

Standard Setting and Revision Procedure

Date of the last Revision – 05.03.2026

trustea Sustainable Tea Foundation

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

www.trustea.org

For feedback, further information, and suggestions please write under the tab
“Trustea code related” in the link <https://www.trusteacms.in/feedback>



Standard Setting and Revision Procedure

Table of Contents –

1. Purpose, Scope, & Guidelines.....	2
a) Commitment towards sustainable practices	
b) Environmental outcomes	
c) Societal outcomes	
d) Economic outcomes	
2. Definitions and Roles.....	3
3. References.....	5
4. Decision to develop or revise a trustea standard.....	6
5. Process to develop or revise a trustea standard.....	8
6. Publications and Implementation of trustea Standards.....	13
7. Record-Keeping Policy.....	17

Standard Setting and Revision Procedure

Date of the last Revision – 05.03.2026

trustea Sustainable Tea Foundation

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

www.trustea.org

For feedback, further information, and suggestions please write under the tab “Trustea code related” in the link <https://www.trusteacms.in/feedback>



1. Purpose and Scope

The purpose and the scope of the code are to achieve the outcome that is stated in the organization’s Theory of Change. The key outcomes below must be always considered in any revision activity and will always form a part of the standard that is issued.

a) Commitment towards sustainable practices

As per the TOC, it is assumed that the efforts of *trustea* and certifications should be able to ensure that the certified entities have the required commitment, reflected through policies and processes, towards sustainability. The entities should have formal Board approved policies towards sustainable practices and mechanisms to ensure those practices

b) Environmental outcomes

It is expected that the *trustea* code and the various outputs therein will ensure that certified entities have resilient climate practices and good natural capital management practices. These environmental outcomes will be reflected in water conservation and soil conservation practices, responsible and efficient waste management systems, pollution management practices, and responsible use of chemical fertilizers among other things.

c) Societal outcomes

On the societal outcomes, it is expected that the certified entities will be acting in a socially responsible manner reflected in their higher level of compliance with rules and regulations, them providing a safer working environment to their staff and labour and making efforts towards empowering youth and women.

d) Economic outcomes

The economic outcomes expected are that the certified entities will be able to maximize their productivity and will be able to operate viably. The code will ensure that not just the entities, but growers and staff associated with the entities are able to earn fair wages and can afford decent living with humane living conditions. The *trustea* efforts will ensure that the tea industry is able to make sustainably and responsibly produced tea available to consumers.

Guidelines

1.1. This document specifies the procedure to be followed by *trustea* Sustainable Tea Foundation (tSTF) for the development of any new *trustea* standards and when substantive changes to existing *trustea* standards are required to be made.

Standard Setting and Revision Procedure

Date of the last Revision – 05.03.2026

trustea Sustainable Tea Foundation

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

www.trustea.org

For feedback, further information, and suggestions please write under the tab “Trustea code related” in the link <https://www.trusteacms.in/feedback>



1.2. tSTF exists to make tea production better for the people who manufacture it, better for the environment it grows in and better for the sector’s future. tSTF works with a diverse range of stakeholders to promote measurable and continuing improvements for the environment, small tea growers’ communities, and the economies of tea-producing areas. tSTF aims to transform tea production pan India (or wherever applicable) by enhancing the availability of tea for the consumers produced in an environmentally sustainable and socially responsible supply chain that fosters economic viability.

1.3. The purpose of this procedure is to ensure the credibility of the trustea standard developed by the tSTF, by incorporating the values of transparency, participation, and fairness into the processes for their development and revision, and through compliance with international best practices for standards development.

1.4. Since trustea is a tea sector-specific sustainability code with good manufacturing practices and country-specific regulatory compliances, the revision process may consider for reference any similar standard if it is in operation.

1.5. The requirements and the structure of the code have to be designed to ensure the achievements of the outcomes as defined in the organisation’s ToC and the same shall be evaluated in the final stage of the adaption of the code

1.6. During revision it will be ensured that all the relevant regulatory requirements of the country are met as minimum compliance. Specific laws link to each clause in the code will be listed and cross-referenced.

The upgradation of the certified entities to the higher categories will be based on going beyond the generic legal compliance for the relevant clause as one of the evaluation criteria.

1.7. All feedback and suggestion received for the existing code shall be collated and presented CDC for consideration during the revision. The feedback received by the link provided in the codebook introduction will be automatically collated by the trustea Code Management System (tCMS) and will be utilised for consideration during the revision.

