SRP Assurance Scheme v1.3

Online Public Consultation: Changes Document

Background

Following the approval of the SRP Assurance Scheme by the SRP Executive Board at its meeting on 17 December 2019, the document has been further improved to offer users a robust, yet cost-effective basis for verifiable claims for rice produced according to the SRP Standard for Sustainable Rice Cultivation v 2.1.

SRP posted the SRP Assurance Scheme v 1.2 for a 30-day online open public consultation from 23 March to 22 April 2020. Over 200 comments were received from the following participating organizations:

- Control Union
- Foodtech Solutions
- Nepcon
- Oxfam

All comments have been documented, reviewed and addressed by the SRP Secretariat and GLOBALG.A.P. in consultation with a multi-stakeholder SRP Chain of Custody Task Force, including members and external dialogue partners. The recommendations are reflected in the SRP Assurance Scheme v 1.3 document, now publicly available for implementation. The Scheme is managed by GLOBALG.A.P. as SRP's Assurance Service Provider.

Purpose

This document (downloadable from the SRP website) presents only substantive changes to the main text and Annexes made as a result of the public consultation process. Minor edits to style, language and formatting are not documented here. However, all comments and substantive changes are recorded in track change in the document itself, together with responses and changes made; this document is also available by request from the SRP Secretariat.

Summary of Substantive Changes

Glossary and Annex 1 (Definitions)

- References to "Farmer Organization" and "Implementer" were removed to avoid confusion in relation to "Producer Group", "Facilitator", and "Sponsor Organizations".

- Added definitions of SRP logos

- Added definition for Produce Handling Unit (PHU)

- Added explanatory note on derivation of definitions: those marked with an asterisk (*) are adapted from the ISEAL Assurance Code of Good Practice v 2.0.)

1. **Introduction**

   - Clarified process for the review, to describe the process as collaborative, consultative and consensus-based, following relevant ISEAL Guidelines, with transparent disclosure of documented changes, available for open public access.

2. **General Principles**

   - Fee table included and corrected as Annex 6.

   - Included clarification that end-users of the SRP-Verified Logo need not be SRP members, provided they can prove the rice was produced by a SRP member.

   - Inserted new text in 2.3.2 based on proposed text by Oxfam: "Third-party verification (level 3 Assurance) offers the highest degree of transparency and robustness that will best meet the needs of traders and retailers. Fees are to be covered by and negotiated among value chain partners, but farmers are not to be charged directly."

3. **SRP Producers**

   - Requirements for Internal Management System (3.2): Added clarification that a separate IMS Document is available to supplement the SRP Assurance Scheme document, offering specific compliance requirements and implementation procedures for producer groups, particularly in ensuring credible grievance and complaint procedures.

   - Agreed that evaluation of training effectiveness will be built into next review.

   - Added requirement for grievance procedure for IMS.

4. **Registration Rules**

   - Clarified registration rules and data collection requirements.

5. **Three Options for SRP Assurance**

   - Clarified Certification vs Verification: Certification is not currently offered under the Assurance Scheme. The term is not used in the document but was inadvertently referenced in Annex 8 (i.e. Certification bodies)- reference now corrected.

6. **Assurance Level 1 – Self-assessment in Producer Groups**

   - Sampling rules were added/clarified.

7. **Assurance Level 2 – Second-party Verification**

   - Added text to clarify sampling process: that the minimum number of group members to be inspected by a second party for the verification of a producer group in subsequent year (i.e. 50% of the square root of the total registered group membership) remains the same until the SRP Working Group provides further guidance based on the pilot implementation feedback (also applies to Level 3).

   - Added text on issuance of a Verification Statement specifying performance of the producer/group, including compliance score and status, verified volume, permitted claims and traceability level.

8. **Level 3 – Third-party Verification**

- Duration of verification: clarified start date as date of verification decision.

- Added text on issuance of a Verification Statement specifying performance of the producer/group, including compliance score and status, verified volume, permitted claims and traceability level.

- Added requirement during application phase to verify declared producer information, in order to avoid duplication in the database.

- Clarified rules on timing and frequency of inspections and on process for unannounced inspections.

9. **Additional Rules for Evaluation of Producer Groups and IMS**

- N/A

10. **Audit Reporting**

- Harmonized reporting requirement with those shown in Annex 2.6.

11. **Verification Decisions**

- N/A

12. **Guidelines for Traceability and Chain of Custody**

- Clarified that the Chain of Custody Standard is available as a separate document, which sets out rules and procedures for verification.

- Reinstated Mass Balance as one of the three Chain of Custody models, together with Product Segregation and Identity Preservation, and added summary of conditions for use of Mass Balance.

13. **SRP Claims and Conditions**

- Clarified conditions of use of SRP logos based on legal review.

- Added text to 13.1.2 to reference access to SRP Brand Manual 2020.

Annexes 1-8

1. **Definitions**

- Deleted 'Certification Body', corrected definitions of 'Facilitator' and 'Producer Groups', added definition of 'Product Handling Unit'.

- Added definitions for SRP logos, including differentiation between the SRP Organizational Logo and SRP-Verified on-pack Label.

- Noted derivation of definitions from ISEAL Assurance Code of Good Practice 2.0.

2. **Producer Registration Requirements and Data Management**

   - Defined minimum data to be collected from producers/producer groups.

3. **Assurance Service Providers: Roles & Requirements**

   - N/A

4. **Verification Bodies: Roles & Requirements**

   - Minor clarifications to requirements

   - Added clause that VBs must be fully aid-up members of the SRP.

5. **SRP Inspector & Auditor Requirements**

   - Clarifications to requirements and retraining requirement in the event of revision of normative documents.

6. **SRP Fees**

   - Removed footnote to Table, Annex 6 Section 2 ("GLOBALG.A.P. certification bodies are exempted from the VB Admin fee because this is included in their GLOBALG.A.P. annual license fee.").

7. **SRP Member Communication & Claims Guideline (On and Off-Pack)**

   - Reformatted in matrix format for easy reference.

   - Adjusted wording to differentiate SRP Organizational Logo and SRP-Verified Label

   - Reinstated Mass Balance (Group Level) as CoC option

   - Claims adjusted to comply with ISEAL Claims Good Practice Guide and legal review.

8. **Data Access Rules**

   - Replaced 'Certification' with 'Verification' throughout.

Document date: 7 September 2020

- NOTHING FOLLOWS -