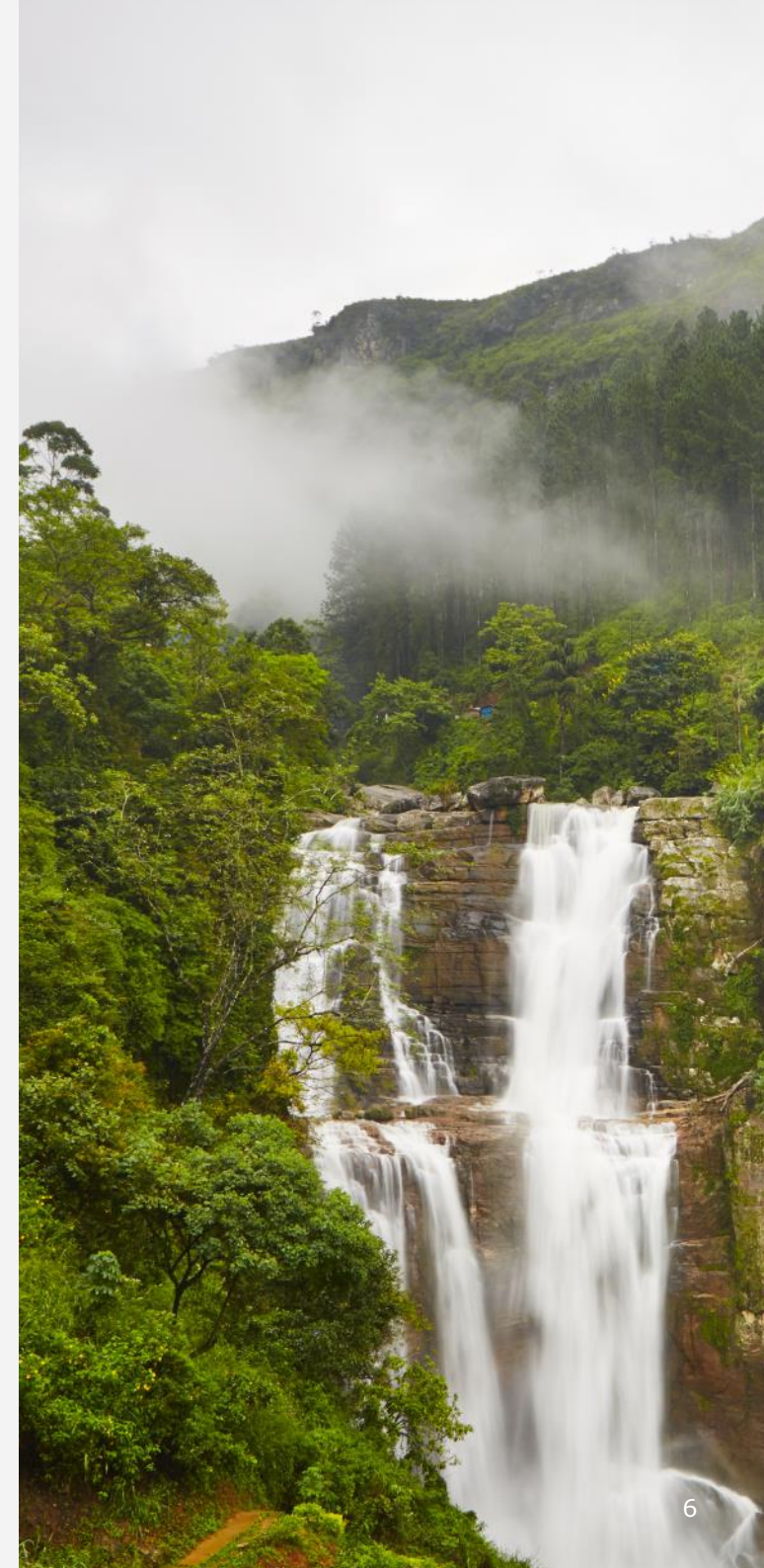
To support  
better land  
management  
and business  
practices that  
benefit people,  
nature and the  
climate





# Our Strategy

## In brief





# Our Strategy

## Goal 1: Reach and Impact

### Promote sustainable practices in landscapes and supply chains

Our focus is to promote the increased adoption of sustainable practices in production landscapes and supply chains where the greatest potential for positive change lies, leading to a healthier environment and climate, and sustainable livelihoods.