2. Definitions and Roles

2.1 tSTF Member: tSTF membership is made up of the following categories: Certified Entities (CE) & Industrial Trade Bodies (ITB), Tea Buyers (TB/CP), Funding Agency (FA), Local communities in tea growing areas, Auction House / Tea traders, Implementing Partners, Approved Certification Bodies (CB), Government/ Statutory & Regulatory Bodies (S&R) relevant to the Tea supply chain, Oversight Bodies (OB), NGOs & Civil Society organizations (NGO/CSO), Small Tea Growers, associate members. All members are contacted by tSTF, at which time a Council is elected and any proposed changes to the tSTF statutes are voted on.

Standard Setting and Revision Procedure

Date of the last Revision – 05.03.2026

trustea Sustainable Tea Foundation

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

www.trustea.org

For feedback, further information, and suggestions please write under the tab “Trustea code related” in the link <https://www.trusteacms.in/feedback>



2.2 tSTF Council: The *trustea* program is governed by a multistakeholder *trustea* Sustainable Tea Council representing the tea industry in India. The Council acts as the representative organ for leading the multi-stakeholder program to improve the Sustainability of the Indian tea industry through the voluntary adoption of the *trustea* code. The role of the Council has been formalised by clear reference in the key company incorporation documents namely the Articles of Association (AOA) and Memorandum of Association (MOA) submitted to the Ministry of Corporate Affairs. The council elects its office bearers by preferential voting and exercises its role authority in line with these documents.

2.3 tSTF Secretariat: The Secretariat acts to execute the decisions of the Council and serves tSTF members and partners.

2.4 Interested party: Any person or group concerned with or directly affected by a standard – used synonymously in this procedure with the term stakeholder.

2.5 Standard: Document that provides, for common and repeated use, rules, guidelines, or characteristics for products or related processes and production methods, with which compliance is not mandatory. For the purpose of this document, the following standard developed by tSTF is considered: The *trustea* Code Principles and Criteria.

2.6 Revision: Any change to the existing standard resulting in significant modification or change of the standard application (e.g. adding or removing relevant or non-relevant Criteria). In this case, the process of revision will have to follow this standard-setting procedure. Non-substantive or administrative changes are not considered as standard revisions and therefore do not have to follow this procedure.

2.7 Code Development Committee (CDC): To improve competitiveness for verified entities and make it possible for them to comply with national regulations and in the future, with international sustainability standards *trustea* formed CDC. This committee keeps the *trustea* code up to date with the technological and regulatory developments in the sector and leanings from the ongoing assessments. The same is reviewed periodically to determine the need for any changes or upgrades to the same. The CDC plays an important role in providing inputs and also reviewing the suggestions made by various applicable stakeholders to keep the code updated and current scenarios and challenges. (CDC members ref. doc)

2.8 Stakeholders: *trustea* has identified the following stakeholders and shall be considered for each relevant stage of the code revision.

Funding Agency (CP)	Direct Consultation
Certified Entities (CE)	During public consultation
Implementing Partners (IP)	Direct consultation

Standard Setting and Revision Procedure



Date of the last Revision – 05.03.2026

trustea Sustainable Tea Foundation

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

www.trustea.org

For feedback, further information, and suggestions please write under the tab “Trustea code related” in the link <https://www.trusteacms.in/feedback>

Approved Certification Bodies (CB)	Direct consultation
Statutory & Regulatory Bodies (S&R)	During public consultation
Oversight Bodies (OB)	During public consultation
NGOs & Civil Society organizations (NGO/CSO)	During public consultation
Producers and producer organization	Direct consultation and public consultation
Other organizations working within the tea sector (O)	During public consultation
Society, at large incl. local communities (S)	During public consultation
Wholesale tea trading organization	During public consultation

2.9. Non-substantive Changes: Amendment in legal requirement of the laws referred in the code, new legislation which supersedes relevant requirements in the code, change in the category of the existing code criteria.

2.10. Substantive Changes: any change in the country’s legal requirements/ inclusion or exclusion of a clause in the existing chapters that impact the implementation that does not alter the basic code requirement

3. References

3.1 Guidelines: ISEAL Code of Good Practice for Setting Social and Environmental Standards (v. 1.1)

3.2 trustea Code (v. 3.1.0)

3.3 trustea System Assurance Protocol - General Regulation Part 1 & 2 - 2026

4. Decision To Develop or Revise a trustea Standard

4.1 The trustea secretariat will make a proposal for revision of the standard based on the reasons outlined in clause no 4.6. The CDC will be approached for approval of the proposal if approved by CDC it will be placed in the council. The decision to go ahead with a revision or review a trustea standard shall rest with the trustea Council.

