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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 private sector partners, SRP is 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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INTRODUCTION

About the Standard Setting and Revision Procedure
SRP Standard Setting and Revision Procedure is applicable for the development and revision of SRP Standards and SRP supporting documents. The first version of the SRP Standard Setting and Revision Procedure was in April 2022; the current document is the second version. As SRP is a community member of the ISEAL Alliance, the procedure for revision of the SRP Standard is therefore designed to be fully compliant with the requirements of the ISEAL Standard Setting Code.

The objectives of this Procedure are:

• To ensure the standard revision process is inclusive and transparent to affected stakeholders.
• To provide a robust review process that ensures the Standard effectively meets its respective goals.
• To ensure that the revision of the SRP Standard is in line with international best practices for standard setting (including the ISEAL Code of Good Practice for Setting Social and Environmental Standards).

As well as contributing to robust and effective standards, the Procedure will facilitate high quality and credibility of assurance as well as monitoring, evaluation, learning and impact assessment processes that depend on the Standard as a science-based foundation.

1. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

SUSTAINABLE RICE PLATFORM e.V. (SRP)

The SRP Board is responsible for approval of substantive changes to SRP strategy, particularly in reference to any changes to the goals and scope of the Standard. The SRP Secretariat shall be responsible for managing all processes for standard development and revisions, or, at its discretion, designate another party to do so.

1.1. SRP Secretariat

The SRP Secretariat shall be responsible for the following:

1.1.1. Ensuring that all standards and supporting documents are developed in accordance with this document.

1.1.2. Drafting the Terms of Reference (TOR) for any Standard setting or revision for approval by the SRP Technical Committee.

1.1.3. Ensuring that all feedback is documented and timely shared with the Technical Committee Working Group delegated by the SRP Technical Committee, including feedback deemed out of scope.
1.1.4. Preparing a public summary comprising:
   a. summary of TOR for Standard Setting and Revision;
   b. steps in the standard-setting and revision process;
   c. decision making procedures;
   d. outcomes of standard setting or revision;
   e. key changes of the standard.

1.1.5. Facilitation of public consultations. For new standard setting, it requires a second round of consultation of at least 30 days.

1.1.6. Record-keeping for the development or revision process, including information shared with the Working Group and other stakeholders, decisions made, and how feedback was addressed.

1.1.7. SRP Secretariat contributing role to the process, the SRP Secretariat participation and contribution shall include staff members from various areas of knowledge and draw upon expertise from Conformity Assessment Bodies, Authorized Training Providers, SRP Registered Projects and experts in different fields.

1.1.8. Determining and finalizing verification systems and labelling criteria for Verified producers, sites and products, criteria for Conformity Assessment Bodies, data collectors and the policies and documents governing the Standard system, such as this document.

1.1.9. Ensuring Working Group members are selected according to experience, subject matter expertise, and stakeholder representation.

1.1.10. Keeping information about the standard development or revision process publicly available, including, at minimum, details on the scope of the revision, estimated timeline, and how to participate.

1.1.11. Keeping details and records of all standards development and revision activities for a minimum of five years, and available to stakeholders upon request, including the following:
   a. Applicable Standard Setting and Revision Procedures at the time of the development or revision.
   b. Stakeholder Identification, including any Working Group members.
   c. Project plan for the standard, including the intended scope, goals, objectives, desired outcomes, needs justification, and plans to address risks identified in meeting the goals of the standard.
   d. Draft versions of the standards; and
   e. Feedback summary.

1.1.12. Organize any feasibility testing and reporting, as directed by the Working Group.
1.2. Technical Committee Working Group

1.2.1. The development and revision of SRP standards shall be led by an expert Working Group to be chaired by a member of the Technical Committee, reporting to the SRP Technical Committee (SRP TC) and SRP Secretariat.

1.2.2. The Working Group shall be composed of members of the SRP Secretariat and Technical Committee members, and others invited to ensure broad, balanced and appropriate stakeholder engagement in revision processes including decision-making.

2. PUBLIC CONSULTATION PROCEDURE

2.1. Overview

2.1.1. SRP shall ensure that participation in the consultation process is open to all stakeholders; and claims to achieve a balance of interests in the subject matter and in the geographic scope to which the standard applies.

2.1.2. SRP publishes drafts of fundamentally changed or new documents for public consultation. Please note that all finalized versions of the documents might be subject to further adjustments.

2.1.3. SRP invites all interested parties to send their feedback regarding the documents. SRP will announce public consultations via SRP’s communication channels to facilitate adequate balance of various stakeholder groups.

2.1.4. The first round of public consultation will continue for 60 calendar days from date of publishing.

2.1.5. Where substantive unresolved issues persist after the first consultation round, or if feedback was insufficient (for example, inadequate representation of stakeholder groups relevant for the topic), SRP will conduct additional rounds of consultation that last for 30 calendar days. In case of necessity of another round, SRP will make the synopsis of the previous round publicly available to comment on it.

