



ISEAL Community Member Monitoring Procedure

Version 1, Effective 2 November 2020

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Introduction

ISEAL Community Members are sustainability standards and similar systems that meet the *ISEAL Community Member Requirements* and strive to continually improve their systems to create greater sustainability impact through participation in ISEAL's learning, collaboration and innovation activities.

This document sets out how ISEAL works with its Community Members to support them to identify, plan and implement improvements to their system that are feasible and strategically relevant.

Purpose and Scope

The ISEAL Community Member Monitoring Procedure has been designed to support you to understand and uphold your commitments as an ISEAL Community Member and understand how decisions are taken.

Specifically, this procedure supports you in understanding how and when:

- › You should describe the improvements that you plan to make to your system
- › You should tell us about the progress that you have made
- › We will work with you to review the outcomes of your system improvement activity
- › We will work with you to identify what you can say about being an ISEAL Community Member
- › We will communicate about your status and your improvements as an ISEAL Community Member
- › Decisions will be taken about ISEAL Community Member status
- › You can challenge decisions related to ISEAL Community Member status

We encourage you to view this procedure together with the *ISEAL Community Member Requirements* and the further supporting documents identified below. Participating in open and active dialogue with ISEAL and other members and using the tools, forums, and activities available to you as an ISEAL Community Member will help you make the most of your membership.

ISEAL always welcomes feedback on this process and your wider experience as an ISEAL Community Member.

Primary Roles and Responsibilities

ISEAL Community Members

ISEAL Community Members (hereafter 'members') commit to continually improving their systems by taking part in ISEAL's learning, collaboration and innovation activities. In the particular context of this procedure, they are responsible for:

- › Submitting annual improvement plans and reporting on their implementation
- › Submitting scope and reach data
- › Accurately communicating about their membership

ISEAL Secretariat

The ISEAL Secretariat (hereafter 'secretariat') provides ISEAL Community Members with an effective space for peer collaboration and exchange and supports ISEAL Community Members to make strategically relevant improvements to their system. In particular, we:

- › Maintain, review and communicate the policies, procedures and tools associated with ISEAL Community Member status
- › Review members' annual improvement plans and reports
- › Manage claims related to ISEAL membership and compliance
- › Communicate transparently about members' status and their improvements in accordance with the *ISEAL Data Policy: Data related to Community Member and compliance requirements*
- › Hear complaints and where possible support the resolution of breaches to the *ISEAL Community Member Requirements* (including the *ISEAL Community Code of Conduct*) following the *ISEAL Complaints Procedure* and this procedure
- › Make recommendations to the ISEAL Board on suspension and withdrawal of ISEAL Community Member status when necessary

ISEAL Membership Committee

The ISEAL Membership Committee is comprised of ISEAL member representatives appointed by the ISEAL Board. The committee's responsibilities include annually appraising the secretariat's application of this procedure, and as necessary hearing appeals and making recommendations to the ISEAL Board.

ISEAL Board

The ISEAL Board is comprised of ISEAL member representatives and is responsible for the decisions to approve or withdraw ISEAL Community Member status.

Terms and Definitions

System overview

An annually updated report that provides a comprehensive and accessible overview of a member's system, specifically:

- › The STRATEGIES a system employs to meet its sustainability objectives
- › A description of the STANDARD or TOOL that the system has developed
- › How the system maintains RESPONSIBILITY for decisions taken about and by its system
- › How the system's design demonstrates a COMMITMENT TO IMPROVEMENT
- › How the standard or tool is monitored and reviewed to ensure its RELEVANCE
- › How the standard or tool is IMPLEMENTED

System overviews are made available to all ISEAL Community Members.

Improvement plan

A plan developed and agreed by a member with the support of the tools and feedback provided by the secretariat, that identifies:

- › The priority areas for system improvement

- › Improvement objectives and how they serve to support closer alignment with the desired outcomes of ISEAL's Codes of Good Practice
- › Key planning and execution milestones

Improvement plans are made available to all ISEAL Community Members.

Progress report

A report provided to the secretariat at the end of each improvement cycle, identifying the successes and challenges of the system in meeting its improvement objectives.

Progress reports are made available to all ISEAL Community Members.

Basic scope and reach data

Data provided by an ISEAL member on common indicators that support ISEAL's collective understanding of the contribution of member systems in improving sustainability.

Review meeting

A meeting between the you and secretariat which supports mutual understanding and agreement of:

- › How effective your participation in ISEAL's learning, collaboration and innovation activities has been in supporting your planned improvements
- › Key learnings from the improvement period that can be taken into the next improvement plan
- › The improvements that are planned for the coming year
- › Your engagement within the ISEAL community and what additional claims may be made about participation in accordance with the *ISEAL Member Claims Guidelines*
- › How to manage any breaches of the *ISEAL Community Member Requirements*
- › How to manage changes or planned changes that might affect a member's ability to meet the *ISEAL Community Member Requirements*.

