

Responsible Sourcing Policy

Trustea Sustainable Tea Foundation

5th Floor, Unit No. 506, The Chambers, 1865, Rajdanga Main Road, Kolkata - 700107

W: www.trustea.org | E: support@trustea.org |

For feedback, further information, and suggestions please write

["support@trustea.org"](mailto:support@trustea.org) mentioning 'responsible sourcing' in the subject line.

Date of Last Revision – Jan 2026



Trustea Sustainable Tea Foundation: Responsible Sourcing Policy

Introduction: *trustea* Sustainable Tea Foundation, primarily a service organization, has limited product sourcing requirements. This policy establishes our commitment to responsible sourcing and serves as a guideline for incorporating social, environmental, and legal standards into our procurement processes.

Scope: This policy applies to all suppliers engaged by *trustea* Sustainable Tea Foundation for goods or services. This policy applies to all sourcing decisions involving purchases on or over INR 300,000, particularly for consulting services. The focus is on mitigating risks in high-risk areas, ensuring compliance with responsible business practices, and driving positive change across the supply chain.

Responsible Sourcing Commitments:

1. **Supplier Selection Criteria:** When selecting suppliers, *trustea* evaluates a range of factors beyond cost, including product quality, safety, continuity of supply, and intellectual property protection. We also assess suppliers based on their working conditions, environmental practices, safety standards, and human rights policies.

trustea requires suppliers to adhere to all relevant social and environmental legislation applicable to the products or services they provide. This includes a thorough assessment of the regulatory environment and any associated risks related to production or service delivery.

2. **Compliance with Legal and Environmental Standards:** *trustea* expects all suppliers to comply with applicable national laws and regulations, including labour and environmental laws. Suppliers are also encouraged to consider relevant international standards, particularly when they exceed local legislation in promoting ethical and sustainable practices.

trustea emphasizes that adherence to these legal and environmental requirements is a precondition for any business relationship. Failure to comply may lead to disqualification or termination of the contract.

3. **Integration of Responsible Sourcing into Supplier Practices:** Suppliers are expected to integrate legal, social, and environmental compliance into their internal policies and supply chain management processes. *trustea* encourages suppliers to ensure that their corporate buyers are aware of the regulatory impacts of their procurement decisions. This helps foster responsible business behaviour and improves overall compliance with social and environmental standards.

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4. **Encouragement for Suppliers to Develop Their Own Sourcing Policies:** *trustea* encourages suppliers to establish and implement their own responsible sourcing policies, tailored to their business capacity and needs. This integration of responsible practices into business strategies should address environmental sustainability, fair labour practices, and human rights.

trustea offers to support suppliers through training and guidance on responsible sourcing practices, helping them align with the principles of ethical supply chain management.

5. **Monitoring and Tracking Compliance:** *trustea* reserves the right to request detailed information from suppliers regarding their social and environmental practices. This may include documentation of policies, procedures, and performance metrics. Additionally, *trustea* may conduct on-site visits to assess suppliers' compliance with responsible sourcing requirements.

Suppliers are expected to cooperate fully with *trustea* in providing the necessary information and facilitating compliance monitoring throughout the contract period.

6. **Stakeholder Expectations and Reporting:** To foster transparency and build stakeholder trust, *trustea* may collect and report on supplier performance concerning responsible sourcing. This information could be included in annual reports or other publicly available formats. *trustea* will always seek explicit consent from suppliers before disclosing their names or specific performance details in such reports.

trustea values the collaboration of suppliers in fulfilling its reporting obligations and encourages open communication to improve sourcing practices and meet stakeholder expectations.

Human Rights Standards: *trustea* is committed to upholding internationally recognized human rights standards in all sourcing activities. Suppliers must ensure fair treatment of workers, avoid any form of forced or child labour, eliminate discrimination, and provide safe working conditions. *trustea* expects suppliers to take proactive measures to prevent human rights abuses and address any identified concerns.

Support to Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence

trustea Sustainable Tea Foundation recognizes the increasing importance of corporate sustainability due diligence in tea supply chains and defines its role in supporting such processes through its standard-setting, assurance, and capacity-building functions. *trustea*'s certification framework, including its code requirements, audit mechanisms, and traceability systems, is designed to support companies in identifying, preventing, and mitigating social, environmental, and human rights risks within the tea value chain.

