



AAC INCEPTION MEETING Provisional Programme

25 June 2020 - 10am to 12.45pm

Webex Virtual Meeting

In the interest of consolidating knowledge on Voluntary Sustainability Standards (VSS) and their impact on developing countries, the **United Nations Forum on Sustainability Standards (UNFSS)** and the **Leuven Centre for Global Governance Studies (GGG)** of the **University of Leuven**, with the support of the **Research Foundation – Flanders (FWO – International Coordination Action)** and the **Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO)**, will be establishing a “Voluntary Sustainability Standards (VSS) Academic Advisory Council”.

The **Academic Advisory Council (AAC)** is designed to pursue the following scientific objective: understand the effectiveness of VSS and the determinants of effectiveness. Currently, different disciplines approach questions related to the effectiveness of VSS from different theoretical perspectives and focus on different dimensions of effectiveness. The AAC’s **objective is to bring these different perspectives into one overarching network on the effectiveness of VSS**, thus contributing to a comprehensive understanding of VSS effectiveness.

The inception meeting of this VSS Academic Advisory Council collaboration will go hand in hand with the publication of the **4th UNFSS Flagship Report, anticipated to be launched during the fall of 2020**. Some key findings of the Report will be presented to the AAC participants in parallel to the three goals this meeting aim to pursue:

1. **Present the aims of the Academic Advisory Council (AAC)**
2. **Introduce the AAC members and their work on VSS** – we hope to interact with our participants by giving each one the opportunity to introduce themselves and their work around VSS
3. **Present and discuss some of the key findings of the 4th Flagship Report on 'Scaling Up VSS through Sustainable Public Procurement and Trade Policy'** which will be launched during Fall this year

Time	Programme
10:00am - 10:20am	Welcome Note and aims of the AAC <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Santiago Fernandez de Cordoba, UNFSS Coordinator, UNCTAD• Axel Marx, Leuven Centre for Global Governance Studies, University of Leuven
10:20am – 11:30am	Presentations by AAC members
11:30am – 11:50am	Presentation of the key findings of the 4th Flagship on 'Scaling Up VSS through Sustainable Public Procurement and Trade Policy' Report” to be launched during Fall 2020
11:50am – 12:30pm	Structured Discussion on the key findings of the 4th Flagship
12:30pm – 12:45pm	Closing Remarks

Representatives from UNFSS member agencies (FAO, ITC, UNCTAD, UNEP and UNCTAD) together with WTO and ISO representatives will also contribute to the discussion through the Inception Meeting.

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