

Protocol for Development of SRP National/Regional Interpretation Guidelines



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About the Sustainable Rice Platform (SRP)

The Sustainable Rice Platform e.V. (SRP) is a global multi-stakeholder alliance comprising over 100 institutional members from public, private, research, civil society and the financial sector. Originally co-convened by the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ), SRP is now an independent member association, working together with its partners to transform the global rice sector by improving smallholder livelihoods, reducing the social, environmental and climate footprint of rice production, and by offering the global rice market an assured supply of sustainably produced rice.

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Background

Sustainable rice cultivation according to the SRP Standard can be interpreted differently according to country or region; however, the same minimum thresholds must be met in order to maintain the credibility of the SRP claim. This document outlines the process for development, review and endorsement of National/Regional Interpretation Guidelines for the SRP Standard for Sustainable Rice Cultivation (in short: SRP NIG).

Draft SRP NIGs are to be developed via an in-country multi-stakeholder consultative process and submitted by an appropriate Guideline-setting organization (e.g., SRP National Chapter or Working Group) to the SRP Secretariat for review and endorsement by the SRP Executive Board. This common process will help avoid proliferation of multiple "SRP Standards" in different countries, allow equivalence of claims across countries and protect brand value.

General Requirements

Requirements for interpretation of the SRP Standard

The ISEAL Code of Good Practice (Clause 6.3, Consistent Interpretation Desired Outcome) defines how a standard can be consistently interpreted and applied across its full geographic scope. For SRP, the ISEAL- based requirements for interpretation of the SRP Standard are as follows:

- a) The global SRP Standard in its current approved version shall be used as the basis for developing corresponding SRP NIGs, except where they would be ineffective or inappropriate.
- b) National/Regional Interpretation Guidelines shall be as consistent as possible with the global SRP Standard and at least as stringent.

Any SRP NIG must maintain the global scoring system and minimum thresholds in order to ensure equivalence of claims. SRP NIGs may only provide additional specifications according to the provisions of the relevant national legal and regulatory framework. Principles for interpretation are listed in *Figure 1*.

Figure 1. Principles for interpretation of the SRP Standard

- Follows an inclusive, multi-stakeholder process
- Transparent, collective decision-making, including public consultation (according to ISEAL)
- Recognizes SRP as the Standard owner and final arbiter, and involves SRP Secretariat in all relevant dialogue and activities throughout
- Uses the SRP's name and logo in association with the SRP NIG only according to the SRP Brand Manual and with prior approval of the SRP Secretariat
- No product endorsement

Requirements for multi-stakeholder inclusion in the process

An SRP NIG must be developed by via an in-country multi-stakeholder consultative process and submitted by an appropriate Guideline-setting organization. The Guideline-setting organization (e.g., SRP National Chapter or Working Group) shall be comprised of a balanced representation of private and public sector stakeholders as well as technical experts and civil society. Balanced representation is reached when each group (private/public/technical/civil society) is represented by at least one person.

SRP Endorsement, Review and Approval

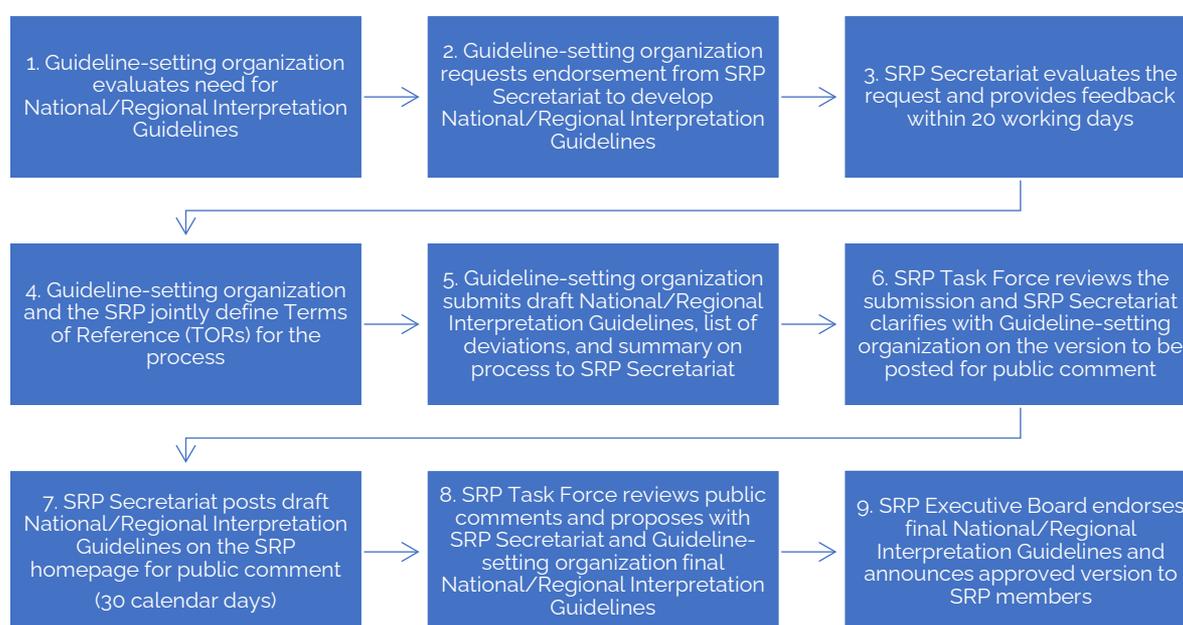
A standing Task Force (to be activated by the SRP Secretariat when needed) will be responsible for reviewing draft SRP NIG submissions and recommend a course of action to the SRP Secretariat and SRP Executive Board. The Task Force will be comprised of at least two organizations (SRP Secretariat and GLOBALG.A.P.) and may include additional invited key experts as required. The Task Force will have the necessary specialized expertise to provide sound science-based review of National/Regional Interpretation Guidelines submissions as well as facilitate responses to feedback from the public consultation process.

