



## **Standard Setting Procedure**

### **1. Introduction**

This document describes the general procedure by which the LEAF Marque Standard is reviewed and revised by LEAF Marque.

LEAF Marque Ltd is responsible for revising the LEAF Marque Standard. The LEAF Marque Standard will only include language that is clear, specific, objective, and verifiable.

The Standard Setting Procedure is made publicly available through the LEAF website.

LEAF Marque welcomes feedback from all stakeholders on any aspect of the LEAF Marque System at any time, including the Standard Setting Procedure. Please contact LEAF Marque (T: +44 (0)24 7641 3911, E: [info@leafmarque.com](mailto:info@leafmarque.com)).

Stakeholders may also submit complaints to LEAF Marque by following the [LEAF Feedback and Complaints Procedure](#).

All comments and feedback received between revision periods of the LEAF Marque Standard are noted and where relevant, considered in subsequent review and revision of the LEAF Marque Standard.

The Standard Setting Procedure is reviewed at least every 5 years. Reviews may be conducted more frequently if a need is perceived, for example, considerations before each review of the LEAF Marque Standard, following feedback/complaints, or as deemed necessary by LEAF Marque.

### **2. Stakeholders**

Stakeholder engagement is a core part of LEAF Marque. LEAF Marque wants to ensure that all stakeholders have the option to be involved in the process of revising and further developing the LEAF Marque Standard (as well as with other areas of the LEAF Marque System as detailed in wider LEAF Marque documentation). LEAF Marque stakeholder engagement covers a wide range of representation including: those indirectly affected, geographic representation, gender, ecosystem representation, the scale of the facilities, and different types of organisations.

Table 1 details a range of stakeholders actively involved / invited to be involved in the Standard Setting Procedure alongside their roles and the composition of groups mentioned.

<b>Stakeholder</b>	<b>Role in the Standard Setting Procedure</b>	<b>Composition</b>
LEAF Marque Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide the strategic direction for LEAF Marque</li><li>• Approves the frequency of revisions of the LEAF Marque Standard</li><li>• Approves the Final version of the LEAF Marque Standard (contents), based on recommendation from the LEAF Marque Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and alignment with the strategy</li></ul>	Multi-stakeholder group. Members do not represent the stakeholder group of which they are part, but rather act in the overall interests of LEAF Marque. Includes: Independent consultant, LEAF Marque



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approves the Standard Setting Procedure based on recommendation from the LEAF Marque TAC</li> <li>• Approves the Terms of Reference for the LEAF Marque Standard based on recommendation from the LEAF Marque TAC</li> </ul>	producer, members of LEAF Board of Trustees and LEAF Secretariat. Extensive experience in food, farming and agricultural sectors.
LEAF Marque Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides advice on the development and revision of the LEAF Marque Standard to meet the strategic direction set by the LEAF Marque Board</li> <li>• May delegate work on standard development and revision to a Working Group</li> <li>• Recommends the Final version of the LEAF Marque Standard (contents) for approval by the LEAF Marque Board</li> <li>• Recommends the Standard Setting Procedure for approval by the LEAF Marque Board</li> <li>• Recommends the Terms of Reference for the LEAF Marque Standard for approval by the LEAF Marque Board</li> <li>• For urgent revisions and/or non-substantive changes the Chairperson may act on behalf of the LEAF Marque TAC</li> </ul>	Multi-stakeholder group including a range of organisations. Includes: producers, supply chain, retailer, certification, academic, intergovernmental and non-governmental.
LEAF Marque Additional Stakeholder Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invited to participate in stakeholder consultation</li> <li>• Invited to provide feedback at any time and specifically during public consultation periods and workshops (as appropriate)</li> </ul>	Multi-stakeholder group including a range of individuals and organisations and/or under-represented groups.
LEAF Groups & Committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invited to participate in stakeholder consultation</li> <li>• Invited to provide feedback at any time and specifically during public consultation periods and workshops (as appropriate)</li> </ul>	Multi-stakeholder groups including LEAF Board of Trustees, LEAF Advisory Board; LEAF Policy and Strategic Development Group; LEAF Demonstration Farmers; LEAF Innovation Centres. <sup>1</sup>
All LEAF Marque Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invited to participate in stakeholder consultation</li> <li>• Invited to provide feedback at any time and specifically during public consultation periods and workshops</li> </ul>	Producers, supply chain, retailers, brands, NGOs, governments, academics, certification bodies, accreditation bodies, consumers.
LEAF Technical Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-ordinates the revision and further development of the LEAF Marque Standard including the Terms of Reference and Standard Setting Procedure</li> <li>• Can approve non-substantive changes and urgent revisions with approval from the LEAF Marque TAC Chairperson as appropriate</li> </ul>	Subset of the LEAF Secretariat