2.1.6. SRP will publish the feedback during the public consultation phase for reasons of transparency.

2.1.7. After the final round of public consultation, SRP will analyze and consider the feedback received. All feedback and responses thereto will be documented by the Working Group; reviewed impartially by the SRP Technical Committee and published following Technical Committee endorsement and Board approval.

2.1.8. SRP will announce the date from which the document will be valid and allow an appropriate transitional period for all stakeholders to adapt to the adjustments or changes.
2.2. Format to submit comments

2.2.1. A form, similar to the one below, will be made available for stakeholders to submit feedback or comments. This form will be made available for download on the SRP webpage. Once the form is completed, stakeholders could send it to info@sustainablerice.org with subject “Feedback to Standard Setting or Standard Revision”.

2.2.2. Mandatory fields will be marked with an asterisk (*).

2.2.3. Stakeholders must tick off one statement whether the comments would be published as anonymously OR anonymously showing only stakeholder category OR full name and organization affiliation.

2.2.4. Following is the procedure how to complete the form:

a. Feedback should be indicating the section/ topic/ page;
b. give comment in a very clear /concise way so that it could be easily addressed;
c. proposed revision or suggested new text is not mandatory but highly recommended to assist WG;
d. By is mandatory field for WG to follow-up if requires further clarification;
e. WG response to comment is mandatory to show that WG has reviewed the feedback;
f. change to indicate if feedback approved and result changes to the document;
g. required to indicate that the change is essential, and if further discussion is necessary, WG could reach out to relevant stakeholders.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section /Topic /Page Information*</th>
<th>Comment*</th>
<th>Proposed Revision/ Suggested New Text</th>
<th>By* (Name and Organization affiliation)</th>
<th>WG response to Comment*</th>
<th>Change</th>
<th>Required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>YES/NO</td>
<td>YES/NO</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I authorize SRP to publish my statement on the SRP website:

☐ Yes, anonymously
☐ Yes, anonymously, showing only stakeholder category (private sector, civil society etc)
☐ Yes, with reference to full name and organizational affiliation

3. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The SRP Secretariat shall conduct a stakeholder mapping exercise to identify potential stakeholders and interested parties for outreach, including:

3.1. Ensuring clear stakeholder participation goals are set and communicated for each stakeholder sector/ category. Goals ensure representation from all affected geographic regions and market sectors of the given standard.
3.2. Ensuring under-represented or disadvantaged stakeholders are identified in the stakeholder mapping, or following the first consultation round, with strategies to proactively seek their contribution, including the possibility for a stipend at the discretion of the SRP Secretariat.

3.3. SRP shall provide stakeholders with appropriate opportunities to contribute to the development or revision of the SRP Standard and Performance Indicators.

4. DECISION MAKING

4.1. Through the standard-setting process, the SRP Technical Committee shall be responsible for approval of the following:

   a. The detailed project process, including intended scope, goals, objectives, desired outcomes, needs justification, timelines, responsibilities and plans to address risks identified in meeting the goals of the Standard.

   b. Publication of revised drafts of the Standard for public consultation; and

   c. Submission of recommendation for the final draft text of the Standard to the SRP Board for final approval includes all criteria applicable to a verified producer, site and/or product.

4.2. Decisions and recommendations of the SRP Technical Committee shall be made by consensus among its members, following its Terms of Reference. Consensus is determined by the absence of sustained expressions of dissent by a prespecified deadline or period during a meeting.

4.3. If consensus is not met in one of the three approvals outlined in 4.1, a majority vote shall be required within each stakeholder category (as outlined under ‘Stakeholder Engagement’).

4.4. The Terms of Reference of the Technical Committee specifies the decision-making process. Meetings must be quorate to proceed, having at least 50% + 1 of Committee members present in person or virtually, plus at least one representative from each stakeholder constituency. The Committee will strive to reach decisions by consensus, with the absence of declared opposition. If a consensus cannot be reached, any member may call for a vote. Where a vote is needed, Resolutions are carried with a simple majority of voting participants.

4.5. As the entity ultimately responsible for the Standard, the SRP Board reserves the right to make final decisions regarding standard content and shall publicly disclose any decisions, including reasoning, that differ from a Technical Committee recommendation.
5. STANDARD DEVELOPMENT

5.1. Standard setting

Standards shall be written to facilitate monitoring and evaluation against the goals of the standard. Conformity criteria within the Standard shall be articulated to ensure they are:

- linked to the goals and desired outcomes identified in the approved project plan;
- clear, objective, and verifiable;
- informed by best available science to contribute to the desired outcomes identified in the project plan, as well as by the latest policy and regulatory and market considerations; and
- do not potentially restrict trade in any way or give preference to one region, proprietary technology or company over another.

5.2. Feasibility testing

5.2.1. The Working Group should make a recommendation to the Secretariat for whether feasibility testing should be undertaken and what its objectives should be. In general, draft new or draft revised SRP standards or new requirements will be pilot tested on a specified number of sites to:

- Ensure clarity, practicality and feasibility;
- ensure that the evaluation and auditability of new criteria meets the requirements of the ISEAL Assurance Code;
- validate if the presumed outcomes of the standard can be achieved.

