
Sustainable Rice Platform
Internal Management System (IMS) Standard
for Producer Groups operating under the SRP
Standard for Sustainable Rice Cultivation
(Group Implementation)



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Version information

This document has been revised from SRP IMS Standard v 1.0 to align with SRP Assurance Scheme 2.0 on its system, definitions and terminology. The primary change involves the removal of the Assurance Service Provider (ASP) as the Assurance Scheme v 2.0 will be managed directly by the SRP Secretariat from 1 January 2024. The IMS Standard itself is unchanged. This version has undergone a comprehensive review and was approved by the SRP Technical Committee in 24 November 2023.

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. Co-convened by the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and private sector partners. SRP works with its members and 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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1. Glossary

Actors: All parties participating in the SRP Assurance Scheme.

Assessment*: The combined processes of audit, review and decision on a producer's or producer group's compliance with the requirements of a standard. This can be:

Internal assessment: Assessment of compliance with the SRP Standard for Sustainable Rice Cultivation which peers, members of an IMS Team or an appointed external party (other than an approved CAB) conducts on behalf of the producer.

Self-assessment: Assessment of compliance with the SRP IMS Standard which the producer or producer group conducts themselves to evaluate the performance and effectiveness of the IMS itself.

Third-party Assessment: Assessment activity that is performed by an approved CAB that is independent of the producer or producer group being assessed.

Audit*: A component of an assessment. A systematic, documented process for obtaining records, statements of fact or other relevant information and assessing them objectively to determine the extent to which specified requirements are fulfilled.

Auditor*: Person who performs the audit.

Chain of Custody: The custodial sequence that occurs as ownership or control of the material supply is transferred from one custodian to another in the supply chain.

Conformity Assessment Body (CAB): An entity that can issue a third-party statement that fulfilment of specified compliance requirements has been demonstrated.

Continuous improvement: A series of incremental, documented improvements in the producer group's operations. Among areas that contribute to continuous improvement of plans are risk assessment; internal and third-party assessment findings; complaints and appeals records; and review of market requirements.

Data Governance*: The overall management of the availability, usability, integrity, and security of the data gathered and used by an organization. A data governance programme includes a governing mechanism, a defined set of procedures, and a plan to execute those procedures.

Farmer Organization (FO): formal or registered membership-based collective action institution serving its members, which commissions and pays for the SRP verification audit. They shall become SRP members and SRP membership and farmer registration dues are payable by the farmer organizations.

Internal Audit*: An internal, systematic, documented process, conducted on themselves by a producer, producer group or CAB, for obtaining relevant information and assessing objectively to determine the extent to which specified requirements are fulfilled.

Internal Assessment: The assessment of a producer's compliance with the SRP standard which peers, members of an IMS Team or an appointed external party (other than an approved CAB) conducts on behalf of the producer.

Internal Management System (IMS)*: In group assurance, the documented set of procedures and processes that a group will implement to ensure it can achieve its specified requirements.

IMS Team: A team formed to guarantee that the IMS is internally evaluated and that all group members receive internal audit or conduct self-assessment according to the frequency stipulated in the SRP Assurance Scheme. This team is established with clear separation of roles (overall management, training, internal inspection, compliance decision taking, purchasing).

Logos: Both SRP-Verified Label and SRP Organizational Logo.

'Label' refers to the SRP-Verified Label indicating the integrity of claims to sustainable best practices according to the SRP Standard, as verified through the SRP Assurance Scheme. The SRP-Verified Label symbolizes a seal of approval.

'Logo' refers to the SRP Organization Logo, used to uphold SRP's brand value and recognition and to ensure consistent application across all SRP programs, tools and communication materials.

Non-compliance* (synonym: non-conformity): An identified occurrence of non-conformance with one requirement of a standard, i.e. a missed threshold, identified as part of an assessment.

Producer (synonym: farmer): The legally responsible individual or business in terms of practices, processes and sales of rice under the scope of verification.

Producer Group: formed by individuals or businesses, either as a legal entity or informally. Such groups may include rice production communities, cooperatives, farmer organizations or millers with contract farmers. Producer groups without a legal entity are expected to follow the same processes as if they were a legal entity, in particular with regard to governance structures to implement an Internal Management System (IMS).

Risk*: The chance of something happening that will have an impact on objectives. It is measured in terms of a combination of the probability of an event and the severity of its consequences.

