



4C LOGO AND CLAIMS GUIDELINE

Version 5.0

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4. Introduction

This document defines the rules and requirements for the use of 4C claims, logos and seals (trademarks) to ensure transparent communication throughout coffee and cocoa supply chains. It safeguards the integrity of the 4C System and supports responsible marketing practices among certified entities and stakeholders.

Purpose

This guideline forms part of the broader 4C System Regulations and applies globally. It is binding for all users of 4C claims and trademarks and is updated periodically to reflect regulatory changes, stakeholder feedback, and evolving best practices in sustainability communication.

Scope

This guideline applies to all 4C System users, certified 4C Units, Business Partners (BPs), Final Buyers (FBs), Intermediary Buyers (IBs), Certification Bodies (CBs), Distributors, Licensees, project partners, and any third parties wishing to use the 4C logo or refer to 4C certification.

Applicability

It covers both:

Coverage

- On-pack uses (e.g. product packaging)
- Off-pack uses (e.g. websites, reports, jute bags, social media)

Improper or unauthorised use of the 4C logo, seals, or claims may lead to reputational harm, legal consequences, and suspension from the 4C System. This guideline is designed to support responsible communication and compliance with both 4C certification rules and applicable laws on advertising, labelling, and sustainability communication.

Compliance with 4C Guideline

This guideline is based on all the latest and relevant global regulations, frameworks, and discussions on clear and transparent sustainability communication to consumers, such as the EU Empowering Consumers Directive and the ISO 14024 framework.

Compliance with global frameworks and requirements

5. Definitions

The following definitions clarify key terms used throughout this guideline and the 4C System.

Term	Meaning
4C Logo	The core visual identifier of the 4C System is primarily used in off-product communications such as websites, presentations, and reports.
4C Seal	A specific visual mark used on-product to indicate the share of 4C certified coffee/cocoa contained in a product. It includes the 30%, 50%, 70%, or 90% seal variants. These seals are provided by 4C upon request and approval.
Add-On Seal	A complementary mark granted to certified 4C System Users who have obtained an Add-On certification (i.e., Carbon Footprint Add-On; Advancing Equity, Empowering Women Add-On; Food Security Add-On).
Claim	Any statement – verbal, written, or visual – referring to the 4C certification, the sourcing of 4C certified coffee/cocoa, or cooperation with 4C.
On-Pack Use	Any use of the 4C seal or claim made directly on final product packaging or labelling that is visible to end consumers.
Off-Pack Use	Any reference to 4C (via logo or claims) in marketing, informational, or corporate materials that are not affixed to a specific coffee/cocoa product.
System User	Any company or organisation that holds a valid 4C certificate or has been granted permission to use 4C trademarks under formal terms of use.
Final Buyer (FB)	The entity that purchases cocoa/green coffee, roasts, and processes it (e.g., roasters, capsule manufacturers, decaffeination companies, etc.).
Physical Segregation	A supply chain model where certified and non-certified products are kept physically separate throughout the supply chain until purchased by FB.
Mass Balance	A supply chain model where certified and non-certified products can be mixed, and claims are based on volume reconciliation. This model is only allowed at the roasting stage of the coffee supply chain and the manufacturing stage of the cocoa supply chain.
Attestation	An official document issued by 4C to confirm a stakeholder's (e.g., producer, system user) certification status or compliance readiness. Attestations are intended for informational or internal display purposes only and do not authorise the use of the 4C logo, seal, or claims.

Table 1: 4C Terms Definition

6. Overview of 4C Trademarks

The following 4C trademarks are protected and regulated under this guideline.

