

# Standard-Setting Code System Report Outline

## Introduction to Public System Report

ISEAL members must produce and annually update a Public System Report for each of the ISEAL Codes. The main goal of the Public System Reports is **to provide a simplified overview of the key aspects of the organisation’s associated system** to stakeholders, e.g. Standard-setting, Assurance or Monitoring & Evaluation. For the Standard-Setting Code, standards systems should prepare a narrative report that describes the various aspects of the standards development and revision process. Where standards systems have developed public summaries for a standards development or revision process, the information in those summaries can potentially serve as useful input to the system report. Reports must provide brief descriptions for all topic areas listed below.

### Presenting information: format and length

Within this general framework, standards systems have flexibility to decide exactly how information is presented. The narrative may be complemented by web links to additional information on the organisation's website or include graphics or diagrams.

It is important that the narrative report be written in clear, easily accessible language. The report should also be concise – maximum length of 4 pages.

## Standard-Setting System Report Outline

Please use the two main section headings to present the information: Standard and Standard-Setting and Revision Process. You may change the order in which you present the sub headings, e.g. scope, sustainability outcomes. A Table of Contents has been added below for reference.

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## Standard

### Scope

- SAN Standard applies to agriculture and cattle activities.
  - All crops, with the exception of those considered illegal in the country where they are grown, may be audited. Four crops may be audited but cannot be considered as certified, namely jatropha, cotton, tobacco and rice (in flooded systems).
  - Cattle operations of *Bos primigenius taurus*, *B. primigenius indicus*, crosses between these two, or water buffalo may be certified unless they are completely raised in stables or under nomadic production systems.
- Audits to the SAN's standards are authorized to take place in 40 African countries, 51 countries in The Americas, 23 Asian countries, 12 European countries and 4 countries in Oceania.

### Sustainability outcomes

- The standard is based on environmental soundness, social equity and economic viability. It considers environmental issues (ecosystems, biodiversity and water), social issues (fair treatment to workers, safe working conditions and community relations), and agronomic/cattle management (integrated crop/cattle management, soil and waste management). Animal welfare is also addressed for the cattle scope.

### Why is it needed (justification)

- Agricultural expansion is responsible for 70 percent of global deforestation, and is the single greatest threat to tropical forests. In these biodiversity-rich regions, farms are often responsible for soil erosion, water pollution and wildlife habitat destruction. SAN promotes efficient agriculture, biodiversity conservation and sustainable community development by encouraging farmers to comply with its standards and by motivating traders and consumers to support sustainability.

### Performance level

- The Sustainable Agriculture Standard consists of ten principles, each of which is composed by several specific criteria that promote good environmental, labour and agronomic practices. The current Sustainable Agriculture Standard contains 101 criteria, 23 of which are critical, meaning that a farm must fully comply with them in order to be granted or maintain a certificate. On top of this, a farm must at least score an 80% overall and of 50% per principle. SAN Standard for Sustainable Cattle Production Systems consists of five principles, which have 36 criteria, seven of which are critical.

### Adaptations

- *The SAN has developed local interpretation guidelines for specific countries and crops (e.g. sugarcane in Guatemala, cocoa in Ghana or coconut in Philippines). This has been done when the characteristics of a certain natural or cultural context, or the characteristics of a producing sector are so particular that require precise guidance. However, having these guidelines is not a condition to allow certification activities in said countries or sectors.*

## Standard-Setting and Revision Process

### When standard was first written and by whom

- *The first standard was developed specifically for banana plantations in Latin America and it was written by Rainforest Alliance and Fundación Ambio, a Costa Rican NGO, around 1992. A second standard, for coffee plantations, was then written by Rainforest Alliance and FIIT, a Guatemalan NGO in 1995. In 1997, the first meeting of SAN partners took place. Then, in the early 2000s the first document that could be considered as a SAN Standard, that was applicable for more than two crops, was launched.*

### Stakeholder categorization and geography

- *Interest sectors for public consultation processes include mainly social and environmental NGOs, producers, the academic sector, certification bodies and governmental organizations, both from the countries where certified farms are located (Africa, Asia and Latin America) as well as where certified products are consumed (Europe, North America).*
- *The SAN's International Standards Committee (ISC) is the committee of international experts for the creation of environmental and social standards for agricultural and cattle certification. It develops or reviews SAN's standards and means of verification together with the Secretariat. The ISC is composed by 12 people, representing the following geographical areas: Africa, Latin America, North America, Asia and Europe, with at least six members representing tropical countries. The ISC has to have a balanced representation with representatives from NGOs, industry, plantations or smallholder group administrators, government and worker organizations. There also has to be a balanced representation of people from the following areas of knowledge: sustainable agriculture, biodiversity conservation, pesticides, agricultural and cattle production, worker rights, food security, and rural development.*

### Summary of the revision process,

- *When the Board of Directors decides that a SAN standard needs major changes, a revision process begins. Stakeholders start engaging from the early stages of the process, by providing inputs related to new topics or significant modifications to the current ones, until the final draft is ready to be sent to the ISC. Stakeholders are contacted either by SAN members, in the geographical regions within their scope, or directly by the SAN Secretariat, who also has a list of stakeholders that is updated regularly. Inputs are received via email, in-person workshops and meetings, webinars and virtual platforms specifically designed for the purpose.*

### Governance

- *SAN's ISC is the responsible of developing environmental and social standards, as well as defining the guidelines for revision processes. As described two sections above, ISC consists of 12 members, and its composition is balanced in terms of geography, sector and areas of knowledge. The ISC approves the content of the final draft of each SAN Standard that is then submitted to the SAN's Board of Directors (BoD) for the final analysis. The final decision of approving a SAN Standard is made by the General Assembly, SAN's main governing body.*

### Decision-making process

- *Decisions at Board of Directors level require a quorum of eight members, and the affirmative votes of at least 75% of those present.*
- *ISC decisions on SAN standards are valid with the presence of at least 80% of its members and if the decision was taken by consensus, without the sustained opposition of one of the present members (without votes against, but with the possibility of abstentions). In the absence of consensus, at least 75% of votes in favour are required for the adoption of a decision. Prior to voting on a process, all points of view, concerns and doubts of ISC members should be heard. The SAN Secretariat is responsible of supporting a constructive decision-making process.*

### Review and Revision process

- *In the first or second page of SAN standards, stakeholders are encouraged to send their comments or suggestions, at any time, to the following email address: [info@san.ag](mailto:info@san.ag)*