

INNOVATION FOR SUSTAINABILITY (I4S) METHODOLOGY

Purpose

IFF strives to create first-to-market solutions that support people and planet in the transition to a more sustainable world. To quantify and track progress, we developed the Innovation for Sustainability (I4S) Assessment tool, which uses a proprietary methodology to evaluate the sustainability performance of our innovation projects.

The purpose of the I4S tool has been to assess and identify sustainability benefits and risks related to our product innovations and promote better-informed decisions through transparency. In turn, this has informed further improvements for future product iterations, as well as identify sustainability value propositions that can improve in-market product performance.

Methodology

The I4S assessment tool allows for an assessment of the sustainability risks and benefits of innovation projects – considering impacts across all life cycle stages of new products. Life cycle stages encompass raw material acquisition, production, transport and distribution, customer application, consumer use and end-of-life. It addresses relative impacts (which could be positive or negative), their magnitude and their likelihood to materialize. IFF’s internal assessment team collectively used the I4S tool to assess innovations by consensus, including clearly documenting the processes and conclusions.

Impacts are assessed compared to a given benchmark solution – and the magnitude and likelihood are assessed to establish if an impact is material. When life cycle assessment (LCA) or other quantitative assessments are available, they will be used in the assessment of an impact’s magnitude. If no quantitative information is available, the subject matter experts, including an LCA expert, will provide estimates of directional impact (e.g., higher/lower, more/less). The basis and rationale of all assessments are documented. Figure 1 (below) depicts the core sustainability assessment process for new innovations, followed by further detail about the I4S scope, assessment team, benchmark for comparison, final score and threshold for sustainability value proposition.

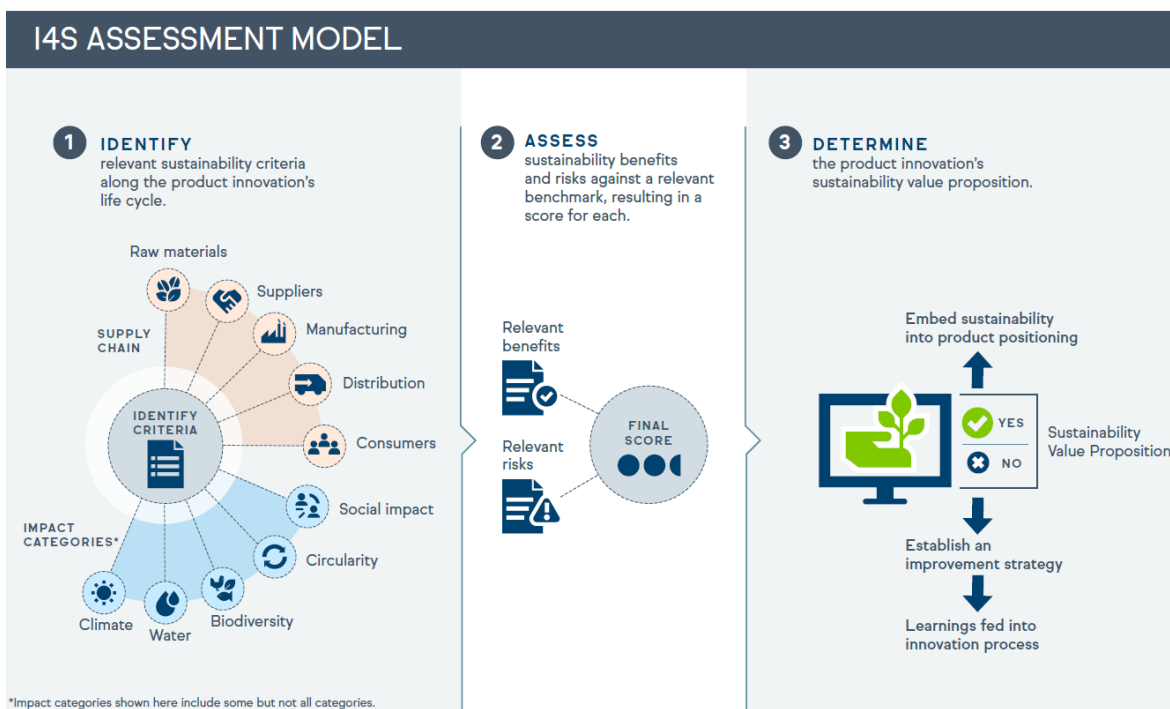


Figure 1: Innovation for Sustainability model for new innovations.

Scope

IFF manages the innovation process with a stage gate framework which accounts for R&D projects and other projects carried out within business-linked Innovation functions.

- For external reporting, sustainability assessments are conducted for projects aimed at developing new products and/or solutions. Hence, it does not include projects aimed at, for example, cost reduction or process improvements that would not result in the launch of a new product.
- A product's launch date will determine the year its assessment will be reported. Launch is defined internally by a particular date in our stage-gate framework, after which we typically offer products for sale to customers.

Assessment team

Approximately two months before a product / project launches, its scoring is completed by an assessment team, representing internal, cross-functional stakeholders with relevant competencies related to R&D, application, manufacturing, marketing, life cycle assessment and sustainability.

To ensure consistency and alignment, a sustainable innovation expert from IFF's Global Sustainability team also participates in all meetings.

Benchmark

One of the key choices involves identification of the benchmark against which the project should be assessed. The benchmark should be the currently dominant in-market solution, and may involve in-kind comparison, comparison to an alternative technology, or a non-use scenario.

