

## Claims – Definition

A “claim” in this document means any statement (whether or not accompanied by a logo) setting apart and promoting a product, business or service; and/or a link or text guidance on access to further information.

This document will cover the following:

- 1. Claim on trustea verification by the members and the usages of the trustea logo.**
- 2. Claims by trustea program on impact and outcomes.**
- 3. External Whistleblowing Procedure**

Currently, several different types of claims and logo use are allowed in trustea. The specific claims allowed and disallowed for each of the areas of scope are defined in this document in the subsequent sections. Users of claims are advised to read carefully for types of statements that are allowed or disallowed before applying for Trustea authorisation (if required).

### **1. Claim on trustea verification by the members and the usages of the trustea logo :**

#### **1.1**

trustea certifies manufacturing units/factories that manufacture for wholesale trade, and the source of the raw materials that is the entire back-end supply chain of that factory. Certified manufacturing units are given the right in their finished product to wholesale/bulk trade to state that their production process is certified by trustea. That is the only claim that we allow as of now. In other words, in our system today, a trustea claim is limited to the factory which can claim to buyers that its manufacturing process is compliant with the trustea code. How and who can make this claim is defined in trustea documentation.

There are two relevant types of the manufacturing procedure. One is retail packaging where the packets are made to be sold to the end consumer. The other is wholesale/ bulk packaging that is sold to the packers.

Only entities that have a valid certificate can make a claim. If they want, they can use the logo on their wholesale packet, and in the sale catalogue to wholesale buyers where they can claim their process is trustea certified.

If a factory makes tea in bulk and also in the same premises they make packets for consumers, the same factory cannot even mention the name of trustea or the logo in their retail packaging as the claim is for the bulk packaging only. They can only mention that on their wholesale/bulk pack. This claim is required to be made by the manufacturer when they

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sell their tea to wholesale/bulk buyers. The bulk buyers may resell the tea, repack the tea, or export. trustea standard gives the assurance to the bulk tea buyers that the factory has produced tea in compliance with the trustea Code based on the requirement of traceability adherence.

## 1.2 Basic Rules for trustea related Claims by members and partners :

Further details on what is allowed or disallowed for each type of claim are explained in the sections ahead, nonetheless, there are some basic rules that apply to all types of claims and must be observed by anyone who intends to make a claim in relation to *trustea*.

These rules are:

- Public claims in relation to trustea can ONLY be made by trustea members.
- Organisations that are not trustea certified members, trustea partners, licensed certification bodies, or licensed training providers are NOT ALLOWED to use the trustea name or logos in any way unless with prior written consent from the trustea Secretariat.
- Any claim in relation to trustea MUST provide an opportunity for further information by sharing a link to the trustea website [www.trustea.org](http://www.trustea.org).
- In cases where trustea authorization is NOT required, this applies only to pre-authorize messaging. If your claim deviates from pre-prepared claims, please note that Trustea authorisation will be required regardless of the type of claim (area of scope).
- Any claim in relation to trustea MUST be informed to trustea by email – [support@trustea.org](mailto:support@trustea.org)
- Misuse of claims in relation to trustea may lead to public dismissal from membership or trustea licensing schemes and attract legal actions, as appropriate.

## 1.3 Areas of Scope :

The table below presents an overview of the areas of scope, to whom they apply, whether logo use is permitted and where, lists of approved organisations (those with the right to make a claim), and finally, whether trustea authorisation is required for making a claim (for more information on how to apply for trustea authorisation for a claim, please go to the Communication & Branding Guideline – Annexure A section on the trustea website).

