

TE Standard Setting and Revision Procedures

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A. Introduction

The TE Standard Setting Procedures follow the ISEAL¹ Standard Setting Code² for the development of TE standards. Our compliance with this code is intended to ensure the standard development process is inclusive, transparent, and effective.

The development of a revised standard will follow the same steps as the development of a new standard unless otherwise noted.

Any complaints about the process for standard development will be addressed through the TE Complaints Procedures.

A1. Overview of TE Standards

Textile Exchange owns the following the standards:

- The Content Claim Standard (CCS) is a generic chain of custody standard that uses transaction certificate to track materials through the supply chain, ensuring accurate content claims.
- The Organic Content Standard (OCS) tracks certified organic material through the supply chain using the CCS.
- The Recycled Claim Standard (RCS) verifies recycled input material and tracks recycled material through the supply chain using the CCS.
- The Responsible Down Standard (RDS) verifies ethical treatment of domestic waterfowl and tracks the verified down through the supply chain using the CCS.
- The Global Recycled Standard (GRS) verifies recycled input material and tracks recycled material through the supply chain using the CCS. There are additional social, environmental, and chemical requirements on each production stage.

A2. Definitions

Consensus: general agreement, characterized by the absence of sustained opposition to substantial issues by any important part of the concerned interests.

Interested party: Any person or group concerned with or who may be directly affected by a standard.

A3. References

- ISEAL Code of Good Practice: Setting Social and Environmental Standards v5.0,
- TE Standards Complaints Procedure

¹ The ISEAL Alliance is an international nonprofit organisation that codifies best practice for the design and implementation of social and environmental standards systems. <http://www.isealalliance.org>

² ISEAL Code of Good Practice: [Setting Social and Environmental Standards v5.0](http://www.isealalliance.org/online-community/resources/iseal-standard-setting-code)
<http://www.isealalliance.org/online-community/resources/iseal-standard-setting-code>

B. TE Standard Development Documentation

B1. Procedures

- B1.1 This document shall be made available upon request through the TE website.
- B1.2 Comments to the documents will be invited and accepted.
- B1.3 Procedures shall be reviewed by TE every 5 years or as needed.
- B1.4 Any substantive revisions to the procedures will be publically announced.

B2. Records

- B2.1 Records of standard development activities shall be regularly posted on the TE website while the standard is still in development, with an open invitation to send comments.
- B2.2 Records of development activities on completed standards will be made available upon request. These shall include, but are not limited to:
 - a) Terms of Reference³
 - b) Public Summary
 - c) Stakeholder Mapping
 - d) Work Plan
 - e) Opportunities for Engagement
 - f) Decision making process
- B2.3 TE shall keep details of all standards development activities and records on file for a minimum of 5 years, and available upon request.

B3. The Work Plan

- B3.1 During the course of the standard development process, the Work Plan will be made publically available by TE. This shall include, but is not limited to:
 - a) The overview of the work being done on the standard (notes, decisions, drafts, etc.)
 - b) Relevant details about the standard
 - c) The development process
 - d) Contact information

³ Terms of Reference:

- a) Justification of the need for the standard
- b) Existing standards addressing similar materials or issues
- c) Proposed scope
- d) Clear objectives for the standard
- e) An assessment of risks in implementing the standard, and how to mitigate for these

C. Roles and Responsibilities

C1. TE Advisory Board

- C1.1 The TE Advisory Board shall approve the decision to develop or revise standards.
- C1.2 The TE Advisory Board shall approve the selection of Steering Committee members.
- C1.3 The TE Advisory Board shall approve the Terms of Reference for each standard after it has been approved by the Steering Committee.
- C1.4 The TE Advisory Board shall approve any concession of rights for the standard.⁴
- C1.5 The TE Advisory Board shall approve standards prior to release.

C2. International Standard Working Group (or IWG)

- C2.1 All TE standards in development will be managed and released by the International Working Group (IWG).
- C2.2 Participation in the IWG is on a voluntary basis.
- C2.3 Any rights given to members of the IWG will be defined separately for each occurrence, and shall be approved by the TE Advisory Board.
- C2.4 The IWG is composed of:
 - a) **Steering Committee:** a small representative group responsible for setting the terms of reference for the standard, and ensuring the standard is developed accordingly
 - b) **Technical Group:** a smaller group, not necessarily representative, tasked with writing and/or editing the standard itself
 - c) **Advisory Group:** a small group of relevant experts, available for comment and direction into specific elements of the standard, but not required for full participation

- C2.5 The Steering Committee and Technical Group will be chosen from the individuals who have expressed interest in these roles following the initial stakeholder outreach.