*Table 1: Standard Setting Procedure Stakeholders*

<sup>1</sup> see closing pages of [LEAF Annual Reports](http://www.leafuk.org/leaf/about/annualreports.eb) for composition; <http://www.leafuk.org/leaf/about/annualreports.eb>



### 3. Review and Revision of the LEAF Marque Standard

#### 3.1 Standard Review

The LEAF Marque Standard is reviewed at least every 5 years to assess the continued relevance and effectiveness of the current Standard relative to its objectives. With approval by the LEAF Marque Board, the LEAF Marque Standard may be revised more frequently, such as upon request or through LEAF Marque internal recommendation (for example following receipt of a complaint or monitoring and evaluation of the LEAF Marque System).

The review process considers all comments received in between revisions to the LEAF Marque Standard, any relevant stakeholder feedback, discussion with the LEAF Marque TAC & LEAF Technical Team, and any findings from Assurance Programme Reviews and/or LEAF Marque Impacts results. A review can lead to no revision, revision of part, or revision of the whole of the LEAF Marque Standard. If a revision is necessary, the timeline for the Standard revision will be defined, ensuring the process occurs in a timely manner relevant to extent of revision necessary.

#### 3.2 Revision Preparation and Planning

Preparation and planning for revision of the LEAF Marque Standard includes:

- Review of stakeholders identified and addition of further interested stakeholders as appropriate (including identifying groups that are not adequately represented)
- Confirmation of the LEAF Marque Standard Terms of Reference<sup>2</sup>.
- A Time Plan<sup>2</sup>.

#### 3.3 Consultation

Public consultation is carried out using the existing version of the LEAF Marque Standard or a draft of a new version of the LEAF Marque Standard.

In preparation for the consultation, consideration is given to:

- Stakeholder engagement:
  - Strategies to reach all stakeholders. At a minimum, this includes publication of the consultation on the LEAF website and information sent via email to all identified stakeholders
  - Identification of stakeholder groups that are not adequately represented and development of engagement strategies accordingly. At a minimum, this includes strategies tailored to those with limited access to technology and providing information in different languages.
- Accessibility and communication of the consultation.
  - First Public Consultation open for a minimum of 60 days
  - Publicised through LEAF communication channels as appropriate
  - Feedback welcomed in any format, including email, online, phone call and in-person discussion
- Content of the LEAF Marque Standard delivery against LEAF Marque Intended Impact, and contribution to topical issues and environmentally sustainable farming
  - Focus on specificity, relevance, interpretation, and auditability of Control Points
  - Identifies Control Point amendments resulting from development projects

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<sup>2</sup> A summary of which is made publicly available.



In addition, LEAF Marque may arrange in-person and/or online meetings or workshops with stakeholders.

LEAF Marque collates and reviews all comments received from the consultation.

LEAF Marque incorporates the consultation feedback in a (revised) draft Standard.

The (revised) draft Standard also, if applicable, incorporates the results from additional research, for example from testing the feasibility and auditability of requirements in the draft Standard.

Where the consultation is carried out using the existing version of the LEAF Marque Standard, feedback from prior to the consultation period will also be considered.

The LEAF Marque TAC reviews the revised draft Standard.

Additionally, LEAF Marque summarises the comments received during the public consultation along with how they have been addressed and the main changes in the revised version. This is shared with stakeholders who responded to the consultation and made available through the LEAF website. LEAF Marque ensures that no confidential information is disclosed through the summary. Where possible, considering the confidentiality of stakeholders, original comments can be made available upon request.