Trademark	Application
	<p>4C Core Logo The principal brand mark of the 4C System. Primarily used off-pack (e.g. websites, reports, presentations).</p> <p>On-pack use only permitted on a case-by-case basis with 4C approval. It may be accompanied by a clear claim explaining the organisation's contribution to the 4C System.</p>
	<p>4C Seals (Tiered) The 4C seals displaying the percentage of 4C certified product sourced by a Final Buyer, based on their total annual purchases. Available in 30%, 50%, 70%, 90% versions.</p> <p>In this document, the general seal is displayed. The appropriate tiered seal will be issued upon request and approval.</p>
	<p>4C Seals (No Tier) The 4C seal without the display of percentage may only be used by a certified producer who roasts coffee or produces a cocoa product to sell directly to an end-consumer.</p>
	<p>Add-On Seals These seals represent successful certification under an approved 4C Add-On or 4C Solution, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carbon Footprint Solution (Level 3 and 4) • Advancing Equity, Empowering Women Add-On • Food Security Add-On* <p><i>*Disclaimer: The Food Security seal differs, as it was developed in cooperation with the German NGO Welthungerhilfe.</i></p>

Table 2: 4C Trademark Application

Any modification, imitation, unapproved use, or misleading association is strictly prohibited. Only 4C may grant usage rights, and all usage must remain within the approved scope.

Ownership

High-resolution files for the 4C Logo and Seals are available via the 4C Portal for certified System Users. External parties (e.g. journalists or researchers) may request access by contacting: info@4c-services.org. Only the official files provided by 4C may be used. Users must not alter colours, proportions, layout, or apply effects such as shadows, gradients, or overlays.

File access

To maintain brand integrity and global recognition, the use of the 4C logo and seals must comply with all technical requirements outlined in Annex I: Graphic Outlines, including minimum sizes, colour codes, clear space and positioning, and prohibited manipulations. Any visual misuse may result in the revocation of usage approval and the implementation of follow-up measures as defined in Chapter 10 of this document.

Visual Requirements

7. Conditions for Use

Use of any 4C trademark is subject to prior written approval from 4C. The following conditions apply to all usage.

Approval

Only organisations with a valid 4C certificate or a formal agreement with 4C are eligible to request trademark use.

Eligibility

Approval is granted only for the specific context, duration, and purpose requested. Use of the 4C logo or seal is prohibited after a certificate is suspended, expired, or withdrawn. Approval covers only the submitted version and use case. Any changes require resubmission. Use is non-transferable and cannot be applied to other products, entities, or communication channels without explicit permission.

Scope of Approval

All requests must be submitted through the 4C Portal, via the designated logo and claims request form. Applicants must upload a draft of the intended use (e.g., label, brochure, or website screenshot). Claims must include substantiating documentation or relevant context for approval. 4C will review the submission and respond with approval, feedback, or a revision request.

Application Process

Note:

If a 4C System User wishes to use the claims proposed in this document, they must also be submitted for review before approval and use. Custom claims approval is granted on a case-by-case basis.

4C is not liable for compliance with national labelling, advertising, or consumer protection laws. Entities using the 4C trademarks must ensure compliance with the law in all jurisdictions where their products or materials appear.

Legal Responsibility

4C reserves the right to revoke any approval if:

Revocation

- The original eligibility conditions are no longer met
- The trademarks are used inappropriately or misleadingly
- There is non-compliance with this guideline or the 4C System Regulation

8. On-Pack Seal System

The 4C on-pack seal system allows Final Buyers and Licensees to communicate their commitment to sustainable sourcing. Tiered seals indicate the proportion of certified green coffee/cocoa contained in a product, based on the Final Buyer's total annual green coffee or cocoa purchases. 4C certified producers may use the 4C seal without a percentage indication.

There are four official seal tiers available:

Tier system

%	Interpretation
30% Seal	Indicates that at least 30% of the Final Buyer's annual green coffee/cocoa purchases are 4C certified
50% Seal	Indicates that at least 50% of the Final Buyer's annual green coffee/cocoa purchases are 4C certified
70% Seal	Indicates that at least 70% of the Final Buyer's annual green coffee/cocoa purchases are 4C certified
90% Seal	Indicates that at least 90% of the Final Buyer's annual green coffee/cocoa purchases are 4C certified

Table 3: 4C Seal Tiers

Only one seal tier may be used per product line or brand. 4C grants seal usage following a formal request and verification process.

Limitation

Note:

The correct seal version will be issued upon request and approval. Draft designs must be submitted through the 4C Portal.