4.2 trustea standards shall be reviewed on an ongoing basis, with the period of the next review not exceeding 5 years from the adoption of the previous version of the standard. Trustea will reach out to the stakeholders mentioned in the tSTF SE01 _ Stakeholder Engagement document informing of the periodic review requirement and seeking their inputs regarding the relevance or otherwise for a revision including any suggestions for the terms of reference if there is any feedback suggesting the need for revision. The same will be put up through a public notice on our website. These will be considered when the input is given to the CDC meeting convened for the specific purpose of discussing the 5-year periodic review. This will be done at least 60 days prior to the specific CDC meeting so that relevant feedback is received and considered.

Standard Setting and Revision Procedure

Date of the last Revision – 05.03.2026

trustea Sustainable Tea Foundation

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

www.trustea.org

For feedback, further information, and suggestions please write under the tab “Trustea code related” in the link <https://www.trusteacms.in/feedback>



4.3 The date of the subsequent scheduled review shall be made publicly available, and appear in the standard.

4.4 A review process shall consider a standard’s continued relevance, effectiveness, and whether external circumstances have changed to the point where change is required.

4.5 After each review, a decision shall be made by the trustea Code Development Committee on whether a revision shall be recommended to the trustea Council.

4.6 Reasons, why a revision process may be recommended and initiated, include -

- The outcome of periodic review as per clause 4.2
- Any feedback from stakeholders (reference clause number 4 from Stakeholder Engagement Document)
- Accumulated comments submitted by any interested parties on the current version of the standard.
- New scientific developments
- Change in legislation
- Change in trustea strategic planning or Theory of Change
- Information from trustea’s Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning system or Risk Management system that indicates revision is necessary
- Any other significant change in the tea production and supply chain
- Lack of relevance of the trustea Standard
- Review as per clause number 1.4 above indicated there is no specifically similar country-specific standard. However, any relevant information on other sustainability platforms may be considered for reference if relevant for the benefit of the program goals.

One or more member from other sustainability standards with experience in code setting and revision is a part of the CDC and provides peer review and input of the process.

4.7 If the development or the revision of a Standard is approved, the trustea Council shall direct the trustea Secretariat to establish a Code Development Committee. (CDC)

The Terms of Reference for the project which frame the work of the Code Development Committee (CDC) shall include –

- a) Clear objectives of the Standard Revision that the standard seeks to achieve, in particular, those objectives that focus on social, environmental, livelihood, health, and safety aspects
- b) Key areas for which the CDC shall develop Standard indicators
- c) Key areas the CDC shall investigate before developing Standard indicators

Standard Setting and Revision Procedure

Date of the last Revision – 05.03.2026

trustea Sustainable Tea Foundation

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

www.trustea.org

For feedback, further information, and suggestions please write under the tab “Trustea code related” in the link <https://www.trusteacms.in/feedback>



d) Instructions to the CDC to produce drafts of the revised Standard both prior to and following stakeholder feedback, including justification of the proposed changes, and an assessment of risks and impact of each change

e) Expected timeframe for the revision process

4.8 The tSTF CDC will designate a Project Manager to coordinate the process. The project manager may, with approval from the CDC invite an external consultant or subject matter expert, if necessary.

4.9 The CDC may form sub-committees for specific topics to derive the more relevant conclusion of the subject change, e.g. Wage or Woman safety.

4.10 The CDC shall abide by the trustea Anti-trust policy at all times

4.11 The CDC shall produce drafts of the new or revised standard both prior to and following stakeholder feedback, including justification of the proposed changes, and an assessment of the risks and impact of each change.

4.12 With the support of the Secretariat, the CDC shall identify and inform peer standards of the intention to develop or revise a Standard and seek input to the ToR from peer standards and encourage their participation in the development or revision of the standard.

5. Process To Develop or Revise a trustea Standard

5.1 Terms of Reference

5.1.1 Before developing or revising a standard, the CDC shall develop Terms of Reference in consultation with the trustea Secretariat using the Term of Reference of the project approved by the Council. If the CDC is revising a trustea Standard, the CDC shall update the ToRs originally approved.

