Sustainable Rice Platform Assurance Scheme V2.0 Information Note No. 1

Title:	Sustainable Rice Platform Assurance Scheme V2.0 Information Note No. 1
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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. 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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INTRODUCTION

This Assurance Scheme V2.0 Information Note No. 1 has normative status and is intended as notification of additional requirements to the SRP Assurance Scheme V2.0. It is intended for use in conjunction with this and other related documents governing the SRP Assurance Scheme. All such documents are made publicly available for download at the SRP website[1].

The scope of this document includes the following topics:

1. Mandatory use of official SRP templates
2. Data validation for each time receiving the SRP-Verified Rice
3. Label and claim assessment process
4. Extension of Verification Statement

1. Mandatory use of official SRP templates

These rules below aim to ensure consistency and compliance with the SRP Standard and Assurance Scheme during third-party assessments.

1.1.   Starting from the application process through reporting, it is mandatory for all third-party assessments conducted under the SRP scheme to use the official SRP templates.

1.2.   All official templates are available for download in the SRP Assurance Platform.

1.3.   Any proposed modification to templates related to the Verification Audit process must be approved by the SRP Secretariat.

1.4.   Updates to templates will be notified to all users and current versions will be downloadable via the SRP Assurance Platform.

1.5.   The SRP Secretariat will not send updated templates via email. It is the responsibility of the CABs to access the SRP Assurance Platform for any template updates and distribute them to relevant staff and VUs.

1.6.   CABs are strongly recommended to always download the latest templates from the SRP Assurance Platform whenever they intend to use them.

1.7.   Alongside the official templates for the Verification Audit process, we also provide sample templates intended to support VUs. These are saved in the folder "*SRP VU templates*".

1.8.   While CABs are permitted to provide sample forms to VUs, they are NOT permitted to assist VUs in modifying the template to ensure compliance with the SRP Standard.

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[1] https://www.sustainablerice.org/resources/

2. Data validation for each time receiving the SRP-Verified Rice

2.1. In accordance with SRP Chain of Custody (CoC) Standard requirements V2.3 outlined in criterion 3.1, Participation Operators (POs) are required to validate SRP documentation.

2.2. Participating Operators (POs) must scrutinize supplier contracts, invoices and other supporting documentation to verify that the supplied products originate from SRP-Verified suppliers and match the accompanying documentation that specifies the product claim(s).

2.3. Each purchase and receipt of SRP-Verified rice should be traceable within the CoC control system. Therefore, it is mandatory for validation purposes to include the **claim category[2] of the products shipped and the code[3] of the Verified Units**. This information should be present in one or more of the transaction documents, such as purchase order, invoice, or packaging note from the supplier and able to be linked to the shipped SRP-Verified rice.

2.4. SRP-Verified suppliers must ensure that the claim stated on the transaction documents aligns with the shipped products. Failure to include the claim will result in non-conformance for SRP-Verified suppliers. Verified Units undergoing audits must ensure they have a proper system to follow-up on and communicate this issue to the CAB and SRP Secretariat.

3. Label and claim assessment process

These rules below aim to uphold the SRP brand value, granting the right to use the SRP Claims and/or SRP Label in accordance with the relevant terms and provisions outlined in the SRP Assurance Scheme and the SRP Chain of Custody (CoC) Policy and Standard.

3.1. For both on-pack and off-pack use of SRP label and claim, proposed label layouts and claim language must receive SRP Secretariat approval prior to publication or printing. Participating Operators are required to submit their proposed label layouts and claims for approval to info@sustainablerice.org. The process for label and claim assessment is outlined in the SRP Brand Manual and Claim Guidelines. SRP Secretariat will assess the credibility of the claim before granting approval, and additional information or clarification may be requested from relevant stakeholders as needed.

3.2. Use of the SRP-Verified Label on-pack must be supported with a Verification Claim as outlined in Section 4, "SRP Verification Claims" in the SRP Brand Manual and Claim Guidelines. Any other claims made requires approval from the SRP Executive Director.

3.3. To substantiate SRP compliance to consumers, the SRP-Verified Label on product packaging requires Participating Operators to undergo third-party verification and

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[2] Claim category refers to Identity Preservation/ Segregation/ Mass Balance

[3] Code from SRP Assurance Platform or from Verification Statement that able to be checked in SRP Assurance Platform

use either of the **Identity Preservation** or **Segregation** models under the Chain of Custody Standard.

3.4. When Participating Operators apply for a third-party assessment, they define their CoC system, which CAB verifies for compliance with the SRP CoC Policy and Standard. POs may choose one or more of the following CoC models—Identity Preservation (IP), Segregation (Seg), or Mass Balance (MB)—to maintain the SRP claim throughout the value chain or apply the label and claim to the final product packaging.

3.5. If Participating Operators wish to **incorporate additional CoC models** at their sites, they must inform CAB to establish the SRP CoC scope-change audit. The audit may be arranged as either desktop or onsite, depending on the risk assessment conducted by the CAB to determine whether the site(s) pose a high or low risk.

3.6. The Participating Operators shall ensure that the claim category stated in the transaction documents reflects the requirements of the CoC system implemented by the PO. The claim category of an SRP-Verified product cannot be upgraded – even if the supply chain participants use a higher CoC system e.g.:

   a) SRP rice Input (Seg) – Processing system (Seg), claim as Seg or MB
   b) SRP rice Input (MB) – Processing system (MB), claim as MB
   c) SRP rice Input (Seg) – Processing system (MB), claim as MB
   d) SRP rice Input (MB) – Processing system (Seg), claim as MB

4. Extension of Verification Statement

These rules are intended for use in conjunction with the Section 13.1 of the SRP Assurance Scheme V2.0 concerning verification decisions.

4.1. Third-party SRP verification assessments are valid for 36 months. In exceptional circumstances an extension to the validity of the verification statement may be granted. Inquiries should be made through the SRP Assurance Platform to obtain SRP Secretariat approval. Justification must be provided, supporting evidence and relevant correspondence with the VU. Additionally, the CAB should propose a tentative verification audit date already agreed with the VU.

4.2. The same process applies to inquiries to extend the verification audit if the audit cannot be scheduled in accordance with the SRP Assurance Scheme.

4.3. The maximum extension is for 4 months, counted from expiry of the validity of the verification statement. Within these 4 months, the CAB should submit the audit report to SRP Assurance Platform. If this is not possible, the SRP Secretariat will review on a case-by-case basis.

Reference documents

SRP Assurance Scheme V2.0

SRP Chain of Custody Policy & Standard v 2.3

SRP Brand Manual and Claim Guidelines Nov.2023

http://www.sustainablerice.org