Risk Assessment*: a method of evaluating the potential and actual impact of sustainability standard on environmental, social and economic issues.

Sustainable Rice Platform (SRP) Member: A legally constituted organization whose application to join SRP as a Full Member or Observer has been approved by the SRP Secretariat.

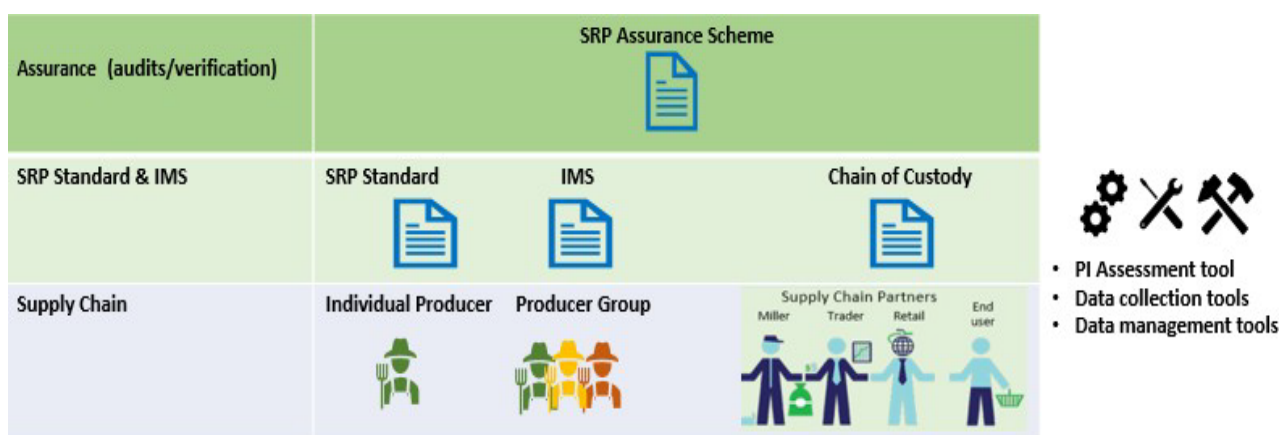
Verification: Issuance of a statement that fulfilment of specified compliance requirements has been demonstrated.

*Note: Definitions marked * are adapted from the ISEAL Assurance Code of Good Practice v 2.*

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1. The SRP Programme

- 2.1.1. The Sustainable Rice Platform (SRP) is a global multi-stakeholder alliance with over 100 institutional members led by UN Environment Programme (UNEP) and the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), together with partners from the public and private sectors, research, nonprofit organizations and the international development community.
- 2.1.2. Established in 2011, SRP aims to secure wide-scale adoption of sustainable farming practices among rice farmers around the world. In 2015 the SRP launched the world's first global Standard for Sustainable Rice Cultivation, which provides a working definition of sustainability in any rice system and allows sustainability scoring at farm level. In addition, a linked set of SRP Performance Indicators (PIs) enable collection of farm data to quantify and verify improvements and impacts.
- 2.1.3. SRP works with 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.
- 2.1.4. The most up-to-date tools and approaches are available at the SRP website: www.sustainablerice.org.



- 2.1.5. SRP and its members work to drive broad-scale uptake of the SRP Standard and tools in both the public and private sectors. The SRP Standard is designed to drive progressive improvement in performance, with the aim to achieve a measurable, transformative impact at sector level.
- 2.1.6. The SRP-Verified on-pack Label and Assurance Scheme are based on the SRP Standard and provide a system for supply chain actors to procure SRP-Verified rice and make sustainability claims for rice produced using proven, climate-smart sustainable best practices.

2.2. About this document

- 2.2.1. This document was first drafted in 2017 by UTZ, supported by SRP Working Group 3, under the name "Performance Management System Standard for the SRP Standard for Sustainable Rice Cultivation, Version 1.0". In 2019 GLOBALG.A.P. as SRP's Assurance Service Provider, revised the document as a

contribution to the normative document "SRP Assurance Scheme". The text was subsequently further revised by Preferred by Nature, a member of SRP, and separated into two documents, based on their respective target audiences.