To be eligible for the tier-based seal use, the 4C System User must hold a valid agreement with 4C for at least one (1) financial year. Seal requests must be submitted via the 4C Portal, indicating the total green coffee/cocoa purchase volume of the last completed fiscal year. The volume of 4C certified purchases for the same year is indicated in the 4C Portal. Eligibility is assessed annually and may be audited. If the purchase ratio falls below the approved tier, use of the higher-tier seal can resume only once compliance is restored.

Eligibility Criteria for Non-Producers

Producers are eligible for seal use without percentage display when they are 4C certified, i.e. part of a 4C certified Unit.

Eligibility Criteria for Producers Traceability and physical segregation

4C traceability requirements demand physical segregation along the supply chain. Certified and non-certified coffee/cocoa must be kept physically separate from the farm level through to the Final Buyer. Mixing is only permitted at the final supply chain stage (roasting or packing). The mass balance claim is therefore only allowed at the roasting stage. This approach aligns with EU and global sustainability regulations and ensures product integrity. For further details on traceability requirements, please see the 4C System Regulations.

When applying the 4C seal on product packaging:

Visual rules

- The seal must not be smaller than the minimum size defined in Annex I
- It must be placed visibly and not subordinated to other certification marks

- It must not be altered or integrated with other visual elements
- It must not imply claims beyond verified certification levels
- Additional explanatory text may be used, but must not mislead consumers

Example:

The 70% seal may not be used with statements like “fully certified” or “sourced exclusively from 4C farms”.

Note:

In exceptional cases, the use of the 4C logo on product packaging (instead of the appropriate seal) may be considered. Such use is subject to a formal request submitted via the 4C Portal and will be reviewed by 4C on a case-by-case basis. Approval will only be granted if the proposed use does not mislead consumers and clearly communicates the nature of the product's link to the 4C System.

9. Off-Pack Logo Use

The 4C logo may be used in communications that do not appear on product packaging. This type of use is referred to as off-pack and includes promotional, informational, and corporate materials.

The 4C logo may be used in the following materials, provided prior approval is obtained:

- Websites and social media
- Corporate presentations and reports
- Educational or training materials
- Marketing materials (e.g. posters, brochures, displays, jute bags)
- Event signage and banners
- Point-of-sale materials

Note:

Off-pack use must never imply that a specific product is 4C certified unless accompanied by an approved on-pack seal.

In exceptional cases, the use of a 4C seal in off-pack communication may be permitted. Such use must be clearly justified, requested through the 4C Portal, and will be evaluated by 4C on a case-by-case basis. Approval will only be granted if the context of use does not imply product certification.

For intended use that is not listed here, approval may be granted after submission of the idea on a case-by-case basis.

Users must be part of the 4C System or hold explicit written approval. All logo placements must adhere to the graphic guidelines in Annexe I. The logo must be used respectfully, clearly, and without distortion or modification. Claims or statements accompanying the logo must be accurate, transparent, and approved.

Description

Off-pack applications

Exceptions

Other cases

Requirements

Third parties such as project partners, certification bodies, researchers, or media may use the 4C logo with permission, provided the use is contextually accurate (e.g. describing a partnership or project), not misleading, and pre-approved by 4C.

*Requirements
for
non-certified
entities*

Example:

“This report was developed in collaboration with 4C” or “We are a 4C recognised certification body.”

10. Sustainability Claims

Sustainability claims referencing 4C are powerful tools for communication, but they must be used carefully and accurately to maintain credibility and avoid misleading stakeholders.

Relevance

A claim refers to any verbal, written, or visual statement that references 4C certification, the sourcing of 4C certified product, participation in the 4C System, partnership or cooperation with 4C. Claims may appear on-pack or off-pack and must be aligned with the actual status of certification and sourcing.

*Definition and
scope*

All claims must be submitted for review and approval via the 4C Portal, supported by substantiated, verifiable data, if needed. Claims must be transparent, not misleading, and clearly indicate the nature and extent of certification (e.g. “70% of our coffee/cocoa is 4C certified”). Implying full certification when only partial sourcing applies must be avoided.