Headline claim

The headline claim allows you to explain your system's relationship with ISEAL in a short statement and in accordance with the *ISEAL Member Claims Guidelines* can be used without the need for prior approval.

Additional claims

Additional claims allow you to communicate in more detail about your ISEAL membership in accordance with the *ISEAL Member Claims Guidelines*. Additional claims are approved by ISEAL in advance of use.

Day

A working day in the jurisdiction of the parties involved.

Supporting documents and references

The following documents are available to support you when participating in and communicating about the ISEAL community.

- › *ISEAL Community Member Requirements*

- › *ISEAL Community Code of Conduct*
- › *ISEAL Member Claims Guidelines*
- › *ISEAL Complaints Procedure*
- › *ISEAL Membership Committee Terms of Reference*
- › *ISEAL Data Policy: Data related to Community Member and compliance requirements*

Improvement Review Procedure

We will work closely with you to establish an annual improvement cycle that aligns with your budgeting and planning periods.

You will report progress and submit annual improvement plans to us on at least an annual basis. Where significant areas of improvement towards an effective M&E system have been identified during the application process, we will work with you to identify whether a more frequent reporting cycle will better serve to support the you in meeting the *ISEAL Community Member Requirements*.

Should we become aware of a failure to meet the *ISEAL Community Member Requirements* (through the *ISEAL Complaints Procedure* or otherwise) we will inform you and request a review meeting. You should contact us to request a review meeting if you make or plan to make changes to your system that could affect your ability to meet the *ISEAL Community Member Requirements*.

- 1) You will work with us to finalise your first improvement plan in advance of your approval as an ISEAL Community Member.
- 2) In each subsequent year or more frequently if agreed during the application process, you will provide us with both a progress report and draft improvement plan in the agreed template no later than the end of the 10th month of the agreed cycle.
- 3) We will acknowledge receipt within 10 days and identify a date for a review meeting which will be no later than 45 days from receipt of your progress report and draft improvement plan.
- 4) In advance of the review meeting, we will review the progress report and draft improvement plan. We may request supplementary information to support this review, where this could include but is not limited to:
 - › Revised procedure or policy documents
 - › Budgets or budget forecasts associated with improvements
 - › Key project milestones
 - › Evidence of communication with stakeholders
 - › Contact details from key stakeholders and permission to contact them
- 5) We will jointly participate in the review meeting which will serve to:
 - › Review your participation in ISEAL's learning, collaboration and innovation activities and to understand how effective this has been in supporting your planned improvements
 - › Identify and discuss key findings from the previous improvement period that can be taken into your next annual improvement plan

- › Review additional claims that you may wish to make
- 6) We will provide you with a summary report within 20 days of the meeting which will confirm the outcome of the meeting, outline any agreed changes to your progress report and improvement plan and confirm any additional claims that you may make.
- 7) You will finalise your progress report and improvement plan and provide these to us within 20 days of receiving your summary report.
- 8) We will make progress reports and improvement plans available to all ISEAL Community Members within 20 days of receipt.

Suspension and Withdrawal

Suspension of ISEAL Community Member status occurs:

- › when members are found to not meet the *ISEAL Community Member Requirements* and/or
- › when members fail to meet the deadlines associated with this procedure

Members whose ISEAL Community Member status is suspended may not claim to be ISEAL Community Members, and may not make the headline claim or any previously agreed additional claims.

When notifying a member of a suspension, the secretariat will request that within 20 days the member provides a rationale and comprehensive plan to address the underlying issues. Failure to respond will result in withdrawal of ISEAL Community Member status.

The maximum term for suspension is six months. If the member has not addressed the issues within that timeframe, the organisation's ISEAL Community Member status will be withdrawn.

Members may also voluntarily withdraw their ISEAL Community Member status.

Appeals

Where a member disagrees with a decision to suspend or withdraw ISEAL Community Member status, both the member and secretariat are encouraged to seek agreement or resolution through dialogue. Where this is not possible, members may lodge a formal appeal to the ISEAL Membership Committee.

The ISEAL Membership Committee is responsible for hearing and deciding on appeals and their decision is final.

- 1) Appeals must be submitted to the secretariat within 30 days of the member receiving notification of suspension or withdrawal. Submissions should clearly state that a formal appeal is being lodged, explain the nature of the appeal and include all documented evidence to support the appeal.
- 2) The secretariat will acknowledge receipt of the appeal within 5 days.
- 3) The secretariat will notify the ISEAL Membership Committee and forward to the Committee all information received from the appellant within 15 days of acknowledging receipt.
- 4) The Committee will assess the submitted information within 40 days and determine whether to uphold or overturn the decision of the secretariat and will inform the secretariat.
- 5) The secretariat will contact the appellant within 10 days to inform them of the decision.