



Sustainable Cashmere Standard Global Principles: revision and integration

Steering Group – Terms of Reference – September 2021

Scope

These terms of reference cover the formation, responsibilities, aims and operation of the Steering Group with respect to the revision of the requirements of the SFA's Sustainable Cashmere Standard (SCS) Global Principles and the integration of these requirements into one holistic standard.

Responsibilities

The Steering Group is an advisory body whose main responsibility is to contribute to the revision of relevant Code content and the integration of the Codes. Specific technical responsibilities of the Steering Group include:

1. Reviewing and providing input to the pre-release drafts of the revised and integrated standard
2. Reviewing consultation feedback and seeking to resolve outstanding issues in the drafts
3. Providing a recommendation for approval on the final draft of the SFA's Sustainable Cashmere Standard Global Principles and National Guidelines.

The Steering Group is also asked to raise awareness of, and drive participation in, the global consultation to revise the standard.

Decision-making

The Steering Group makes a recommendation to the Technical Committee about the quality of the final draft of the integrated Sustainable Cashmere Standard at the close of the consultation.

The Technical Committee then decides whether to recommend the standard to the Board. This decision is based on the quality of the process followed and whether the content satisfies the Terms of Reference for the integrated Code.

The Board then makes a final decision on whether to approve the integrated standard for publication. This is based on consistency with the terms of reference for the Code and the quality of the process followed.

Aims of the revision and integration process

The revision and integration of the standard provides opportunities to improve the value of the standard and standards compliance by looking at system credibility in a holistic way.

The revision and integration process aims to:

- update standard's content to reflect changes in the sustainable production and processing of cashmere fibre
- address findings from the review of the Animal Husbandry, Rangeland Stewardship and Clean Fibre Processing Codes of Practice.

- expand the scope of an integrated standard to include essential good practices in traceability and claims management
- more effectively support adoption and implementation of the standard
- rationalise standard's requirements (by reducing redundancy, better calibrating the expected performance levels, and creating clearer and stronger linkages in interconnected areas of performance)
- support improvements to the Sustainable Cashmere Standard compliance programme, where the burden of compliance is reduced while maintaining rigour.

Membership

The Steering Group will consist of 6-8 members with expertise in credible and effective cashmere production and processing.

Members represent their own views and the interests of the stakeholder group they represent. They do not represent their organisations. Membership will include representation from the following interests:

- Sustainability standards systems
- Similar sustainability systems adopting innovative models
- Organisations offering monitoring, verification or assurance services (including certification and accreditation bodies)
- Expert technical consultants
- Non-governmental organisations
- Users of sustainability systems (e.g. businesses, producer associations) and other interested parties (e.g., governments, multilateral agencies)

No more than 1/2 of Steering Group members will be employees of SFA members.

Application and appointment process

Members of the SFA Technical Committee may volunteer to serve on the Steering Group. Further members of the Steering Group will be selected by the SFA through an application procedure.

In addition to ensuring a balance of stakeholder interests, the following criteria will inform the selection and appointment of Steering Group members:

- Holistic knowledge of cashmere production or processing, or technical expertise in at least one of the following system functions: standard-setting, assurance, monitoring and evaluation, claims or legal compliance
- Current understanding of the SFA's Cashmere Standard, Codes of Practice or Chain of Custody
- Commitment to the SFA's mission
- Geographic diversity and gender balance
- Ability to work in English
- Availability to participate in the approximately 3-4 virtual meetings outlined in the anticipated schedule below. Each meeting involves preparatory reading and reflection.

Members are required to agree to the Chatham House Rule and complete a conflict of interest declaration at the outset of their service on the Steering Group.

Membership in the Steering Group is for the duration of the standard revision and integration process which will run for approximately 6 months (estimated timeline: Nov 2021 – May 2022). Should a member need to resign from the Committee, the SFA may appoint a suitable replacement.

Operations and meetings of the Steering Group

The SFA's Standards and Compliance Manager will act as facilitator of the Steering Group and project manager.

The Steering Group will meet through virtual meetings. The proposed schedule of meetings is as follows:

- Nov 2021 – Meeting to kick-off the process; this includes briefing members of the Steering Group on the review findings and consultation plan and to review first draft of the revised Code prior to consultation
- Dec 2022 – Meeting(s) (1-2) to consider the feedback from the first round of consultation and review the second draft
- Jan/Feb 2022 – Meeting(s) (1-2) to consider the feedback from the second round of consultation and review the final draft for recommendation

Additional virtual meetings may be scheduled as necessary.

Time costs to participate in virtual meetings will not be reimbursed and there are no per diems or honoraria associated with membership on the Steering Group.

The Steering Group seeks to make decisions by consensus, with consensus defined as the absence of sustained opposition. When consensus cannot be reached, the Steering Group reverts to decisions by vote with a 75% majority required.

Meetings will be held under the Chatham House Rule – that is, that the notes will record statements made but will not be attributed. Outcomes of the discussions may be made publicly available unless the discussion is specifically noted to be 'internal only' or if the speaker asks for their comment to be 'off the record'.

Further information

Please contact Lesley Colvin, SFA Standards and Compliance Manager, with any questions on these terms of reference: lesley.colvin@sustainablefibre.org.

Annex 1: ISEAL Code of Good Practice: Terms of Reference

Objectives and Scope

The Sustainable Cashmere Standard is a normative reference that operationalises the SFA's Global Principles. The standard defines credible management of the components of a sustainability system* where these components include standard-setting, assurance, claims, and impacts (monitoring, evaluation, and learning).

**A sustainability system is the collective set of decisions and activities carried out by an organisation to*

- *establish standards or similar tools focused on one or more sustainability issues*
- *measure, monitor or verify performance or progress against these tools*
- *allow for claims*