- 2.2.2. The first of these documents (the current document) is the '*SRP Internal Management System (IMS) Policy and Standard for Producer Groups operating under the SRP Standard for Sustainable Rice Cultivation*' (in short IMS Standard). This document sets out the formal requirements used by internal and third-party assessment auditors to assess compliance of the IMS, and against which the IMS can evaluate itself.
- 2.2.3. The second document is the '*SRP Internal Management System (IMS) Guidelines for Producer Groups operating under the SRP Standard for Sustainable Rice Cultivation*' (in short IMS Guidelines). This document is designed to guide producer groups in the proper function of the IMS to ensure effective and transparent organisation and management of the group.
- 2.2.4. In 2023, the SRP Secretariat revised both documents to align with the Assurance Scheme 2.0 and launched soon after the Assurance Scheme.

2.3. How does this document relate to the SRP Standard?

- 2.3.1. It is the responsibility of either the group or individual farmers to demonstrate compliance with the requirements under the SRP Standard. For groups of farmers this can only be achieved by means of a functioning IMS. This document lists the requirements to measure results and identify measures for continuous improvement at IMS level.
- 2.3.2. SRP Actors (e.g. Producers/Producer groups, millers, processors, or producer organizations and other organizations) need to adopt and implement the SRP Standard and policies listed below as a minimum, before they can be verified by an SRP Approved CAB. Optionally, SRP actors can call upon the support of a Facilitator. Please note that the SRP Performance Indicators are an optional tool that complement the SRP Standard by measuring impact of adoption; they are not part of the formal verification process.
- 2.3.3. In details, rules for assessing producer groups and IMS can be found in SRP Assurance Scheme, section 8 "Additional Rules for Assessment of Producer Groups and IMS".

2.4. Requirements structure and scoring

- 2.4.1. The IMS Standard comprises 14 requirements under the responsibility of the IMS Team/Manager. It allows for stepwise compliance to encourage and reward progress toward full compliance. All requirements have several possible levels of compliance.
- 2.4.2. Each level of compliance corresponds to a number of points. The highest compliance level in most requirements scores 3 points. Most requirements have additional intermediate compliance levels with 1 or 2 points. All requirements have made explicit the lowest level of compliance, scoring zero points. There are a few exceptions to the maximum scores per requirement. One requirement (No. 13) allows for a 'non-applicable' response, if no service provider is used.
- 2.4.3. The total score against the IMS Standard is presented on a 0-100 scale. This score is based on the total number of points scored, divided by the maximum achievable number of points (42), multiplied by 100.

$$\text{Score Standard (0-100)} = \frac{\text{Total number of points corresponding to actual performance}}{\text{Maximum number of points possible}} \times 100$$

- 2.4.4. The essential compliance level (threshold) for each requirement in the IMS Standard is indicated by an asterisk (*) next to the corresponding level of compliance. A claim of sustainable rice cultivation can only be made if all mandatory thresholds are met, and a minimum score of 90% is achieved for the SRP Standard and 75% for the IMS Standard.
- 2.4.5. The scoring of IMS could affect the sample size. In accordance with the SRP Assurance Scheme 2.0, in order to allow sampling size reduction, the minimum score in IMS audit shall be either 75% and no missed threshold in preceding audit, or if above 85% with no more than 1 missed threshold in the preceding audit.

3. INTERNAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (IMS) REQUIREMENTS

For each IMS requirement an essential minimum performance level has been defined. This level is indicated for each requirement by an asterisk (*) next to the level of performance.