	Trustea membership	Trustea certification	Physical product trades (off-product claims)	Physical product trades (on-product claims)	Credit trades (off-product claims only)	Trustea Accreditation System	Trustea training	Use of Logo Permitted	Place of logo usage	Basis of Claim	Whether approval required	Approved Organization List
Commercial Partners	x				x			Respective Company Logo	Off-Product Claims	Membership Invoice	No, exception case of deviations	<a href="https://trustea.org/partners/">https://trustea.org/partners/</a>
Certified Entities		x	x	x			x	Respective Company Logo	Off-Product & On-Product Claims	trustea Verification Certificate from CB	No, exception case of deviations	<a href="https://trustea.org/partners/">https://trustea.org/partners/</a>
Certification Bodies						x	x	Certification Mark	Off-Product Claims	trustea Verification Certificate from CB	No, exception case of deviations	<a href="https://trustea.org/auditors/">https://trustea.org/auditors/</a>

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Implementation Partners		x				x	x	Respective Company Logo	Off-Product Claims	Agreement with tS	Yes	<a href="https://trustea.org/partner/">https://trustea.org/partner/</a>
Impartiality Committee						x		Respective Company Logo	Off-Product Claims	Agreement with tS	Yes	NA
trustea Council	x							Respective Company Logo	Off-Product Claims	Agreement with tS	Yes	<a href="https://trustea.org/governance/">https://trustea.org/governance/</a>
Code Development Committee	x							Respective Company Logo	Off-Product Claims	Agreement with tS	Yes	<a href="https://trustea.org/partner/">https://trustea.org/partner/</a>

\*Examples of Off-product claims are typically the claims made on websites, reports, publications, studies, promotional material, signs, business cards, etc. Off-product claims may refer to a particular product, but the logo cannot be placed on-product (e.g. packaging).

Notes - See Communication & Branding guideline for more information on

- how to correctly use trustea’s logos.
- how to request authorisation from trustea for a claim.

## 1.4 Monitoring System & Misuse of Claims :

trustea Secretariat takes claims related to its systems and brands very seriously and strives to ensure that claims related to trustea are truthful, credible, consistent, and efficient, equally for internal/ non-public, consumer-facing and business-to-business claims. To achieve this objective, trustea Secretariat is implementing an internal Monitoring System to:

1. Keep track of authorised claims’ use
2. Monitor the use of the Trustea logos and other related copyright material
3. Monitor the statements being used in relation to trustea’s systems, products, and services
4. Uncover and take corrective action on potential misuse of trustea’s logos and/ or misleading or untruthful claims.

## 1.5 Internal Control Procedures:

trustea Secretariat’s management systems are being reviewed to ensure that claims are monitored more closely. These include systems to map the risks of claims’ misuse and to propose mitigation strategies. The control procedures also include regular reviews of the claims’ authorisation process and the authorised claims themselves as well as periodic external searches (both by trustea and if required by external parties) for uncovering potential misuse of claims or trustea logos.

## 1.6 trustea’s Certification Mark License Agreement:

Any claims related to trustea certified physical product trades MUST apply for authorisation as per Annexure A of the Communication & Branding Guidelines. Once the claim is authorised by trustea Secretariat, the applicant will be required to agree to and sign a License Agreement for the use of trustea’s Certification Mark.

The objective of this license is to stipulate the rules and limits of the use of trustea’s

certification Mark and to ensure trustea's brand is protected.

For more information regarding the License Agreement please contact: [comms@trustea.org](mailto:comms@trustea.org)

### 1.7 Penalties for Misuse of Claims and trustea's Logos:

trustea Secretariat's governance documents have clear rules regarding the abuse of claims and misuse of trustea logos by trustea members, which may ultimately lead to expulsion and legal action.

Likewise, trustea's license agreements (for example with certification bodies, benchmarking schemes, credit trading sellers and buyers, etc.) also provide rules around potential penalties for the misuse of claims and trustea's logos, which may ultimately lead to loss of license. Any case of misuse of claims or logos will be addressed by the Trustea Board of Directors, based on the trustea Secretariat's Complaint Resolution Process. Deliberate misuse of claims or logos may lead to suspension or ultimately expulsion from trustea membership and/or loss of license and/or certification. The trustea logos (and claims relating to trustea) may not be used in any manner that is misleading, including (but not limited to):

1. Confusing the trustea logos or any claims relating to trustea certification with any other label, trademark, brand, or logo.
2. Associating the trustea logos with products that are not certified by trustea.
3. Implying that non-certified products or processes are certified by trustea.