LEAF Marque will hold additional consultation cycle(s) if stakeholder feedback is identified as insufficient or if further input is needed to resolve relevant issues. Decisions to hold additional consultation(s) will be made in conjunction with advice from the LEAF Marque TAC. Such subsequent consultation cycles will be a minimum of 30 days.

### **3.4 Approval**

A draft Final version of the Standard is recommended by the LEAF Marque TAC for approval by the LEAF Marque Board.

### **3.5 Publication**

The revised LEAF Marque Standard is published on the LEAF website at least 3 months, and where possible 6 months, before it becomes effective. A one-month period is suitable for non-substantive changes.

The LEAF Marque Standard includes the date the document is issued and the date on which it becomes effective (i.e. status of the document) as well as contact information for LEAF, official language(s) and a version history.

Draft and Final Standards are published in English, on the LEAF website, free of charge. To reduce environmental impacts, LEAF Marque documents are primarily available electronically. Hard copies of the LEAF Marque Standard (including previous versions) and other related materials are available on request at a reasonable handling fee by contacting [info@leafmarque.com](mailto:info@leafmarque.com).

The publication of a new version of the LEAF Marque Standard is also publicised through LEAF media channels as appropriate.

LEAF Marque seeks to make the LEAF Marque Standard available in other languages where this supports the use of the Standard. The English version of the LEAF Marque Standard is the definitive version and therefore any issues of interpretation from other translations need to be referred to the English version.



Any translations of the Standard are reviewed and approved by LEAF Marque, published on the LEAF website and are for information only.

### **3.6 Evaluation of Revision project**

Once a revision of the LEAF Marque Standard is complete, the project is evaluated by LEAF Marque. Improvement actions may be identified, for example relating to procedures, templates, documentation, project planning etc. These lessons learnt are shared with appropriate teams/individuals within LEAF Marque and noted for future developments.

### **3.7 Non-substantive Change(s)**

From time-to-time, non-substantive change(s) may be required to the LEAF Marque Standard (for example to clarify language). In this case, there is no need for a formal revision process. A notification of the changes will be made in the Version History in the subsequent Standard.

### **3.8 Urgent Changes**

Where urgent revisions are required to the LEAF Marque Standard, LEAF Marque will define the appropriate procedure which include at least consultation with the Chairman of the LEAF Marque TAC and/or LEAF Marque Board. The LEAF Marque TAC and LEAF Marque Board will be informed of any such changes made and the reasons for these changes.

Urgent revisions may be required to meet changes in the conditions of production or for other urgent matters.

## **4. Decision Making**

Where possible, all decisions are reached by consensus.

A consensus is considered to be a lack of sustained opposition.

In order to reach a consensus, the LEAF Marque TAC (and/or Working Group) utilises the following processes to establish whether there is opposition:

- a) A face-to-face meeting where there is a verbal yes/no vote, show of hands for a yes/no vote; a statement on consensus from the Chair where there are no dissenting voices or hands (votes); a formal balloting process; etc.
- b) A telephone or online conference meeting where there is a verbal yes/no vote a statement on consensus from the Chair where there are no dissenting voices.
- c) Electronic communication where a request for agreement or objection is provided to members (a proxy for a vote).
- d) Or, combinations of the above.

When consensus cannot be met, for example when there is a sustained opposition, the issue shall be resolved using alternative process as appropriate including the following:

- a) Discussion and negotiation within the group in order to find a compromise.
- b) Direct negotiation between the stakeholder(s) submitting the objection and stakeholders with different views on the disputed issue in order to find a compromise.
- c) Where consensus/compromise cannot be reached, the issue will be escalated to the LEAF Marque Board (or LEAF Board of Trustees as appropriate).



## 5. Records

LEAF Marque keeps records relating to each revision of the LEAF Marque Standard on file for at least five years. All electronic storage is regularly backed up. This includes:

- Policies and procedures
- Stakeholders contacted
- Stakeholders involved in each stage of the process
- Comments received
- Summary of how comments received were taken into account
- Draft and Final versions of the Standard

If a publicly available document is removed from the website (e.g. documentation relating to a previous revision process), documentation is still available to stakeholders upon request.

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Version History	Date
Version 1	March 2013
Version 7	December 2022