No.	IMS-element	Requirement	Compliance level	Points
1	Legality, establishment & organization of IMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documentation shall be available to demonstrate the legal standing of the producer group and its legal right to carry out agricultural production and/or trading and be able to legally contract with and represent the producer members/production sites. An organizational chart, description of functions and responsibility for the IMS Team is in place; a simple model and minimum requirements for each role is available in Annex 1. The documented set of procedures and processes that a group will implement shall be available to ensure it can achieve its specified requirements, including for continuous improvement. These are as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members enrolment and exclusion procedure. Internal approval procedure. Grievance mechanism & complaint handling procedure. Members' appeal procedure. Internal assessment procedure. Traceability & product handling procedure. When the producer group does not have legal status, it must comply as specified in the definition. 	<p>a) The legal entity has been granted the legal right to carry out agricultural production and/or trading and be able to legally contract with and represent the producer members/production sites. An organizational chart is available indicating all IMS staff are in place with roles designated and implemented. Responsibilities for key tasks and the qualifications required are identified. The functions are described, assigned and shared with the concerned officer. A documented set of procedures and process are available.</p> <p>b) A simple organizational chart is in place with details according to assigned persons and their functions (job descriptions are not required). A documented set of procedures and process is available.</p> <p>c) A simple organizational chart is in place with details according to assigned persons and their functions (job descriptions are not required). A documented set of procedures and process is not available.</p> <p>d) Not clearly identifiable as a legal entity and no available organizational chart and description of functions are available.</p>	<p>3</p> <p>2*</p> <p>1</p> <p>0</p>
2	Impartiality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All IMS staff have signed and understood the meaning of a conflict-of-interest declaration. The declaration includes a clause that s/he cannot inspect or approve a group member with whom s/he has a potential or actual conflict of interest. IMS staff also commit to declare any such perceived or actual conflict of interest. All declarations are verified by the IMS Manager. 	<p>a) All IMS staff have signed the declaration.</p> <p>b) Some IMS staff members have signed the declaration.</p> <p>c) None of the IMS staff have signed the declaration OR there is no declaration in place.</p>	<p>3</p> <p>1*</p> <p>0</p>

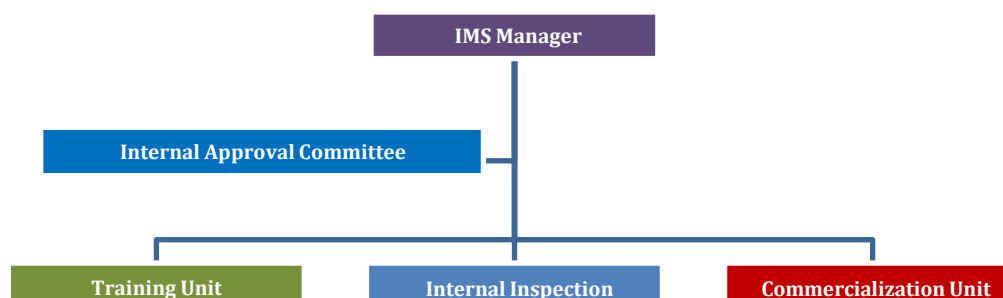
No.	IMS-element	Requirement	Compliance level	Points
3	Producer list	<p>A complete list of producers participating in the programme is retained centrally and updated at IMS level. The list documents the following information for each producer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Producers name, contact details, group ID number. - Land status (owned or leased). - Location of production area and GPS coordinates. - Total growing/ production area and/or quantity for each registered product. - Entry date to the programme. - Production (previous yields since entry date and current year's estimate) validated by IMS. 	<p>a) A complete and up-to-date producer list is available.</p> <p>b) The producer list is incomplete.</p> <p>c) The producers list information is not correct/ not updated OR no producer list in place.</p>	<p>3</p> <p>2*</p> <p>0</p>
4	Producers agreements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All individual agreements with each producer are retained centrally and updated at IMS level; each producer receives a copy of their agreement. • The agreement with each producer contains at least the rights and obligations of both parties including termination of membership, and the right to appeal the decision following the producer group's stipulated grievance procedure. • The agreement is in writing and signed or follows the procedure established for agreements (e.g. recorded, witnessed). • The agreement and consequences of enrolment must be understood by the producers. 	<p>a) Signed agreements between each producer and the group legal entity are completed for all registered members. Members have a copy of their agreement and are well informed of their enrolment, responsibilities and consequences.</p> <p>b) The agreements are incomplete (not all members sign the agreement OR the agreement is not completely mentioned the element stipulated in requirements), OR members do not have a copy of their agreement.</p> <p>c) No individual agreements in place.</p>	<p>3</p> <p>2*</p> <p>0</p>
5	Gender equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A written gender equality promotion policy is communicated to group members/workers. • A committee is appointed, responsible for implementation, monitoring and evaluation of measures to promote gender equality and women's empowerment. • At least twice per year a meeting is organized including all IMS management staff and group members to review progress on enhancing gender equality and women's empowerment. 	<p>a) All three requirements are in place and followed.</p> <p>b) Two out of three of the requirements are in place and followed.</p> <p>c) None or only one of the three requirements is in place</p>	<p>3</p> <p>2*</p> <p>0</p>

