

# Code of Conduct for the floriculture sector



**IRBC**  
agreement  
floriculture

The Code of Conduct is a code with 12 principles for international responsible business conduct in the floriculture sector, developed by signatories to the [IRBC Agreement for the Floricultural Sector](#). The [Code of Conduct](#) provides values and guidance for responsible business conduct in the floriculture sector. This is a flyer which summarizes the Code of Conduct and explains how it serves as an important starting point for risk assessment and a tool to support a due diligence process.



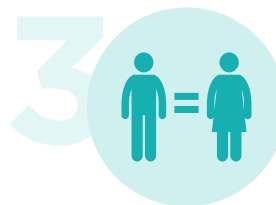
## No bonded labour

Forced labour is not permitted



## No child labour

Child labour is strictly forbidden



## No discrimination

All people shall be treated equally, regardless of their gender, ethnicity, religious background, or preferences



## No precarious employment

Employees shall receive secure and well protected labour agreements



## Freedom of association and collective bargaining

Companies respect their worker's freedom of association and collective bargaining via (amongst others) trade union membership



## Fair remuneration

Workers enjoy a fair salary and in-kind benefits, and companies work progressively towards a living wage



## Decent working hours

Regular and decent working hours, without structural overtime and in line with laws and standards



## Occupational health and safety

Workers benefit from safe and hygienic working conditions



## Special protection for young workers

Workers between the ages of 15 and 24 shall be treated with extra care



## Protection of environment

Companies will minimize negative impacts on the environment



## Access to remedy

Companies will provide the opportunity for employees to seek remediation in case of negative consequences



## Ethical business behaviour

Companies will apply principles of honesty and fairness to relationships with employees and business partners

### Signatories to the IRBC Agreement





## The IRBC Agreement Floricultural Sector

In 2019, several leading growers, trading companies, branch organizations and auction Royal FloraHolland, together with NGOs, trade union FNV and the Dutch government, signed the International Responsible Business Conduct Agreement Floricultural Sector (the IRBC agreement). The main goal of the IRBC agreement is to work together towards a more sustainable floriculture sector.

### “Due Diligence” as main objective

One of the objectives in the IRBC agreement is that companies set up a so-called “due diligence” process. Due diligence is about taking supply chain responsibility for human rights and the environment, about continuously evaluating, and responding to (potential) risks – both in your own business operations and in the ones related to yours. The focus is not on the risks for the company itself, but rather on the environment and the community in which the company is active.

### Why is due diligence important for the floriculture sector?

Taking supply chain responsibility is increasingly required by law. Countries such as Germany, France and England already have due diligence legislation in place and the EU too is working on an EU-level legislation for mandatory due diligence. Almost all these legislative pieces adhere to the [“OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises”](#) and the [“UN Principles for Human Rights and Business”](#) as the basis. To be well prepared for this legislation, the signatories to the IRBC agreement have been working on a suitable approach to due diligence for the floriculture sector.

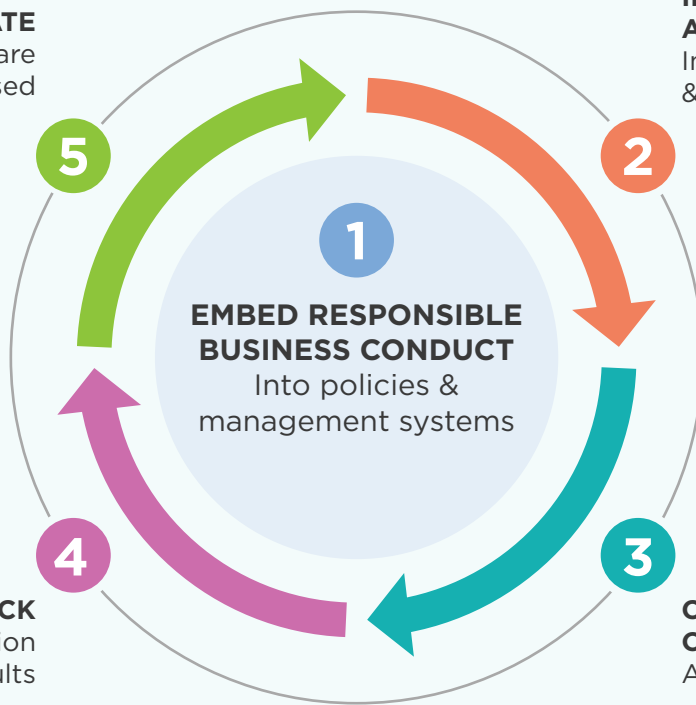
## This Code of Conduct offers a starting point for due diligence

The due diligence process follows a cycle with 6 steps (please see figure 1, next page). The first step is to indicate for which principles an organization stands when it comes to responsible business conduct. With this, a company also indicates how it wants its supply chain partners to do business with them. To ensure that the floriculture adopts an aligned position as much as possible, the signatories to the IRBC Agreement have drawn up this Code of Conduct. This Code of Conduct provides 12 principles for responsible business conduct. These principles are based on existing sustainability requirements (including OECD- and UN-guidelines, legislation, and certifications) and have been adapted to the floriculture sector where relevant.





**COMMUNICATE**  
How impacts are  
addressed



**IDENTIFY & ASSESS  
ADVERSE IMPACTS**  
In operations, supply chains  
& business relationships

**6 PROVIDE FOR  
OR COOPERATE**  
In remediation  
when appropriate

**3 CEASE, PREVENT  
OR MITIGATE**  
Adverse impacts

**4 TRACK**  
Implementation  
and results

Figure 1: OECD due diligence cycle. Source: OECD (2018), OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Business Conduct

## How is the Code of Conduct used?

The Code of Conduct can be used to integrate responsible business conduct in the policies of a company and to communicate the principles for responsible business conduct to its supply chain partners (step 1 in the above figure). Doing so, a company will have a fixed set of principles to refer to for identifying, evaluating, and addressing potential risks and adverse impacts. As such the Code of Conduct is a tool to support continuous improvement, enabling a company to focus on preventing and mitigating the most urgent and common risks together with its supply chain partners.

How an organization integrates or communicates the Code of Conduct is up to that organization itself. This can for example be done by publishing the principles on the company website, but also by incorporating the principles of the Code of Conduct in agreements with supply chain partners.

The companies under the IRBC Agreement will communicate the principles of the Code of Conduct. The use of the Code of Conduct by companies outside of the IRBC agreement is strongly encouraged. Doing so, floriculture sector stakeholders further contribute to responsible business conduct and prepare themselves for upcoming legislation and market requirements.



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