The choice of the proper benchmark is based on the market, available alternatives, and customer and consumer expectations. A detailed proprietary model and decision tree has been developed to assist in identifying the appropriate benchmark, which requires input from the assessment team.

Sustainability impacts

The impacts in scope for the assessment are selected from a list of potential relevant sustainability criteria defined across the product's life cycle (see Appendix A). The criteria have been established based on our internal expertise in sustainability science and inputs from e.g., [WBCSD's Portfolio Sustainability Assessment Framework](#); [Cefic's Safe and Sustainable-by-Design](#); typical LCA impact categories; and recurrent topics from customer requests.

Criteria are identified by the assessment team and selected based on relevance. If a particular impact or supply chain stage is not affected by the innovation in question, it will not be considered in the assessment. Relevance is assessed by the innovation's potential impact versus the benchmark on IFF's own operations, IFF's (future) customers, sourcing activities, and other stakeholders (e.g., consumers, NGOs and regulatory bodies, etc.). For example, if a new product has no impact on the use phase relative to the benchmark, all use phase criteria will be considered irrelevant to the assessment. Alternatively, if a new product enabled cold transport at an elevated temperature, the use phase would be considered relevant and the impact (in this case, GHG emissions compared to a benchmark case) would be identified. If a significant improvement was found, it would contribute to the benefit score. In this way the entire life cycle is covered and life cycle thinking is embraced.

Assessment of benefits, risks, and threshold

The innovation's benefits and risks are scored separately using a proprietary rating system and the final score is a calculated product of the two. There is a quantitative threshold for this final score that establishes whether or not the innovation has a sustainability value proposition.

The risk score is further extended by the category of "showstopper" risks, which are extraordinarily severe risks, as defined by IFF in accordance with several internal and external policies and regulations, Codes of Conduct, frameworks and other initiatives. If identified, these must be mitigated, or the risk score will immediately drop to below the threshold for a sustainability value proposition. For example, if a raw material for a product was a part of a supply chain that, based on country of origin, has a high risk of child labor and no known measures are in place to prevent it, this would be considered a showstopper risk and would prevent the product from having a sustainable value proposition. An innovation being assessed as having a "sustainability value proposition" needs to show a material sustainability benefit with a high likelihood to occur, without an unmanageable showstopper risk.



Limitations

One of the key limitations of the methodology is that it is often relying on qualitative data, expert estimates and educated reasoning, due to limited availability of information and resources. Secondly, it inherently deals with limited data availability and quality. In innovation projects, market/competitor information and certain other details may not be available. Finally, the list of sustainability criteria is to be regarded as comprehensive but not exhaustive. Future practices and/or legislations may be included as part of the continuous improvement of this assessment process.

Documentation

The assessments are conducted with a standardized template to ensure that all projects are evaluated and documented in the same way. All assessments are kept separate and stored in internal spreadsheets.

New innovations that have a sustainable value proposition that supports people and planet [%] have been assured to a limited level of assurance starting in 2023. For more information on the assurance standards used, the level of assurance obtained and the assurance process, please see the Independent Assurance Report at the end of the 2025 Do More Good Report, available at iff.com/sustainabilityreport or in the [IFF Report Library](#).

Appendix A – Sustainability criteria

	Upstream		Downstream	
	Sourcing	Production	Use Phase	End of Life
Climate Action, Energy, Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Greenhouse gas emissions <input type="checkbox"/> Energy Use <input type="checkbox"/> Distribution Optimization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Greenhouse gas emissions <input type="checkbox"/> Production yield / Material efficiency <input type="checkbox"/> Energy use / source 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Greenhouse gas emissions <input type="checkbox"/> Industry transformation <input type="checkbox"/> Energy use <input type="checkbox"/> Efficacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Transport emissions <input type="checkbox"/> Energy use
Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Water consumption 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Water consumption 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Water consumption 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Water consumption
Waste & Circularity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Waste, pollution, other emissions <input type="checkbox"/> Recycled / Bio-based / Renewable <input type="checkbox"/> Raw material scarcity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Waste, pollution, other emissions <input type="checkbox"/> Recycling of production side streams 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Waste, pollution, other emissions <input type="checkbox"/> Circularity <input type="checkbox"/> Durability <input type="checkbox"/> Food waste 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Bio-accumulation <input type="checkbox"/> Biodegradability
Regenerative Ecosystems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Land use change use / deforestation <input type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Land use change use / deforestation <input type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Land use change use / deforestation <input type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity <input type="checkbox"/> Animal welfare 	
Health, Safety & Regulatory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Material hazards and safety <input type="checkbox"/> Regulatory trends 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Chemical process hazards and safety <input type="checkbox"/> Occupational health hazards and safety <input type="checkbox"/> Regulatory trends 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Consumer safety <input type="checkbox"/> Health & wellbeing <input type="checkbox"/> Nutrition <input type="checkbox"/> Regulatory trends 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Hazards to the environment <input type="checkbox"/> Regulatory trends
Responsible Sourcing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Human rights¹⁾ & other social aspect <input type="checkbox"/> Sourcing certification <input type="checkbox"/> Traceability along the supply chain 			

✓	Avoided, enabled, improved, promoted, supported, protected
0	Neutral, unremarkable, not applicable, not relevant
✗	High risk, high impact, concern area, hindered
?	Unknown, uncertain, lack of data

1) Forced labor, Child labor, No freedom of association, Occupational health & safety issue, Unfair wages
Discrimination, Harsh or unhuman treatment, Excessive working hours / unregular employment

