



Revision of STD01 - BioTrade Verification Framework for Native Natural Ingredients - 2007-09-20 Terms of reference and process

Last up-dated, 28 October 2010

Background

The Union for Ethical BioTrade is a membership-based organization that promotes environmentally and socially ethical trade in wild collected and farmed products that come from native biodiversity.

The UEBT Verification Framework is an international standard derived from the seven principles and criteria developed by UNCTAD's BioTrade Initiative. It is applicable at the organization level and throughout supply chains and it is one of the tools UEBT uses to work towards achieving its mission.

Need for revision

Since the publication of the UEBT Verification Framework in 2007, numerous field applications and audits have been undertaken. A pre-consultation process that reviewed the Verification Framework with the direct users was conducted in order to establish whether a full consultation process would be valuable. After the report was revised, the Union for Ethical BioTrade's Board of Directors concluded in April 2009 that none of the comments from the consultation process pointed to fundamental flaws in the standard. Yet, the following improvements could be made:

- Improvements with regard to the wording and structure of the standard;
- Some descriptions of the process are outdated as over time UEBT has further improved its procedures;
- Some comments related to minimum indicators need to be addressed.

A formal revision of the Verification Framework will allow:

- Correction of issues identified in the pre-consultation phase;
- The introduction of additional elements that could further increase the impact of the Verification Framework;
- Inclusion of more experience and expertise in the revision process;
- A further increase in the legitimacy of the Verification Framework.

UEBT has thus decided to submit the Verification Framework to a full consultation process.

Union for Ethical BioTrade

32, Rue de Berne
1201, Geneva, Switzerland

General line: + 41 22 5661585

Fax: + 41 22 7310340

www.ethicalbiotrade.org

Other standards operating in a similar field

The Union for Ethical BioTrade carried out benchmarking reviews with a number of standards that operate in a similar field. The study, conducted in May 2009, reviewed the standards of the following organizations:

- Rainforest Alliance/ The Sustainable Agriculture Network (RA/SAN)
- The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)
- Fairtrade Labeling Organizations International (FLO)
- Fair Wild - ISSC-MAP
- Fair For Life (IMO)
- Ethical Trade (Soil Association)
- The International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM)
- ECOCERT, Equitable Solidaire et Responsable (ESR)

The compatibility analysis shows that none of the standards assessed address all the issues contained in the UEBT Verification Framework. Overall, the most compatible standards are those of FSC, SAN, and IMO.

Objective

The objective of the revision of the BioTrade Verification Framework for Native Natural Ingredients is to ensure its continued effectiveness in meeting its goals. In particular the revision will:

- Allow UEBT to address the issues identified by stakeholders on the structure and the content of the standard;
- Ensure further stakeholder participation and buy-in of the standard.

Considering the nature of comments received in the implementation of the standard thus far, no fundamental changes are expected.

Stakeholders and impact

In general terms, stakeholders of the UEBT Verification Framework can be divided into six broad categories from developing or developed countries. In the context of the Union for Ethical BioTrade, the following groups can be identified as:

- Trading members (or potential trading members) and their supply chains, raw material producers, intermediaries, processors, and brands, principally in the cosmetics sector, but also in the food and pharmaceutical industries, and similar organizations outside of the membership basis.
- Non-trading members, including national BioTrade programmes, local authorities, social and environmental non-governmental organizations, trade associations, labour unions and similar organizations outside the membership basis.

At this stage, the Union for Ethical BioTrade seeks to reach out to stakeholder groups, but does not set specific thresholds for the participation of each group. UEBT has an on-going process in place of stakeholder analysis to further increase its understanding of relevant

stakeholders. This process includes the collection of comments in the course of verification exercises.

It should be emphasized that the verification process of UEBT rests importantly on buyers managing their supply chains so that all the actors implement practices ethical sourcing of biodiversity. This allows for the benefits of the system to reach very small organizations that are frequently not able to participate in more traditional certification approaches. However, should the requirements of the standard fail to achieve their objective, they could have a negative impact on these small and remote producers, who are often difficult to involve in standardization processes. Receiving input from this group will therefore demand that special efforts are made.

Phases of the revision process

The revision process will have the following phases:

- 1st consultation phase: 06.07.2009 to 10.01.2011
- 2nd consultation phase: 15.03.2011 to 15.05.2011
- Validation phase: 15.07.2011 to 30.08.2011
- Publication: 30.10.2011

Comments will be collected at each consultation phase and then introduced in the subsequent version of the document. The validation phase will consist of a vote by all those who have commented and it will be balanced according to the six broad stakeholder groups described above. Each phase, including the vote, will be open to all stakeholders.

A detailed description of the whole process can be found in the Union for Ethical BioTrade standardization procedure (PRO06 - Standardization Process - 2009-01-28), downloadable from the Union's web site (www.ethicalbiotrade.org). It is also available from the site where the consultation is managed (www.piec.org/standards), or from the UEBT Secretariat at: info@ethicalbiotrade.org

Contact: Rachel Asante: rasante@piec.biz

Stéphanie Paquin: stephanie@ethicalbiotrade.org