



## Terms of Reference LEAF Marque Technical Advisory Committee (TAC).

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1. The LEAF Marque TAC works in close co-operation with the LEAF Board of Trustees, the LEAF Marque Board and all other stakeholder groups within LEAF. These Terms of Reference are binding for the activities of the LEAF Marque TAC and the LEAF Board shall have access to them.

### 2. Scope and Objective

- 2.1. LEAF's vision and mission statements are "... a world that is farming, eating and living sustainably" and "... to inspire and enable sustainable farming that is prosperous, enriches the environment and engages local communities." The LEAF Marque TAC is the body that brings together expertise from stakeholders within the industry to ensure the technical content of the LEAF Marque standard is robust and practical and systems are in place to effectively deliver it, and to advise on:
  - 2.1.1. Continual development of the LEAF Marque standards system with consideration to other standards systems including benchmarking and equivalence exercises.
  - 2.1.2. Interpretation of standards and guidelines for local application in English.
  - 2.1.3. Development of all the standards system documentation associated with inspection and certification including training, consultation and advice on e.g. management plans etc.
  - 2.1.4. Any technical issues associated with the standards system that the LEAF stakeholder groups wish the TAC to consider.
  - 2.1.5. Key communication activities that are of a technical nature, including the claims about the standards system and claims made by third parties including LEAF members and the LEAF Marque Chain of Custody.
  - 2.1.6. Monitoring and evaluation of the standards system to show how effective the delivery of its stated claims including access to information and data collection.
  - 2.1.7. Delivery of inspection and certification of the standards system.
  - 2.1.8. Issues that affect the integrity and credibility of the standards system including compliance with the ISEAL codes of practice.

### 3. LEAF Marque TAC Membership

- 3.1. Membership of the LEAF Marque TAC is not limited in number. Membership is open but conditional on relevant expertise, active engagement, and commitment to the objectives of LEAF and the TAC. Substitution and guests: Any substitution for an established member must be on a 'like for like' basis. The substitute must be fully briefed on the subject and able to offer advice / viewpoint on behalf of the organisation. Guests would be allowed at the discretion of the TAC.
- 3.2. Any organization seeking formal membership shall:
  - 3.2.1. Accept and comply with these Terms of Reference as well as any and all other documents decided, approved, adopted, enacted and implemented by the LEAF Marque TAC.
  - 3.2.2. Commit to support the vision, mission, objectives, and systems of the LEAF and TAC.
  - 3.2.3. Conduct their affairs in a manner suitable to support and further the vision, mission, objectives, and systems of LEAF and the TAC.



- 3.2.4. Be directly involved in working with the issues or practicalities of sustainable agriculture and horticulture.
- 3.2.5. Allocate sufficient time, resources, and effort necessary to meet the requirements for formal participation of the LEAF Marque TAC in the following ways: - to react to discussion papers, and to participate in teleconferences and/or in-person meetings.

- 3.3. Nominations must be submitted to the LEAF Marque Technical Managers, which will then make a recommendation to the LEAF Board of Trustees and the LEAF Marque Board as to whether or not the applicant should be accepted.
- 3.4. The LEAF Board of Trustees will have four weeks to query any suggestions of the LEAF Marque TAC regarding acceptance of a candidate. Any LEAF Marque TAC recommendation questioned by any member of the LEAF Board will be discussed during the next LEAF Board meeting for a final decision. Membership shall not be unduly denied to any organisation if they meet the requirements above.
- 3.5. All members of the LEAF Marque TAC have to commit to attend at least 50 percent of the meetings.
- 3.6. All members of the LEAF Marque TAC will be registered in the LEAF database and will receive regular communications from LEAF.
- 3.7. LEAF Marque retains the right to invite named third parties to attend the LEAF Marque TAC meetings, as well as to deny access to the LEAF Marque TAC meetings to named third parties, where the integrity of LEAF Marque is under threat.
- 3.8. Guests can be invited to attend meetings but should be identified as such in the minutes, and may not attend more than 2 consecutive meetings without becoming a registered member of the LEAF Marque TAC. (Other than persons performing administrative functions in the group such as minute-taking).

#### **4. LEAF Marque TAC Working Group(s)**

- 4.1. From time to time in accordance with the review of the LEAF Marque standard; working groups will be set up to address certain technical aspects relating to a specific area of the LEAF Marque standards system.

#### **5. LEAF Marque TAC Chairperson**

- 5.1. The Chairperson will be appointed by the LEAF Board of Trustees from recommendations from the TAC and LEAF executive. Ideally the chairperson should be independent and able to represent all stakeholders views and opinions.

#### **6. Decision Process**

- 6.1. Quorum: For meeting quorum to be achieved, a minimum of seven (7) members (three being the Chairperson and LEAF Marque executive staff) must be present or participate in the meeting by telephone.
- 6.2. Decisions are taken by consensus within the TAC and LEAF Board of Trustees.



- 6.3. The decisions of the TAC to will be taken on the basis of a consensus. In order to reach a consensus the TAC will utilise the following alternative processes to establish whether there is opposition:
- 6.3.1. 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.,
  - 6.3.2. A telephone conference meeting where there is a verbal yes/no vote,
  - 6.3.3. An e-mail meeting where a request for agreement or objection is provided to members and the members providing a written response (a proxy for a vote), or
  - 6.3.4. Combinations thereof.
- 6.4. In the case of a negative vote which represents sustained opposition of any important part of the concerned interests to a substantive issue, the issue shall be resolved using the following mechanism:
- 6.4.1. Discussion and negotiation on the disputed issue within the TAC in order to find a compromise,
  - 6.4.2. Direct negotiation between the stakeholder(s) submitting the objection and stakeholders with different views on the disputed issue in order to find a compromise,
  - 6.4.3. Dispute resolution process. Choose the best time to resolve the issue especially if discussions have been heated. Identify what the issue is. Discuss the issue rather than attacking the person. Use "I" statements, choose to listen to each other and let each party express their views in turn. Work out possible solutions and compile a list if necessary. Decide together about the best solution and see if it will work. Be prepared to re-evaluate.
  - 6.4.4. Where consensus / compromise cannot be reached then the issue will be escalated to the LEAF Marque Board or LEAF Board of Trustees as appropriate.

## **7. Communication**

- 7.1. All written communication taking place between the LEAF and its executive staff and the LEAF Marque TAC will be in the English language.
- 7.2. All external communication must be in agreement with LEAF executive staff (The LEAF Marque Logo has to appear on any approved communication document).
- 7.3. The LEAF executive staff? will inform the LEAF Board of Trustees and the LEAF Marque Board about relevant issues and decisions on a regular basis.

## **8. Time requirement**

- 8.1. Currently, four meetings a year are planned March, May, September and December. There may be a requirement to review issues by email as and when they are required.

## **9. Records**

- 9.1. Agendas will be issued and minutes taken and signed as a true record, these will be filed within the LEAF office as hard copies.

## **10. Confidentiality**



10.1 The minutes of the meetings will remain confidential. Any publication or release will be agreed by the LEAF Marque board in the interests of the company and only a summary where there is a clear benefit.

## **11. Review**

11.1. The Terms of Reference will be reviewed once every two years.