No.	IMS-element	Requirement	Compliance level	Points
6	Risk assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A risk assessment is carried out in accordance with a documented risk assessment procedure and conducted to assess the producer's risk profile. • The risk assessment is reviewed annually. • The results and follow-up actions are documented. 	<p>a) A risk assessment is carried out in accordance with the pre- agreed procedure, reviewed annually and documentation is complete.</p> <p>b) A risk assessment is carried out, but not in full accordance with the procedure, or documentation is incomplete.</p> <p>c) No risk assessment has been carried out or no annual review has taken place.</p>	<p>3*</p> <p>2</p> <p>0</p>
7	Internal assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A system for internal assessment is in place and implemented. • New producers must be internally assessed individually in the first year of joining the group. • All producers must be internally assessed individually (or peer to peer reviewed) before the first year of every cycle of the third-party assessment. • A clear mechanism determines the frequency of internal assessment for existing members based on a risk profile clearly defined and documented in the risk assessment. • Individual internal assessment results are documented in the Individual Farmer Reports and in the Group Summary Report. Reports contain producer identification, previous production and current estimation, producers' signature, inspection date, inspector's name, non- conformities identified, corrections and corrective actions, approval or sanction decision. 	<p>a) A system for internal assessment is in place and implemented according to the requirements.</p> <p>b) A system for internal assessment is partly in place or implemented.</p> <p>c) No such system is in place or implemented.</p>	<p>3*</p> <p>1</p> <p>0</p>
8	Approval and sanction system	The IMS has an approval and sanction system in place, including an approval and sanction manager or committee, a procedure for decision-making and corrective measures, a documented and signed up-to-date decision for all inspected producers and communication of all decisions to the respective producers. It also includes a procedure for the producer's right to appeal, which has been clearly communicated to all members of the producer group.	<p>a) The system is in place and implemented with all mentioned elements.</p> <p>b) The system is partly in place or implemented.</p> <p>c) No such system is in place or implemented.</p>	<p>3</p> <p>2*</p> <p>0</p>

No.	IMS-element	Requirement	Compliance level	Points
9	Self-assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self-assessment process at IMS level shall be available in order to assess key constraints to be addressed in order to reach compliance with the SRP Standard and to estimate what changes will be needed from the outset. Self-assessment may involve a process of training, coaching and development of action plans. Self-assessment will be accomplished by farmer group members who have received relevant and adequate training with updated IMS training records to show for it. The principle of impartiality shall be implemented for self-assessment conducted by IMS staff. Results are documented and made available to the third-party auditor prior to the audit. 	<p>a) A self-assessment as per required process and procedures has been carried out; the results have been documented and made available to the auditor prior to the audit.</p> <p>b) A self-assessment has been carried out and the results have been documented but not made available to the auditor prior to the audit.</p> <p>c) A self-assessment has been carried out fully to all group members.</p> <p>d) A self-assessment has been carried but NOT fully to all group members, OR no self-assessment has been conducted.</p>	<p>3</p> <p>2</p> <p>1*</p> <p>0</p>
10	Group management plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A group management plan is in place and updated annually, including all actions taken to address issues identified in the risk assessment, internal assessment reports (documented in the Group Summary Report), self-assessment reports, and third-party assessment findings. Group management plan includes as a minimum, soil fertilization, integrated pest management and social and gender equality policy. The actions are implemented and documented. The annual plan should be related to SMART results (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-Bound). A set of data needs to be collected to determine the score and threshold compliance against the SRP Standard. These data should be available and stored in the office of the IMS. 	<p>a) A group management plan is in place and implemented in accordance with all requirements; the annual plan is related to SMART results (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-Bound); there are a set of data collected to determine the score and threshold compliance against the SRP Standard and available in the office of the IMS.</p> <p>b) A group management plan is in place and is partly implemented; the plan is not related to SMART results; no data is collected and available.</p> <p>c) No group management plan is in place.</p>	<p>3</p> <p>2*</p> <p>0</p>