*Requirements
for use*

Example:

A product with a 30% seal must not claim “This coffee/cocoa is 4C certified” but may state “Contains at least 30% 4C certified coffee/cocoa”.

All suggested claims, including those proposed by the user, must go through the official 4C review process via the Portal.

See Annex II for examples of permitted on-pack and off-pack claims.

*Claim
Examples*

Disclaimer:

The examples in Annex II are illustrative only. If you would like to use a different wording or develop a custom claim, you must submit it for review and approval through the 4C Portal.

The following types of claims are not allowed:

*Prohibited or
misleading
claims*

- Use of the term “100% 4C certified” if the total certified sourcing is less than 100%
- Claims that imply mass balance or volume-matching models
- Vague or generic sustainability claims positioned near the 4C logo without clarity

11. Monitoring and Verification

4C ensures credible use of its seals and claims through a structured process of review, monitoring, and ongoing verification.

*Application
and Approval*

All requests for on-pack seal use must be submitted via the 4C Portal. Applications must include:

- The total volume of green coffee/cocoa purchased during the most recently completed fiscal year
- The certified volume of 4C coffee/cocoa purchased
- A draft design or mock-up showing the intended use of the seal

Only after formal written approval from 4C may the seal be applied to any product or material.

4C reserves the right to conduct random reviews and document checks of approved seal users, to request proof of compliance at any time, and to review additional materials where the seal or claims are used (e.g., marketing assets).

If a Final Buyer's certified sourcing share drops below the approved seal tier, the buyer must immediately stop using the seal until the issue is corrected. The buyer may reapply for a lower-tier seal based on current data. Continued use of the incorrect seal constitutes misuse (see Section 10)

Monitoring

*Adjustments
and
suspensions*

12. Legal Considerations

Use of the 4C logo, seals, and sustainability claims must comply not only with 4C's internal guideline but also with relevant legal frameworks.

*Legal
responsibility*

4C approval of logo or claim use does not imply legal compliance. It is the responsibility of each user to ensure that all claims adhere to applicable national and international consumer protection, advertising, and labelling laws. Legal counsel must be consulted when necessary to verify compliance in the target markets.

Note:

Different jurisdictions may interpret environmental and sustainability claims differently. Misleading or unsubstantiated claims can carry legal consequences.

4C cannot be held liable for legal consequences arising from improper or unauthorised claims made by external parties

Approval from 4C to use a claim or logo is limited to the agreed scope, period, and context. Approval does not exempt the user from complying with applicable legal obligations and may be withdrawn if any legal or reputational risk is identified.

*Limitations of
approval*

13. Non-Compliance and Consequences

4C takes the integrity of its certification system and communication guidelines seriously. Misuse of the 4C logo, seals, or sustainability claims undermines trust in the system and may result in severe consequences.

*Non-
compliances*

Non-compliance includes, but is not limited to:

- Using the 4C logo or seal without prior approval
- Using the incorrect seal tier (e.g. 70% instead of 30%)
- Continuing use after certificate expiration, suspension, or withdrawal
- Making unapproved, misleading, or unverifiable claims
- Altering or reproducing 4C trademarks without permission

To uphold compliance, the 4C team conducts random online checks and logo-use audits. Stakeholders may be asked at any time to provide evidence of correct use and eligibility. All approved uses are subject to ongoing verification and can be re-evaluated at any point.

Monitoring

If misuse is identified, 4C may immediately withdraw any granted approval, request the removal of all printed and digital materials displaying the logo, seal, or claim, and/or list the entity publicly as non-compliant (e.g. on the 4C website or in communications). In severe cases, 4C reserves the right to escalate the case under the 4C Integrity Program, pursue legal action in the case of trademark infringement or reputational harm, and/or permanently exclude the entity from future use of the 4C trademarks.

Misuse

Note:

If unauthorised use is detected, users will be notified and given a deadline to remove all misuse. Ongoing or repeated misuse may trigger further penalties.

14. Communication and Publication Rights

4C supports transparency and the promotion of sustainability leadership among certified stakeholders and partners. Therefore, 4C reserves the right to highlight approved examples of logo and seal use across its communication channels.