The selection and acceptance of participants shall be done with the goal to have balanced representation of interested parties, covering the different:

- a) points in the supply chain (eg: farmer, manufacturing, brands)
- b) geographic regions (eg: Asia, Europe)
- c) market sectors (eg: apparel, home)
- d) interest groups (eg: animal welfare organizations, trade associations)
- e) certification expert (eg: certification body, standards body)

Ideally the Steering Committee will be no more than 12 people, and the Technical Group will

⁴ For example, exclusivity to certify to the standard for a given amount of time for members of the IWG.

be no more than 4 people.

- C2.6 The selection and acceptance of participants in the International Working Group by TE and the Steering Committee shall reflect a balance of interest and adequate stakeholder engagement. Individuals will be chosen based on the following:
- a) expert knowledge and/or experience of the issue(s) under consideration
 - b) capacity to contribute a wide range of viewpoints
 - c) represent potentially affected stakeholders
 - d) understanding of TE's mission and vision

C3. Decision Making

- C3.1 The process of decision-making will reflect a balance of views among interested parties in the subject matter and in the geographic scope to which the standard applies.
- C3.2 The standard-setting process shall strive for consensus among all core members (Technical Group and Steering Committee) of the IWG.
- C3.3 In the event that consensus is not possible:
- a) The member(s) who disagree from the majority shall present alternative solutions for consideration
 - b) If a compromise cannot be reached within the group, input from the wider stakeholder group will be invited; after consideration of this feedback, the IWG will attempt to form a consensus, or move to a vote. A decision is considered to pass with a majority vote.
 - c) In the event of a tie vote, TE will make the deciding vote, however, it will strive for consensus on any given issue at all times.

D. Development/Revision Process

D1. Initiating Development/Revision

- D1.1 Proposals to develop or review a new standard may be submitted by any interested party and shall be logged by TE.
- D1.2 The decision to develop a new, or revise an existing, TE standard shall rest with the TE Advisory Board, with the following considerations:
- a) Does the proposal fit into the strategic direction of TE?
 - b) Do other existing standards, or standards in development, sufficiently address the identified need?
 - c) Can sufficient funding and resources be secured?
 - d) How urgent is the project?
- D1.3 TE will develop an initial list of potential stakeholders and interested parties.
- For revisions, the list of previous stakeholders and interested parties will be used and adjusted as needed.
- D1.4 TE will conduct an initial needs assessment to determine if there is sufficient interest in developing the standard.
- D1.5 TE will publicize its intention to develop/revise the standard and invite expressions of interest in participation.
- D1.6 TE will choose the Steering Committee and Technical Group, with the goal to have balanced representation from among the identified stakeholders.
- TE will keep record of stakeholders and interested parties not selected for the International Working Group for future consultation into the standard.
- For revisions, the existing Steering Committee will be given the opportunity to remain in the Committee. TE and existing Steering Committee members will select additional members as needed.
- D1.7 The Steering Committee will be tasked with determining and approving the Terms of Reference:
- a) Justification of the need for the standard
 - b) Existing standards addressing similar materials or issues
 - c) Proposed scope
 - d) Clear objectives for the standard
 - e) An assessment of risks in implementing the standard, and how to mitigate for these:
 - i. Identification of factors that could have a negative impact on the ability of the standard to achieve its objectives
 - ii. Unintended consequences that could arise from its implementation
 - iii. Possible corrective actions that could be taken to address these potential risks

For revisions, the Terms of Reference will be reviewed, amended as needed, and approved

by the Steering Committee.

- D1.8 TE will outline and publicize the development process, including:
- a) How to contribute to the consultation;
 - b) Terms of Reference of the standard;
 - c) Steps in the standard-setting process, including timelines and clearly identified opportunities for contributing;
 - d) Decision-making procedures, including how decisions are made and who makes them.
 - e) Regular updates on the status of the standard development or revision activities.

D2. Stakeholder Engagement

- D2.1 Once the decision to proceed with the standard is made, a final stakeholder mapping will be conducted with the participation of the Steering Committee.
- a) Clear stakeholder participation goals will be set and communicated.
 - b) TE shall identify parties who will be directly affected by the standard and those that are not adequately represented and proactively seek their contributions.
 - c) Key stakeholders and interested parties, including organizations that have developed related standards, will be contacted about the standard and the ways that they can participate.
- D2.2 Throughout the development of the standard:
- a) Participation in standards consultation is open to all interested parties and that participation reflects a balance of interests among interested parties in the subject matter and in the geographic scope to which the standard applies.
 - b) Constraints on disadvantaged groups to participate effectively in standards development and revision shall be addressed in the standards development process.
 - c) Interested parties shall be provided with meaningful opportunities to contribute to the development or revision of a standard, through direct comments or during the stakeholder review process.