The SRP Executive Board will be responsible for endorsing final SRP NIGs for publication.

Development of National/Regional Interpretation Guidelines

The process to develop National/Regional Interpretation Guidelines is shown in *Figure 2*.

Figure 2: Nine steps to develop National/Regional Interpretation Guidelines



Illustrative process description

The process in *Figure 2* is further described for clarity.

- A. The SRP Secretariat receives a request from a Guideline-setting organization (e.g., SRP National Chapter or Working Group) for endorsement to develop an SRP NIG, evaluates the request, and provides feedback within 20 working days (Figure 2, Steps 2 and 3). If the SRP Secretariat provides endorsement, the SRP Secretariat and Guideline-setting organization jointly define Terms of Reference (TORs) for the process (Figure 2, Step 4).
- B. The Guideline-setting organization executes the TOR; develops the draft SRP NIG, a detailed list of deviations between the global SRP Standard and the draft SRP NIG, and written summary on process undertaken; and submits this package to the SRP Secretariat (Figure 2, Step 5).
- C. Upon receiving the submission package, the SRP Secretariat activates the Task Force to conduct an initial review to identify deviations which should be reconsidered before public consultation and present findings to the SRP Secretariat. The SRP Secretariat and the Guideline-setting organization agree on the draft version for public consultation (Figure 2, Step 6), which is posted on the SRP homepage for a 30-calendar day public consultation (Figure 2, Step 7).
- D. Following close of the public consultation period, the SRP Secretariat provides the Task Force with all comments received during the public consultation. The Task Force conducts review and presents findings to the SRP Secretariat to recommend one of the following courses of action (Figure 2, Step 8):
 - a) Endorse draft National/Regional Interpretation Guidelines (and Task Force prepares a justification with responses to public comments) – The SRP Secretariat may convey this to the Guideline-setting organization for information.
 - b) Modify draft National/Regional Interpretation Guidelines (and Task Force prepares a list of requested changes with responses to public comments) – The SRP Secretariat will advance the recommendation to the Guideline-setting organization for corrective action and provide timeline for revision by the Guidelines-setting organization and for re-review by the Task Force (this may take several rounds).
- E. Once the recommendation to endorse is reached by the Task Force and the SRP Secretariat, the SRP Secretariat coordinates with the SRP Executive Board for a no-objection decision to endorse the SRP NIG. If no-objection by the SRP Executive Board, the SRP Secretariat publishes the final SRP NIG on the SRP website and announces it to the membership (Figure 2, Step 9).
- F. An SRP NIG shall be valid until the next revision of the SRP Standard. Following release of a revised Standard, review of an SRP NIG shall also be triggered. In the interim, the Guideline-setting organization shall monitor any minor revisions to the Standard and at its own discretion take appropriate action to amend the SRP NIG, keeping the SRP Secretariat informed of any and all such revisions.

Reference Documents

SRP Standard on Sustainable Rice Cultivation
SRP Performance Indicators for Sustainable Rice Cultivation
SRP Assurance Scheme
SRP Brand Manual
ISEAL Code of Good Practice Setting Social & Environmental Standards