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Procedure for Development and Modification of RSB Procedures

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Objective and summary

The objective of **RSB-PRO-25-001** is to describe how RSB Procedures are developed and modified.

The ultimate authority for approving development and modification of RSB standards is the RSB's multi-stakeholder Board of Directors. The Secretariat is empowered to handle minor modifications and is the entity that oversees the procedures development and modification process.

Comments on and review of this document

Any party can make comments on the procedures described in this document by writing to the RSB Secretariat (info@rsb.org). The Secretariat will undertake a regular review of this document every three years, or earlier if deemed necessary by the Secretariat or RSB Board of Directors. The review shall take into account any comments received, the actual working practices of the Secretariat, and any changes to the ISEAL Code of Good Practice.

Main changes from the previous version (Version 1.0)

- a. References to the RSB Services Foundation were either removed or replaced by "RSB Secretariat", since the activities of the RSB Services Foundation were transferred to the RSB Secretariat as of February 1, 2014.

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PROCEDURE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND MODIFICATION OF RSB PROCEDURES

A. Scope

This procedure covers the process to develop and modify RSB procedures. RSB procedures are documents that explain the proper implementation of RSB standards and the RSB certification system.

RSB procedures are intended to standardize operating procedures, help stakeholders understand the operations and implementation of the system, and increase transparency and accountability.

RSB procedures do not, however, concern the environmental, social or economic performance required from participating operators to receive certification.

This document applies to the following RSB procedures:

- Development & modification of RSB standards (RSB-PRO-15-001)
- Development of geographic and crop-specific adaptations of RSB standards (RSB-PRO-15-002)
- Development & modification of RSB procedures (RSB-PRO-25-001)
- Development & modification of guidance on RSB standards and procedures (RSB-PRO-35-001)
- Benchmarking and recognition of other certificates and schemes (RSB-PRO-40-001)
- Grievance (RSB-PRO-65-001) and mediation (RSB-PRO-65-002) processes
- Requirements for certification bodies (RSB-PRO-70-001)
- Requirements for accreditation bodies (RSB-PRO-75-001)
- Communication and claims (RSB-PRO-50-001)

B. Development of new procedures and modification of existing procedures

1. *Procedure Development Requests*

The RSB Secretariat should identify and initiate those procedures that need to be developed or modified for the proper implementation of RSB standards and certification system.

A proposal to develop new procedures, or modify an existing one, can also be made at any time by:

- RSB Standards Working Group (SWG)
- RSB-certified operators,
- Certifying bodies or auditors working with the RSB standards,
- Accreditation Bodies,
- RSB Secretariat
- Members of the RSB (through RSB Chambers), the RSB Board of Directors (BoD), or the RSB Assembly of Delegates (AoD).

All proposals shall be made in written form to the RSB Secretariat (using the feedback form in Annex I and available on the RSB website), and shall clearly:

- identify the type of procedure to be developed/modified;
- outline the rationale for the proposal; and
- where relevant, reference background papers and, previous decisions or discussions by the RSB.

At least once a year, the Secretariat shall present to the RSB BoD a work plan describing the required developments and modifications of procedures. The work plan and intended publication dates for procedures under development shall be published on the RSB Secretariat website.

2. *Procedure Development Process*

RSB procedures may be drafted by the Secretariat, RSB Members or technical advisors/consultants.

Where relevant, the Secretariat may organize the consultation of RSB Chambers on the draft procedure(s). Consultation of RSB Chambers before approval by the BoD is compulsory for the following RSB procedures:

- Development & modification of RSB standards (RSB-PRO-15-001)
- Development of geographic and crop-specific adaptations of RSB standards (RSB-PRO-15-002)
- Benchmarking and recognition of other certificates and schemes (RSB-PRO-40-001)
- Communication and claims (RSB-PRO-50-001)

3. *Approval and Notifications*

The Board of Directors shall approve all procedures. In the case of an urgent need to approve a procedure, the Chair of the Board of Directors may make the approval.

Approved procedures shall be published on the RSB Secretariat website. Key stakeholders (e.g. RSB Members, certified operators, certification bodies, accreditation bodies, etc.) will also be notified of new procedures if the procedure is directly related to their affiliation with RSB.

4. *Minor and Major Revisions*

Minor modifications are modifications to the procedures such as improving or clarifying the language or providing guidance notes that do not fundamentally change the content of a requirement. Minor modifications include improving or clarifying the language, correcting typing or grammatical errors, or providing explanatory notes that do not fundamentally change the content of a procedure.

Major modifications are modifications of the procedures that change the definition of a term or the content, interpretation or implementation of a requirement.

The Secretariat may make minor revisions to procedures at its sole discretion. Major modifications require the approval of the Board of Directors and shall follow the process described in Section B.

5. *Revision Schedule*

Procedures will be automatically reviewed every three years, taking into account any stakeholder recommendations and comments. The scheduled revision process will be incorporated into the work plan presented to the Board of Directors.

C. Other Secretariat duties regarding procedures

The Secretariat shall maintain all relevant written records related to the process including proposals, draft and final procedures, consultation documents, parties consulted, meeting minutes, and RSB Board decisions for five years. Any public document shall remain available upon request for five years.

ANNEX I – RSB Feedback Form

RSB FEEDBACK FORM

Name : Organisation Type: *Private*
Organisation :
Contact details (please include email address): RSB Member
Certified Operator
Accredited Auditor

Nature of the feedback: *General*

WHICH RSB DOCUMENT DOES YOUR FEEDBACK REFER TO?

WHICH SECTION(S) OF THE DOCUMENT DOES YOUR FEEDBACK REFER TO?

Example: Criterion 10.a; Section G.2.3.1; etc.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ISSUE

Examples:

- The requirement is inapplicable in the context of...
- A new requirement is needed to address...
- The paragraph is in contradiction with...

SUGGESTED TEXT (IF APPLICABLE)

RATIONALE / BACKGROUND

Example: Reference in literature, report, regulation, other standard, etc.

GUIDANCE ON IMPLEMENTATION (IF APPLICABLE)

Example:

- This requirement shall only be required from large scale operators
- Specific guidance to auditors is needed to accompany this modification
- This modification also needs to be included in the RSB Tool

ADDITIONAL REMARKS

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- I want my feedback to remain anonymous (RSB might publish a summary or excerpts from the consultation)
- I want a direct reply from RSB Secretariat (all feedback are considered for inclusion in revised versions)
- I want to receive information about RSB Membership and/or RSB Certification
- I want to subscribe to the RSB Newsletter

Thank you for your contribution to the improvement of the RSB Standard!

Please return this form

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