## Goal 1: Reach and Impact

**We focus our work on forest and climate impact commodities and related sectors.**

Examples include cocoa, coffee, palm oil, forest products and tourism.

1.1



### **Innovation in sustainability assurance**

We will revolutionise and reinvent traditional sustainability certification to create efficiency, add value, and increase positive impacts, while building on our status as a leading provider of global assurance services.

1.2



### **Expertise for schemes**

We will engage with and support established and emerging social and environmental schemes in alignment with NEPCon values and ISEAL Credibility Principles by being a trusted provider of expertise on standard setting, system development, oversight and assurance.

1.3



### **Responsible sourcing services**

We will be a leading provider in helping a wide range of companies to source responsibly, or to develop and/or strengthen their own sustainability programs and policies through our risk-based services and tools.

1.4



### **Solutions for smallholders and communities**

We will increase access to and benefits of sustainability solutions for smallholders, communities and small and medium enterprises, through developing and adapting risk-based assurance, certification standards and practices that are more appropriate to their scale.

1.5



### **Enhanced supply chain traceability and transparency**

We will modernise traceability away from traditional labor-intensive models to real-time technological ones, thereby improving the credibility of sustainability claims and consumer-facing labels.

1.6



### **Mission-driven projects**

We will develop and implement projects that support our strategy; endeavours that diversify our work and keep our experts innovative and open in realising our vision and mission.

1.7



### **Globally recognised training provider**

We will share our expertise and knowledge with stakeholders through transparent, open-source training on sustainable practices and responsible sourcing.

1.8



### **Greater influence on corporate and public policy**

We will seek out opportunities to engage companies and governments and influence how they use, reference or benchmark credible, rigorous sustainability standards in their development and sustainability policies.

1.9



### **New technology solutions**

We will integrate additional smart, cutting-edge technology wherever it can scale up responsible practices, saving human efforts for where we need it most.

1.10



### **Evaluation and learning to inform decisions**

We will evaluate our effectiveness regularly because sustainability is dynamic and complex. We will use the learning to be agile; expanding, revising or exiting activities as needed to improve our impact.

1.11



### **Measuring and communicating our impacts**

We will evaluate our sustainability impacts and business value, to accurately and transparently communicate this to our stakeholders.



# Our Strategy

## Goal 2: Brand and Networks

Build brand recognition  
that multiplies  
sustainability impact.

Our focus is to use the NEPCon  
brand to drive impact, creating a  
multiplier effect where more  
stakeholders will engage in our  
programmes and services.

2.1



### Effective brand assets

We will define the components of an effective brand for use by staff and partners, including communications messages that reflect our credibility and leadership.

2.2



### Tailored communications to targeted audiences

We will define and reach out to our most important target groups for building awareness and develop strategic communications messages that speak to these audiences about the issues and needs they care most about.

2.3



### Leverage brands to create market demand

We will develop deep relationships with brand-owners as well as other organisations with high potential for creating market pull throughout sustainable supply chains.

2.4



### Client-focused marketing support

We will support businesses in their consumer-focused marketing, including providing approved messages and other support that allows customising while maintaining credibility of sustainability claims.

2.5



### Partnerships to drive more impact

We will continue to build partnerships with leading and aligned organisations to identify and act on shared sustainability goals, and/or mutually support each other's work.



# Our Strategy

## Goal 3: Our Organisation

Strengthen our organisation in all areas to achieve our mission.

Our focus is to maximise and strengthen our workforce, systems and finances to ensure long-term stability so we can achieve our goals.

3.1



### Highly skilled and valued staff

We will continue to recognise our staff as our greatest asset in achieving impact. We will invest in our human resource functions including career development, compensation and benefits, and other important areas.

3.2



### Capacity for relevant sectors, issues and regions

We will ensure our staff offers balanced expertise covering relevant sustainability issues, products, commodities and parts of the world. We will strengthen our in-house expertise on social issues.

3.3



### Balanced internal and external resources

We will continue to ensure high quality services by focusing on better balancing of our human resources, enabling us to deliver activities consistently while managing risks related to reliance on external resources and seasonal workload fluctuations.

3.4



### Data-driven management

We will enhance our data management systems to be efficient, scalable and results-focused. We will continue to value effective data gathering and reporting.