Transparency

By receiving approval to use any 4C logo, seal, or claim, the user agrees that:

Use of approved examples

- 4C may feature the approved use case (e.g. packaging, website, marketing) in its promotional materials
- Examples may appear on the 4C website, social media, presentations, reports, and public events
- Only materials that were submitted and approved through the official review process will be considered for publication

Note:

If you prefer not to have your approved logo or claim used publicly, you may indicate this in your application.

Journalists, NGOs, researchers, and others may reference 4C certification in off-product materials. However, any use of the 4C logo or seal requires written permission. Claims or visual elements must be factual, clear, and non-misleading. 4C reserves the right to request edits or removal of unauthorised references.

External stakeholders

15. Attestations

4C offers official attestations to confirm the certification or compliance status of stakeholders within the system. These attestations are intended for informational or internal display purposes and do not replace or authorise the use of 4C trademarks (logos or seals) and claims.

Official attestations

Types of attestations issued include:

- **Certificate Attestations for Producers**

Producers that are part of a certified 4C Unit may request a formal attestation confirming their certification status. These may be used for display in offices or as supporting evidence in supply chain communications.

- **EUDR Attestations**

Producers who have submitted the required documentation as part of the 4C EUDR One Stop Solution and are ready to support EUDR compliance of their buyers may receive an attestation confirming their readiness.

- **Custom Attestations for Other System Users**

Any certified 4C System User may request a custom attestation, which will be reviewed and issued on a case-by-case basis by 4C.

Attestations must not be used in place of on-product seals or promotional logos. They are for internal, informational, or B2B purposes only, and any misuse may result in withdrawal of the document.

*Types of
attestation*

Limit of use

16. Annexes

Annexe I: Graphic Guidelines

This annex outlines the formatting and visual standards for using the 4C logo and seals.

The 4C logo is available in various digital formats, including RGB, CMYK, and positive and negative colour schemes. The 4C logo and seals should preferably be used in colour. If this is not possible due to optical or graphical reasons, you may use the black or white version.

4C Core Logo	
	<p>Coloured version</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orange (CMYK: 0 75 86 0; RGB: 235 90 43; Hex: #eb5a2b) • Light green (CMYK: 53 0 55 0; RGB: 133 196 143; Hex: #85c48f) • Dark green (CMYK: 80 29 57 42; RGB: 30 97 85; Hex: #1e6155)
	<p>Black version</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pure Black (CMYK: 0 0 0 100; RGB: 0 0 0; Hex: #000000)
	<p>White version</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pure White (CMYK: 0 0 0 0; RGB: 255 255 255; Hex: #ffffff)

4C Tiered	
	<p>Coffee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orange (CMYK: 0 75 86 0; RGB: 235 90 43; Hex: #eb5a2b) • Light green (CMYK: 53 0 55 0; RGB: 133 196 143; Hex: #85c48f) • Dark green (CMYK: 80 29 57 42; RGB: 30 97 85; Hex: #1e6155)
	<p>Cocoa</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orange (CMYK: 0 75 86 0; RGB: 235 90 43; Hex: #eb5a2b) • Light green (CMYK: 53 0 55 0; RGB: 133 196 143; Hex: #85c48f) • Dark green (CMYK: 80 29 57 42; RGB: 30 97 85; Hex: #1e6155) • Sandy orange (CMYK: 0 29 64 8; RGB: 235 166 84; Hex: #eba654)