No.	IMS-element	Requirement	Compliance level	Points
11	Chain of Custody Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the producer/farmer level, the Chain of Custody models that recognized are Identity Preservation (IP) and Product Segregation (Seg) Control procedures are established and documented, including a flowchart of the products from their origin, procedure to record production and yields, product movement, product storage, sales and resale. Risk points must be identified, and a mitigation plan must be defined to mitigate mixing risk for each chain. The Chain of Custody system requires that all transaction documentation (purchase invoices, sales invoices, other sales-related and dispatch documentation) shall be recorded at IMS level. The IMS shall demonstrate that SRP-Verified rice is handled in its facilities that follow the requirements in the SRP CoC Standard requirements. 	<p>a) All CoC procedures are in place as per requirements; relevant staff are well aware of the procedures, and these are implemented in practice.</p> <p>b) The procedures are partly in place. However, paddy and rice products are handled and sold with the compliant claim according to the Chain of Custody model chosen and can be proven from the records and documentation.</p> <p>c) No procedures of Chain of Custody system is in place nor implemented OR producers implement mass balance.</p>	<p>3</p> <p>2*</p> <p>0</p>
12	Complaint management	<p>Producer groups or individual producers with multiple sites have a system to ensure that complaints are received, registered, identified, investigated, followed up and reviewed as per Grievance mechanism & complaint handling procedure.</p>	<p>a) An effective, fully compliant complaint management system is in place and documented.</p> <p>b) The complaint handling system is in place but not effectively implemented in practice.</p> <p>c) No complaint handling system in place</p>	<p>3</p> <p>1*</p> <p>0</p>
13	Service providers	<p>Full records are maintained to demonstrate that the competency of any service providers has been assessed and meets the requirements of the SRP Standard.</p> <p>The work of service providers should follow relevant requirements and procedures in accordance with the applicant's IMS; such requirements must be specified in service level agreements or contracts.</p>	<p>a) No service providers used.</p> <p>b) Records to demonstrate that the competency of service providers has been assessed and meets the requirements of the SRP Standard are available. Service agreements/ contracts are in place.</p> <p>c) Records to demonstrate the competency of service providers are available but incomplete.</p> <p>d) No service provider assessment system in place.</p>	<p>N/A</p> <p>3</p> <p>1*</p> <p>0</p>
14	Claims and use of SRP-Verified Label	<p>In making on or off-pack claims and in using the SRP-Verified Label, the producer group and supply chain partners comply with the SRP CoC Standard, SRP Brand Manual & Claim Guidelines, and the SRP Assurance Scheme.</p>	<p>a) All claims and usage of the SRP-Verified Label comply with the SRP CoC Standard, SRP Brand Manual & Claim Guidelines, and the SRP Assurance Scheme.</p> <p>b) Logo/label use and product claims do not fully comply with the SRP CoC Standard, SRP Brand Manual & Claim Guidelines, and the SRP Assurance Scheme.</p>	<p>3*</p> <p>0</p>

Annex 1: Model of Organizational Chart for Internal Management System



Roles and Function	Responsibility	Minimum Requirements
IMS Manager	Oversee the entire IMS including overall management and group governance to ensure effective and efficient implementation of the IMS.	Individual who has received SRP official training on SRP Standard and Performance Indicators (SPI), who understands the SRP IMS Standard and SRP Assurance Scheme.
Internal Approval Manager/ Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Approve enrolment of new members based on internal assessment results and other supporting documents including but not limited to legality, producer consent, etc. - Review internal assessment results and decide the consequences of negative assessments, including potential termination of group membership. - Review complaints and appeals received from group members or other parties. 	An individual or group of persons who understand the group's operation and governance, and is familiar with its procedures. These persons commit to acting impartially so that decisions are consistent and accepted as fair.
Training Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify training needed for members on specific requirements based on internal assessment and members' request. - Develop training programme for members. - Implement training programme and review its effectiveness. 	Group of people who understand SRP Standard and Performance Indicators (SPI) and has been trained by SPI authorized trainer.
Internal Auditor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct internal assessment and could also self-assessment on each group member. - Analyse self-assessment and internal assessment results and identify key areas for improvement as a baseline to develop a training plan. 	Group of people with recognized assessment skills, who understand SRP Standard and Performance Indicators (SPI) and has been trained by SPI authorized trainer.
Sales Commercialization Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify supply chain risks at producer level in order to contribute to a management plan to mitigate traceability risk. - Record purchase and sales data. - Ensure the traceability system is implemented robustly. 	A person or group of people who understand the principles of traceability and Chain of Custody standard requirements.