3.5



### Financial resilience

We will ensure that we have a financial model that gives us sufficient, appropriate and diversified funding to deliver on our annual work plans and our longer-term strategic goals.

3.6



### 'Walking the walk' of sustainability

We will practice our own values; being a great place to work where we constantly reduce our sustainability footprint, source more responsibly, and improve in a range of other areas.

3.7



### Optimised structure and service delivery

We will strengthen our organizational structure to enhance service delivery, maintaining our values-driven approach that will enhance collaboration among teams, ensure local expertise and global consistency, and foster close cooperation.



# The NEPCon Way

The operating principles listed below reflect our values and approach to our work. They guide us in our daily work and serve as a beacon in decision making, forming the foundation of how we operate. Collectively they are what we like to call, the NEPCon Way.

1. We choose our activities based on transparency, credibility and potential for positive change.
2. We are committed to monitoring the impacts of our activities.
3. We seek to add value by addressing the needs and gaps in global sustainability efforts.
4. We seek to minimise systems costs while maximising the positive impacts and credibility.
5. We openly share our expertise, knowledge and tools to mainstream sustainability.
6. We conduct our own operations according to the sustainability principles we promote.
7. We observe ethical business practices, expecting same from our clients and partners.
8. We aim to ensure gender equality at all levels of the organisation.
9. We engage passionate staff with high integrity, support professional and personal development, and reward engagement, execution and excellence.
10. We strive to be a financially healthy organisation to better fulfill our mission.





# NEPCon and the SDGs

## Our collaboration with schemes, businesses and other stakeholders contributes to many of the SDGs.

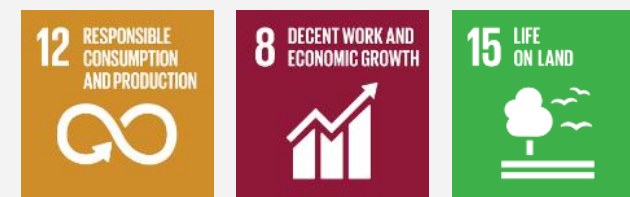
The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) build the framework for the global transformation by 2030. SDG implementation defines sustainable business practices.

NEPCon wants to be a driving force in reaching the SDGs because we see the promotion of sustainable practices in landscapes and supply chains as a way towards a better future. The SDGs guide us in this strategy as we strive for solutions that have a positive impact on people and the environment.

Here are just a few examples. Our work to promote the sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources directly links with **SDG 12 Responsible Consumption and Production**. We do this through training people and organizations on better practices and responsible sourcing and through our global assurance services. On **SDG 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth**, we work with broad range of sustainability standards, many of which regulate working conditions and labour rights, including provisions to eliminate modern slavery and child labour. We support **SDG 15 Life on Land** through our donor-funded projects, assurance services and by integrating technology where it can push the adoption of responsible land use practices more quickly. Offering better access to sustainability solutions and markets for smallholders and communities contributes to several SDGs, including **SDGs 1, 16, 15 and 5**. We support **SDG 13 Climate Action** to build climate resilience by engaging governments to use robust sustainability standards in their policies.

We have done a mapping of NEPCon strategic objectives to the SDG targets and assigned a **NEPCon impact score** for each SDG, indicating NEPCon relative contribution to the SDG through our strategy and work.

Our contribution to the SDG targets,  
considering NEPCon strategy and work  
(according to NEPCon impact score from 0 to 30)



18-30



6-17



2-5





# Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

We are committed to monitoring and evaluating the impacts and outcomes of NEPCon's work and consistently communicating the results to stakeholders. This includes evaluating our effectiveness, measuring how we are progressing towards our mission, and ensuring that we revise our future plans based on what we learn. We also will cultivate an organisational culture and approach to monitoring and evaluation that emphasises learning and continual improvement. In that light, we will treat this strategy as a living document to be reviewed annually and updated as needed based on our evaluation processes.

## Up and Running...

This strategy sets out our highest goals and objectives. But the document is only our starting point. We will develop specific action plans, divide responsibilities and bring the NEPCon team together to learn and adjust efforts as we go.









## About NEPCon

Founded in 1994, NEPCon is a non-profit organisation working to support better land management and business practices that benefit people, nature and the climate in over 100 countries around the world.

[www.nepcon.org](http://www.nepcon.org)