4C Add -On Seals	
	Carbon Footprint Solution (Level 3 and 4) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dark green (CMYK: 80 29 57 42; RGB: 30 97 85; Hex: #1e6155) Seafoam green (CMYK: 31 0 10 40; RGB: 107 155 139; Hex: #6b9b8b) Light green (CMYK: 53 0 55 0; RGB: 133 196 143; Hex: #85c48f) Pale mint (CMYK: 6 0 4 5; RGB: 226 241 231; Hex: #e2f1e7)
	Advancing Equity, Empowering Women Add-On <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Orange (CMYK: 0 75 86 0; RGB: 235 90 43; Hex: #eb5a2b) Light green (CMYK: 53 0 55 0; RGB: 133 196 143; Hex: #85c48f) Dark green (CMYK: 80 29 57 42; RGB: 30 97 85; Hex: #1e6155) Light orange (CMYK: 0 49 64 4; RGB: 246 125 89; Hex: #f67d59) Linen (CMYK: 0 6 14 2; RGB: 250 234 215; Hex: #faead7)
	Food Security Add-On <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dark brown (CMYK: 0 48 100 76; RGB: 60 31 0; Hex: #3c1f00) Light brown (CMYK: 0 21 36 55; RGB: 114 90 73; Hex: #725a49) Light green (CMYK: 53 0 55 0; RGB: 133 196 143; Hex: #85c48f) Dark green (CMYK: 80 29 57 42; RGB: 30 97 85; Hex: #1e6155) Pale mint (CMYK: 6 0 4 5; RGB: 226 241 231; Hex: #e2f1e7)
 	Food Security Add-On* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please refer to https://foodsecuritystandard.org for further details on the correct application and use of this seal. <p>*The Food Security seal differs, as it was developed in cooperation with the German NGO Welthungerhilfe.</p>



Figure 1: 4C Seal Colours



Figure 2: Example of logo on-package application

If a company or organisation would like to use the 4C logo and seals in any colour other than those specified above, a request for approval can be sent to 4C before the application. 4C will decide on the application of any other colour on a case-by-case basis.

Opacity

The 4C logo must be used in 100% opacity and should not be used with reduced opacity.



Figure 3: 4C logo opacity

Size

It is possible to adjust the size of the 4C logo and seals proportionally. The logo and seals must remain legible and uncluttered at all times.

Clearance area

The 4C logo should only be used where its independence and integrity are preserved. A required free space of 25% of the logo's height shall be kept around the logo.

Please allow more space whenever possible.



Figure 4: 4C logo clearance area

Manipulation

The colours, formatting, opacity, proportion and text of the 4C logo should not be altered. Do not cut or use the elements of the 4C logo separately from each other, add shadows, effects, or warp or rotate the 4C logo.



Figure 5: 4C logo manipulation

Dos and Don'ts Summary Table

Dos	Don'ts
Use official artwork provided by 4C	Alter colours, proportions, or design
Maintain buffer space around the logo	Overlay or crowd the logo with other elements
Follow legibility rules	Use low-resolution or pixelated logos
Request approval before use	Recreate the logo from scratch or remove elements

Annexe II: Claim Examples

These are illustrative examples of approved claims. All claims, whether from this list or custom-created, must be submitted via the 4C Portal for approval before use.

If your idea is not listed here, it can still be reviewed and approved on a case-by-case basis through the Portal.

On-Pack Claims (with Seal)

- Used on product packaging alongside the appropriate seal.
- “Contains at least 30% 4C certified coffee/cocoa based on annual sourcing”
- “This product includes 70% sustainably sourced green coffee/cocoa verified by 4C”
- “100% of our coffee/cocoa is certified against the 4C Code of Conduct”
- “Made with 4C certified coffee/cocoa from responsibly managed farms”
- “Our coffee/cocoa meets sustainability criteria certified by the 4C System”

Off-Pack Claims

- Used on websites, corporate reports, marketing assets, etc.

For Certificate Holders

- “We are a 4C certified coffee/cocoa producer promoting responsible practices”

For Final or Intermediary Buyers

- “Our company sources green coffee/cocoa certified by 4C”
- “We are increasing our certified coffee/cocoa share through the 4C partnership”

For Certification Bodies

- “Approved 4C Certification Body contributing to sustainable coffee/cocoa systems”

For Project Partners or NGOs

- “This project is implemented in collaboration with 4C”
- “In cooperation with 4C, we promote responsible sourcing”

Prohibited or Misleading Claims

Never permitted:

- “100% 4C certified” unless 100% of total sourcing is certified
- “This coffee/cocoa is 4C certified” without clarification of the percentage
- Any reference to “mass balance,” “volume matching,” or “equivalent sourcing” (not allowed under the 4C model)
- Claims implying full product certification when only partial sourcing is verified