In the case of misuse by either Trustea members or non-members, trustea reserves its right to initiate legal action, as appropriate.

### 2. Claims by trustea program on impact and outcomes :

As a part of the standard's public outreach and communication, the organization will put out the achievement and claims on the outcomes and impact of the program. These claims will be based on information that is objective evidence based, verifiable and credible studies or sources.

#### 2.1 Sources of information :

- a. Data collected through field assessments by third-party audits. (source: tCMS)
- b. Data collected through field assessments by trustea system assurance audits (source: tCMS)
- c. Data collected through field assessments by Implementing partners through the gap closure report (source:tCMS)
- d. Impact survey commission by trustea or its partners (Impact report)
- e. M & E activities (M&E Report)
- f. Specific interviews and feedback for a specific report like a yearbook or quarterly newsletters

#### 2.2 Verification of Information and source:

Trustea has to objectively verify and investigate, if necessary, the accuracy and credibility of the information which forms the background of the outcome claims. Once this is established, the

background data, video logs or interview transcripts have to be retained with a clear correlation to the output.

All the sources of information like publicly available reports or research papers, information from websites, industry publications etc. will be clearly acknowledged in the publications where it is used as input. If any such source is referred to by any external agency which may prepare reports on behalf of trustea, trustea has to verify the authenticity of the reference source. Irrespective of whether such information is directly used by trustea or any third-party agency engaged by trustea, all necessary permissions and acknowledgments will be ensured.

### **2.3 Feedback on Claims:**

Trustea will provide on request, any of background information/data which forms the basis of the claims, in case there is a query or appropriate/justified request for the same. If any error is established as a result of a query, it will be immediately rectified and the same will be recirculated with a clear indication of the rectification.

### **2.4 Scope and timeline:**

Trustea will ensure that the specific scope and the time period of the claim are clearly indicated in the relevant document. The same will be reflected in the backup information of the claim. For example, if an impact report is issued the report will clearly state the time period for which the impact is being claimed and the same should be reflected in the data collection, survey, and interviews.

Annual reports and quarterly updates will also be linked to the period for which they have been issued.

### **2.5 Review and approval:**

As a minimum all claims will go through two steps review before publication as below:

- a. Information by third parties commissioned by trustea: Review by trustea
- b. Internal information: Review by the next level within the organization

This review must consider the following criteria –

1. Accuracy of the data
2. Correctness of the visual representation
3. Verification of the accuracy of the incremental benefit claims
4. Verification of the credibility of the sources
5. Objective accuracy of the improvement
6. Methodology of the data collection, statistical tools used, and assumptions underlying the

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information.

## 2.6 Data Privacy :

All the data and information collected will be stored securely. Any information relating to the identity of individuals or organization can only be shared with their approval. In case of any query on the claims, generic data can be shared on request but any data or information related to the privacy of an individual or organization cannot be shared without their specific consent.

## 3. External Whistleblowing Procedure:

If any individual or organization wishes to dispute confidentially an alleged untruthful or misleading claim as well as any misuse of trustea’s logos, trustea is to be contacted through the following link <https://www.trusteacms.in/feedback> and timebound resolution will be ensured.

The confidentiality and personal details of the whistleblowers will be protected and will not be shared with any other individual or the complainant’s organisation both during and after the resolution process.

### Reference Document:

Data Privacy Policy (Available on trustea Website under Resources – Policies/Guidelines)  
Communication Guideline (Available on trustea Website under Resources – Policies/Guidelines)  
Trustea Grievance Policy (Available on trustea Website under Resources – Policies/Guidelines)  
ISEAL Impact and outcomes claims and communications Guidance

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