

2020 revision plan for the ISEAL Credibility Principles

Introduction

2013, ISEAL launched the *Principles for Credible and Effective Sustainability Standards Systems* (Credibility Principles) – a set of core principles that provide an international reference for defining the foundations of credible practices for sustainability standards. They are a means for communicating the core values that lie behind credible standards and have also served as a reference point for interpreting ISEAL’s Codes of Good Practice and for framing the desired outcomes of Code requirements. The Credibility Principles were developed through an extensive global consultation with the guidance of an international multi-stakeholder Steering Committee.

In 2019, ISEAL carried out a review of the Credibility Principles in order to determine if they require revision. The review explored how the principles have been used and adopted, the best approach to communicating the principles to meet stakeholder needs, changes in the landscape and trends, as well as their usability, scope and objectives.

The [findings of the review](#) informed the ISEAL Technical Committee’s decision to proceed to revision of the Credibility Principles. The ISEAL Board has approved the revision process that will be carried out in 2020.

Terms of reference

The findings of the review informed the ISEAL Technical Committee’s revisions to the terms of reference for the Credibility Principles, which were approved by the ISEAL Board in December 2019. The revised terms of reference are as follows:

Scope

The Credibility Principles apply to the full scope of operations and governance of sustainability standards and related systems.*

They are also relevant to a wide range of actors in their engagement with and evaluation of sustainability systems.

Objectives

The Credibility Principles define and communicate the core values of credible and effective sustainability systems, improving the delivery of sustainability impacts.

The Credibility Principles inform the development and revision of ISEAL’s Codes of Good Practice and guidance materials.

They are not intended to serve as a normative reference.

**Related systems includes standards-like initiatives that define sustainability performance levels or improvement pathways; that measure, monitor or verify performance or progress; and that allow for claims.*

Revision timeline

Activity	Tentative date
Formation of the Steering Group for the revision (for more information, please refer to the Terms of Reference for the Steering Group)	January 2020
First draft of the revised Credibility Principles prepared	January - February 2020
Meeting of the Steering Group to review the first draft	March 2020
Public consultation on first draft including online survey and workshops	May - July 2020
Review of consultation feedback and preparation of the second draft	August 2020
Meeting of the Steering Group to consider consultation feedback and review the second draft	September 2020
Public consultation on the second draft of the Credibility Principles	November 2020
Review of consultation feedback and preparation of final draft	December 2020
Meeting of the Steering Group and Technical Committee to consider the consultation feedback, and review and approve the final draft of the revised Credibility Principles	January 2021
Board approves the revised Credibility Principles	Q1 2021

Opportunities for stakeholder involvement

There are multiple ways to get take part in the revision process:

- Participate in the ISEAL Credibility Principles Steering Group (formation in early January 2020)
- Participate in our consultations, including online surveys, webinars and workshops
- Sign up to our [mailing list](#) to be kept informed about the revision process
- Share information about the revision on social media

Contact

If you are interested in getting involved in the revision process or have any questions, contact Eleanor Radford: eleanor@isealalliance.org