In alignment with internationally recognized frameworks such as the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Business Conduct, and the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, *Trustea* provides structured assurance and credible data that companies may use as an input to their due diligence processes.

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However, *trustea* does not replace or assume the full due diligence responsibility of companies. The scheme acts as a supporting tool by providing verified information, risk-based assessments, and continuous improvement mechanisms at the production and supply chain level. Companies remain responsible for conducting their own due diligence, making risk-based decisions, and addressing adverse impacts in line with applicable regulations and international standards.

trustea publicly communicates the scope and limitations of its role to ensure clarity for all stakeholders and to promote responsible and transparent use of its certification system in corporate sustainability due diligence frameworks.

Compliance Check: *trustea* ensures compliance to the policy by taking cognizance of by the vendors on the policy and answers to the questions mentioned in the annexure to the policy. Also maintain the record of the same and perform periodic assessment check wherever applicable.

Conclusion: *trustea* Sustainable Tea Foundation is dedicated to promoting ethical and responsible sourcing practices. We expect our suppliers to align with our commitments to legal, environmental, and human rights standards. Through continuous monitoring, collaboration, and improvement, we aim to build a supply chain that upholds the highest standards of sustainability and ethical integrity.

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Annexure: I

Question one: selecting a supplier

When choosing a supplier, in addition to making a final determination on cost, companies often need to evaluate a range of supply chain issues: product quality and safety, continuity of supply and speed of delivery, and intellectual property protection. Criteria such as working conditions, environmental practices, safety standards, and human rights policies should also be factored into the selection process.

As a first step, we will check basic facts about the social and environmental legislation and the level of enforcement assess potential production risks.

Question 1: What are the applicable social and environmental legislation that applies to your services/supply? Please describe how you conform to these requirements.

Question two: Commitment on Compliance with the law

It will be explicitly made known while contracting with companies that companies should make it known that they expect their business partners to comply with all national laws and regulations, including labour and environmental Laws, and as appropriate, to take into account principles from relevant international instruments, which may sometimes go beyond local legislation.

Question 2: Could you confirm that you fully understand trustea Sustainable Tea Foundation's commitment to only engaging with organizations that adhere to responsible sourcing principles, ensuring full compliance with all legal and environmental requirements for the scope of their services/products? Please note that any failure to meet these standards could result in disqualification from the supply agreement.

Question three: Integrate responsible sourcing into buying practices

It is expected the supplier organisation will integrate legal compliance to all the supply chain activities in its own scope.

The company can initiate direct improvements in two ways by raising awareness among its corporate buyers of the impact their decisions might on necessary regulatory compliances.

Question 3: Do you consider legal and regulatory commitment to relevant social and environmental laws when making purchase decisions?

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Question four: Encouraging suppliers in setting their own sourcing policies

trustea encourages suppliers to develop their own responsible practices so that suppliers can integrate these objectives into their own business strategy, based on their individual capacity and needs.

If required *trustea* is willing provide training to its suppliers to help them improve their corporate commitment to responsible sourcing.

Question 4: Do you need guidance or training on setting up responsible sourcing practices?

Question five: Track supplier compliance

trustea can ask their suppliers to provide comprehensive information about their social and environmental practices.

If necessary, On-site visits can also be organized to monitor suppliers' progress. While implementing the contract, information may be asked for to substantiate or further assess compliance.

Question 5: Do you confirm that you will provide all necessary information as may be asked for regarding responsible sourcing for the purpose of tracking compliance?

Question six: Managing stakeholder expectations and reporting

To build stakeholder trust, *trustea* may collect information on supplier performance across markets, and publish it in an annual report or other publicly-available format. However, whenever, individual companies are mentioned by name, the explicit consent of the company will be obtained.

As a part of continual improvement activities and stakeholder expectations management, *trustea* may publish responsible sourcing compliance information as a part of reporting.

Question 6: Are you willing to work with *trustea* for publishing your efforts on responsible?

(Note: *trustea* will always obtain prior consent for such public domain reporting.

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