For revisions, the existing stakeholder mapping will be reviewed, amended as needed, and approved by the Steering Committee.

- D2.3 The Steering Committee will review and approval the final stakeholder mapping, and select the members of the International Working Group, outlined in Section C.

D3 Structure and Content of TE Standards

TE standards will comply with the following:

- D3.1 The objectives of the standard shall be clearly and explicitly specified.
- D3.2 The standard shall be no more trade-restrictive than necessary to fulfill the legitimate objectives of the standard.
- D3.3 In setting the requirements for the standard, consideration shall be given to regulatory requirements, market needs as well as scientific and technological developments.

- D3.4 Each requirement shall be clear, objective and verifiable, and clearly contribute to the achievement of the standard's objectives, and include guidance and/or indicators for verification.
- D3.5 Standards shall be structured to allow for monitoring and evaluation of progress toward achieving the standard's objectives.
- D3.6 A standard shall be expressed in terms of a combination of process, management and performance criteria. To this end, the standard shall be outcome-based so as to avoid being prescriptive.
- D3.7 The standard shall not favor a particular technology or patented item.
- D3.8 An implementation manual will be used to give further interpretation of the requirements of the standards.
- D3.9 Assessment criteria will be defined separately from the requirements of the standard.
- D3.10 The standard shall attribute or cite all original intellectual sources of content.

D4. Public Consultation

- D4.1 The Steering Committee shall approve the draft Standard or the draft revised standard before releasing it for public consultation.
- D4.2 Upon completion of the standard draft (or draft of changes in the case of a revision), all standards will undergo Public Consultation, which shall involve up to two rounds of stakeholder feedback. The launch of a public consultation shall be officially announced on the TE website.
- D4.3 The first round of open stakeholder review shall include:
 - a) A period of at least 60 days for submission of feedback
 - b) Standard draft made available for public view
 - c) Publicized process for submitting feedback
 - d) Invitations sent to all stakeholders identified during the stakeholder mapping
- D4.3 After the first round, the IWG will review all feedback provided and make any agreed changes to the draft standard.
- D4.4 A summary of feedback received during the first round of stakeholder review, including TE responses shall be made available for public view

A second round of open stakeholder review will be carried out if substantive, unresolved issues persist after the first round, and shall include the same steps as the first round, with the allowance for 30 days instead of 60.
- D4.5 TE will take into account all comments and input received during both rounds of feedback, and will compile comments received according to the issues raised and shall prepare a written synopsis of how each material issue has been addressed in the standard revision. This document will be made available through the TE website.
- D4.6 After the second round, the IWG will review all feedback provided and make any agreed changes to the draft standard.

D5. Finalizing the Standard

- D5.1 The IWG will approve the final version of the standard prior to release.
- D5.2 Decisions shall be made public, along with a summary of the deliberations involved.
- D5.3 The final standard will be released upon approval of the TE Advisory Board.
- D5.4 TE will take ownership of the final standard.

D6. Standard Distribution

- D6.1 All current draft and final standards will be publically available for free download on the TE website.
- D6.2 The official language of all standards will be English, and noted on the cover page.
- D6.3 Hard copies and translations will be provided upon request, dependent on resources.

D7. Standard Revisions

- D7.1 TE standards will be reviewed at intervals of no more than 5 years. The date of the subsequent scheduled review will be made publicly available.
- D7.2 A review process shall consider a standard's continued relevance, effectiveness, and whether external circumstances have changed to the point where change is required:
 - a) Stakeholder and/or internal feedback as captured in the Feedback Log⁵
 - b) New technology developments
 - c) Changes in industry best practices
 - d) New or changed legislation
- D7.3 TE may also propose non-substantive changes to the TE Advisory Board as follows:
 - a) Written proposal for the recommended change shall be prepared, and shall be circulated to the TE Advisory Board and approved TE certification bodies for a 30-day review period.
 - b) After this 30-day review period the written justification may be amended to take account of any comments received.
 - c) The final written proposal as amended shall be submitted to the TE Advisory Board of Directors for approval.
 - d) The updated standard shall be clearly identified with a version number and date and the most recent version shall be posted on the TE website.
- D7.4 There will be a one year transition period for certified organizations to transition to the revised version, starting from the release date of the revised standard.

If you have any comments or questions about the TE Standard Setting and Revision Procedures, please contact Integrity@TextileExchange.org.

⁵ <http://textileexchange.org/integrity-feedback-log>