

Expert Group Profile

Description of the Expert Group

Related Committee	Sustainability Committee
Name of the Expert Group	Due Diligence Governance Expert Group
Working Group leader (Co-Lead)	Lead: Ford – André Kremer Co-Lead: Prewave – Daniel Lukanov
Association Contact	Stan Faldin

Description / Challenge / Initial Situation:

The Catena-X consortium has developed a framework for incident tracking and management in Environmental and Social Standards (ESS) to support supply chain due diligence obligations. The Catena-X Expert Group Human Rights (HR) created a practical guide for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) addressing regulatory gaps in human rights risk management.

Currently, both these use cases have been merged into the Due Diligence Governance Expert Group, which continues to advance the outcomes with the goal of establishing both technical (ESS/Grievance) and non-technical (Human Rights) solutions. Additionally, this expert group plans to initiate a new use case to address the upcoming EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR), which will come into force by December 30, 2025.

Due to the restructuring within the group, new participants are being sought to cover the following use cases: Human Rights, Grievance (formerly ESS), and EUDR.

Goals:

The Catena-X Association approved the setup of a long-term mandated “Due Diligence Governance (DDG)” expert group. Its mandate are the following workstreams:

Human Rights

- Identifying and prioritizing topics that require further development or clarification is a continuous part of maintaining relevance and effectiveness of guidance and standards.
- Monitoring regulatory developments supports adapting the group's outputs and ensuring alignment with evolving legal requirements.
- Finalizing the Human Rights Guidance Book is a key step in providing practical and comprehensive support to companies, especially SMEs, for addressing human rights risks and compliance gaps.
- Mapping self-assessment questionnaires (SAQs) against major legislations helps companies streamline compliance efforts and understand how various frameworks interrelate.
- Identifying relevant human rights certificates, audits, and questionnaires is essential for developing tools and standards that integrate these elements cohesively into due diligence processes.
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Grievance (former ESS)

- Further development and updating of the Environmental and Social Standards (ESS) Kit, ESS standard, ESS Code of Conduct, and the Practical Guide from the Human Rights Expert Group. These updates are based on feedback and newly gathered information to ensure tools and guidelines stay relevant and effective.

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- Setting up clear roles and responsibilities (R&R) for a clearing agency. This agency is intended to oversee and manage the grievance process and related governance structures within the Catena-X ecosystem.
- Conducting a pilot to verify the grievance process before its formal release in Catena-X. This pilot aims to test and validate the process in real-world scenarios, ensuring it aligns with standards and user needs.

EUDR

Currently, there is no standard for uploading DDS certificates or waivers either to different provider platforms or directly to the customer portals. This initial step must be completed before users can upload evidence to EU Traces. As a result, affected parties face additional effort due to the need to manage multiple platforms and portals.

The specific sub-working group focuses on developing a standardized data exchange format that can be used to submit data to various platforms and portals seamlessly.

Key focus areas include:

- Exchange of requirements and data parameters is based on defined semantic models, JSON schema, and APIs.
- Architecture integration includes registered connectors and compliance with interoperability standards.
- Simulation involves testing data flows and conformity across connected platforms and portals

Relevant for all workstreams

- Collaboration with relevant industry initiatives such as VDA, PFA, CLEPA, ACEA, and others is a key activity coordinated by the Sustainability Committee to ensure alignment and maximize impact across the automotive ecosystem.
- Systematic liaison with additional ESG experts, academia, and related stakeholders helps enrich the knowledge base, foster innovation, and integrate best practices into Catena-X initiatives.
- The Sustainability Committee outlines and prepares prioritization and decision-making processes within the expert groups or the committee itself, creating transparency and efficient governance on sustainability topics.
- The group identifies gaps and challenges from practical participant expertise and daily operations, working proactively on future solutions and recommendations for Catena-X members.

Members of the expert groups may be requested by the Sustainability Committee to present their outputs to third parties, either upon committee requests or after committee validation in cases of direct solicitation. This facilitates external communication and broader engagement for Catena-X's sustainability efforts.

Why should I participate?

- Contribute directly to shaping the industry's approach to sustainability, compliance, and responsible governance.
- Collaborate with leading experts and organizations to develop Catena-X standards that drive transparency and accountability.
- Influence cross-industry interoperability for due diligence data and processes.
- Strengthen your organization's expertise and role in advancing ESG practices within the automotive sector.
- Help define practical, scalable, and regulatory-compliant solutions for human rights, environmental, and governance challenges.

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What is expected of me?

By applying to become a member please make a statement on the following criteria to outline your best fit.

- Expertise in **ESG-related regulations** (LkSG, CSDDD, ESRS, UFLPA, EUDR).
- Experience in **committee governance** or expert group collaboration.
- Strategic and collaborative mindset with the ability to align multiple stakeholders.
- **Availability of approximately 4 hours per week** for participation in meetings and analyses.
- **Commitment** to active engagement, including regular online sessions and contribution to working documents.

Organisation

Selection Framework Governance Group:

The expert group selection framework and criteria within Catena-X prioritize members who have the right combination of practical and operational expertise, commitment, diversity, and experience. This mix is essential to effectively guide the development of occasion-related tracking and management of grievance (ESS) incidents, ensuring compliance with Supply Chain Due Diligence obligations like the German LkSG, the EU CSDDD, the upcoming EUDR, and other relevant automotive industry regulations

Please find below an outline of the requirements for Expert Group members. When applying, kindly provide a statement addressing the following criteria to demonstrate your suitability:

- **Availability:** Ability to attend weekly expert group meetings and engage in any additional analyses as needed, with an estimated commitment of approximately 4 hours per week.
- **Commitment:** Dedication to regular participation and active contribution within the expert group.
- **Subject Matter Expertise:** Possession of relevant knowledge and expertise in the specific areas outlined in the competency description section above

In the event of a high number of applicants, a dedicated review group will be established to provide structured feedback and review the results.

Rough planning - Milestones / Outcome / Deliverables (e.g. "Date & Activities & Outcome"):

- **October 2025:** Announcement of the Expert Group, application phase for new members, and confirmation of additional members.
- **November 2025:** Go-Live of the Expert Group with inception in working mode, including review of existing content from the previous sub-working group. Review of EUDR Data Exchange requirements for standardization.
- **December 2025:** Manual piloting of a grievance case and preparation of the first draft of a standardized API.
- **January 2025:** Finalization of the Human Rights Guidance Book and piloting of EUDR DDS/Waiver upload to various platforms.
- **March 2026:** Piloting a grievance case using a beta release application.
- **June 2026:** Piloting the final version for EUDR / Waiver upload to various platforms.
- **2026:** Defining and agreeing on a work plan and activities that align with Catena-X e.V. and Tractus-X Release Management schedules, including relevant due dates.