5.2.2. The tests may include field trials or mock audits, and measurement of impact and evaluation of risk as appropriate.

5.2.3. Where feasible, multiple pilot tests should be held to trial the new or revised standard in geographical regions which are significantly different from one another.

5.2.4. A report summarizing the results from testing shall be made publicly available on the SRP website as part of subsequent consultation materials.

5.2.5. Testing should be conducted prior to the final consultation opportunity.

5.2.6. Results of the field test shall determine any edits and changes necessary to the draft standard prior to final endorsement.
5.3. **Supplementary documents**

5.3.1. As a minimum, the Standard shall be accompanied by supplementary documents as described below:

a. Guidance for local applicability where necessary or helpful (e.g., varying farming methods around the world);

b. An accompanying User Manual, providing additional guidance for organizations seeking Verification; and

c. Verification Procedures providing guidelines for Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs).

5.3.2. Supplementary documents may be updated by SRP as often as deemed necessary without a formal revision process. The SRP Technical Committee may provide feedback on these and other supplementary documents, but they are not considered within the decision-making scope of the SRP TC.

5.4. **Mandatory information**

The following shall be noted in the Standard document:

5.4.1. Stipulation of English as the official language of the Standard, including the statement that in case of inconsistency between translated versions, the English version shall prevail;

5.4.2. Anticipated timing of next revision and process for submitting feedback and complaints;

5.4.3. Release date, effective date and version number (a new standard will be designated as Version 1.0);

5.4.4. Disclaimer stating that SRP will not be held liable for use of the Standard; and

5.4.5. Copyright statement. SRP strives to provide an open platform for collective co-creation of public domain tools to benefit smallholder rice farmers. Collective ownership of such assets is thus foundational to foster open discourse and sharing in a pre-competitive arena. Nevertheless, legal protection over intellectual property is required to uphold the brand value of SRP, particularly in relation to the Assurance Scheme, Training Scheme and related use of logos. Contributors to the revision process agree to abide by the SRP Policy on Intellectual Property Rights, which may be amended from time to time by resolution of the Board. All SRP-branded publications shall be the sole intellectual property of SRP e.V. and shall be published under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-SA) licence. This allows third parties to freely remix, amend and build upon SRP materials (including training curricula) on a non-commercial basis, provided SRP is duly credited and that the new creation is also licensed under identical terms and placed in the public domain. Attribution shall be given to all co-authors and contributors in order of contribution.
5.5. Transparency- Availability of documentation on SRP website

5.5.1. The following documents shall be publicly available on the SRP website:
- Final Standard as approved
- Feedback summary
- Summary of key changes
- Transition policy

5.5.2. A detailed list of all changes from previous versions (if applicable) must be made available upon request.

5.6. Standard revision

5.6.1. The SRP Secretariat may make minor revisions involving non-substantive changes to the standard without requiring a formal revision process or Technical Committee approval. Such changes shall be notified and recorded in the subsequent review and revision process. Stakeholders will be notified through various channels, including: 1) monthly updates for CAB; 2) SRP webpage; 3) social media; 4) webinars as necessitated to share detailed changes.

5.6.2. The SRP Standard shall undergo a review at least every 5 years, following the relevant requirements set out in the ISEAL Code of Good Practice for Setting Social and Environmental Standards.

5.6.3. In addition to scheduled major revisions, major revisions may also be initiated for the following reasons:
   a. Standard criteria result in critical unintended consequences that may compromise the goals or desired outcomes of the Standard;
   b. New developments that change or affect implementation, the assurance process, or known impacts of the Standard;
   c. Expanded goals or scope in SRP strategy; or
   d. At the discretion of the SRP Board.

5.6.4. All major revisions shall include the following steps as part of the process:
   a. Approval of a project plan by the Technical Committee;
   b. Approval of the public consultation standard draft by the Technical Committee;
   c. Public consultation of at least 60 days; and
   d. Approval of the final Standard.

5.6.5. The process is shown schematically in the Process Flow Chart (see below).

5.6.6. The SRP Secretariat shall stipulate a transition period for each verified organization and Conformity Assessment Body to transition its internal processes to the revised version, starting from date of publication of the revised Standard.
5.6.7. The date of the revised Standard publication shall be recorded as the ‘Standard version conformity date’.

SRP Standard Setting and Revision: Roles & Responsibilities

SRP Secretariat
- Manage processes of Standard setting and revisions, or, at its discretion, designate another party to do so
- Draft Terms of References for approval by SRP Technical Committee
- Facilitate public consultations

Technical Committee & Working Group
- Lead the processes of Standard setting and revisions, coordinating with Working Group selected to draft the Standard
- Approve detailed projects process, including intended scope, objectives, desired outcomes, needs justification, timelines, responsibilities and plans to address risks identified in meeting the goals of the Standard
- Approve publication of revised drafts for public consultation
- Submit final draft for SRP Board approval

SRP Board
- Identify goals and scope of the Standard and revisions
- Reserves the right to make final decisions regarding standard content and shall publicly disclose any decisions, including reasoning, that differ from a Technical Committee recommendation
- Review and approve final revised Standard document for publication