

**Union for Ethical BioTrade
Standard Committee
Terms of reference**

GOV08 – Standard Committee Terms of Reference 2009- 04-22		
Replaces	Standard Committee Terms of Reference - 2008-10-11	
Approval of the original document:	BO	2008-10-11
Approval of current version:	EC	2009-04-22

Period of validity and modifications

This document has been approved by the Board of the Union for Ethical BioTrade (in short the Union) on the date of 22 April 2009. Any modification of these terms of reference shall be approved by the Board. They remain valid until such a revision occurs.

Appointment and Duration of Terms of officers

The Standard Committee is composed of 6 to 8 persons, of which at least 4 are members to the Union for Ethical BioTrade. At minimum 2 Trading Members and 2 Affiliate Members participate. The Board will assure a balanced representation of different stakeholders in the Standard Committee. Committee members will be appointed by the Board for a duration of 3 years

Purpose

The purpose of the Standard Committee is to oversee procedures related formulation and revision of standards, assuring a balanced multi-stakeholder representation in accordance to the requirements for developing standards as stipulated by the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the International Social and Environmental Accreditation and Labeling Alliance (ISEAL).

Standard development procedure

The process used by the Union is summarized Diagram 1, below. It is composed of 4 broad steps:

1. a 30-day notification period to stakeholders, including national WTO enquiry points. During this phase a stakeholder mapping is carried out to identify who are the important stakeholder who need to participate in the standard development process;
2. a 60-day consultation of the first draft;
3. a 60-day consultation period of the second draft;
4. a 30-day voting period.

This process gives decision-making power to all those who have participated in the consultation. Participants are identified according to six broad interest groups: developing and developed countries, each distinguished between social, economic and environmental interests. The decision-making power is balanced between the six groups. The Board of the Union provides the final formal approval on the standard.

This process ensures an effective separation between the development of the standard and the management of the verification process.

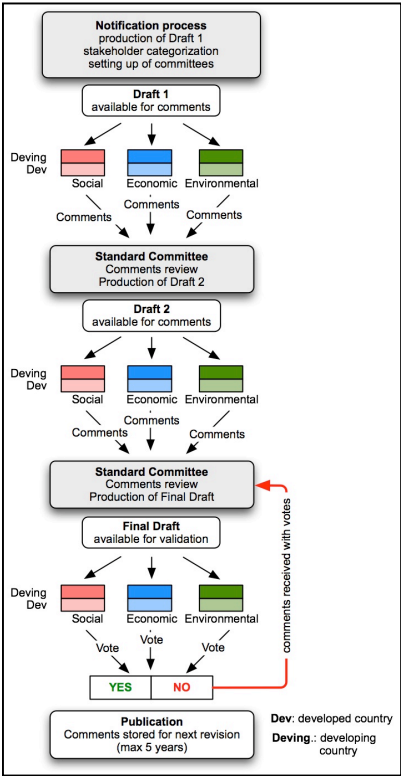


Diagram1 - Union's standard development process

Tasks and decision power

The Standards Committee provides recommendations to the Board regarding the following:

- Proposing and/or overseeing procedures regarding the formulation of new, and the revision of existing, standards;
- Periodic revision of adopted standards;
- Revision and clearing of draft standards and incorporate comments from consultation processes in such revision processes;
- Provide recommendations to the Board regarding the adoption of new or revised standards.

Committee President and the role of the Secretariat

The Committee appoints a President from its midst, who will report to the Board and the General Assembly on the functioning and decisions of the Committee.

The Union’s Secretariat acts as Secretary to the Committee. As such it prepares the agenda and background documentation on each agenda point, and elaborates the minutes of each meeting. Before each meeting, it will provide to the Committee a summary of the issue at stake, a clear indication of decisions/feedback required from the Committee, and the necessary background information.

Meetings are convened by the Committee's President and facilitated by the Secretariat. Committee members can request that additional issues be put on the agenda, or request that a special meeting is convened to address a specific issue.

Meeting format and decision-making

For addressing comments in the development of a new or revised standard, the committee meets physically at least at the end of the consultation phase of the first and the second draft. Additional meetings may be organised if necessary.

For addressing further issues, the Committee is expected to discuss them by e-mail. Teleconferences may be organised if need arises. Committee members normally have one week to react on issues raised, unless indicated differently. Silence shall be considered as approval of the deadline.

The Committee endeavors to take its decisions by consensus. Consensus is defined as the absence of sustained opposition but does not require unanimity. In case consensus cannot be achieved, or when a vote is needed, a simple majority of all Committee members, which must include at least 50% of each membership group, is required.

Confidentiality & conflict of interest

If a decision to be taken creates a potential conflict of interest with other (applicant) members, she/he shall notify this to the Standards Committee. In case of a conflict of interest, the member shall refrain from taking part in the relevant discussions and decisions.

Integrants to the Standard Committee shall sign a confidentiality agreement addressing the issues of confidentiality and conflict of interest.

Reporting

Minutes will be prepared on all meetings of the Standards Committee. Minutes will be signed by the President of the Committee and presented to the Board.