5.1.2 The Terms of Reference shall include –

- a) The proposed scope of the standard and the intended geographic application.
- b) A justification of the need for the standard, including an assessment of whether the proposed standard will meet an expressed need, an assessment of the most important sustainability issues falling within the scope of the standard, and documentation of other standards operating or in development that meets all or part of the expressed need.
- c) Clear social, environmental, and economic outcomes that the standard seeks to achieve and how those are linked to the organisation’s intended change.
- d) An assessment of risks in implementing the Standard and how to mitigate these, including identification of factors that could have a negative impact on the ability of the standard to achieve its objectives, unintended consequences that could arise from its implementation; and possible corrective actions that could be taken to address these potential risks.
- e) Rules and responsibilities for the working of the CDC.
- f) Evaluation of the resources needed to deliver on the objectives set by the Council.
- g) Decision-making process based on the principles of consensus.
- h) A series of KPIs to evaluate the success of the revision process. – (KPI)

Standard Setting and Revision Procedure

Date of the last Revision – 05.03.2026

trustea Sustainable Tea Foundation

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

www.trustea.org

For feedback, further information, and suggestions please write under the tab
“Trustea code related” in the link <https://www.trusteacms.in/feedback>



1. Adherence to the timeline for each step of the process
2. Approvals from CDC as per TOR
3. Revision of draft based on the CDC input
4. Presenting to the council for approval as per the timeline

5.1.3 A summary of the finalised Terms of Reference and work plan shall be made publicly available for comment.

5.1.4 The trustea website shall be continuously updated, at least once in a month with information on the status of the standard development or revision activities.

5.2 Drafting the trustea Standard

5.2.1 The project manager is responsible for drafting the Standards and presenting it to CDC for approval.

5.2.2 The social, environmental, and livelihood objectives of the Standard shall be clearly and explicitly specified in the Standard itself.

5.2.3 In defining the content of a Standard, consideration shall be given to regulatory requirements, market needs, trustea Theory of Change and Impact assessments, audit reports, input from stakeholders, existing peer standards, sustainability risk assessments, and scientific & technological developments.

5.2.4 Standards shall be structured to allow for monitoring and evaluation of progress toward achieving the standard's objectives.

5.2.5 A Standard shall avoid language and structure that may create ambiguities in interpretation. Consistent interpretation will be sought by setting criteria that are clear, objective, and verifiable.

5.2.6 A Standard shall not favour a particular technology or patented item.

5.2.7 A Standard shall attribute or cite all original intellectual sources of content.

5.2.8 The CDC shall approve a draft standard before releasing it for public consultation.

5.2.9 The CDC shall inform the trustea Council before releasing draft Standard or draft revised Standard for public consultation.

5.3 Public Consultation

The public consultation of stakeholders for the new/ revision of the standard shall be done as per clause 5 of the Stakeholders Engagement Process document.

At the outset of a standards development or revision, tSTF shall make publicly available a summary of the process that shall include:

- a. summary of the ToR for the standard, including the proposed scope, objectives and justification of the need for the standard;

Standard Setting and Revision Procedure

Date of the last Revision – 05.03.2026

trustea Sustainable Tea Foundation

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

www.trustea.org

For feedback, further information, and suggestions please write under the tab
“Trustea code related” in the link <https://www.trusteacms.in/feedback>



b. steps in the standard-setting process, including timelines and clearly identified opportunities for contributing; and

c. decision-making procedures, including how decisions are made and who makes them.

d. The following milestones with timelines will be published for every revision activity. The estimated time from the initiation of the exercise till the completion of the rollout of the revised standard is 2 years.

Activity

1. Code change proposal to CDC and Council
2. Final CDC on the complete draft
3. Council approval on the draft
4. Public consultation for 60 days and feedback requests by mail to specific stakeholders as per the stakeholder engagement
5. Reach out to unrepresented category for feedback
6. Review all the feedback/ comments from step number 4 above and collate for CDC
7. CDC recommendation on actions if any based on the feedback
8. Final draft by including any changes as recommended by CDC
9. Second Public consultation process if any substantive change is required as per step number 7
10. Review the final draft against the desired outcome of the organizational ToC
11. Decision Making and Final approval of the Standard by the council
12. Release of the trustea standard
13. Transition rule enforcement
14. Training the CBs & IPs
15. Guidance for certificate holders to transition between the current and new version
16. Registration for certification on new standard opens
17. The trustea new version of the Standard requirements comes into effect
18. Auditing can start against the transition period version of the new standard
19. Continue to engage in dialogue with our partners
20. Industry feedback
21. Feedback from CPs, CBs & Ips & Users on the circulated code
22. Changes if any required
23. trustea shall review and where necessary revise its Theory of Change, intended outcomes, impacts, strategies and causal pathways at least once every five years, or earlier where significant change occurs.

5.3.1 The draft of the proposed revision shall be made available in the website at the time of the public consultation. The launch of a public consultation shall be officially announced on the trustea website. A minimum period of sixty days will be provided for feedback. The announcement shall be copied to ISEAL Alliance.

Standard Setting and Revision Procedure

Date of the last Revision – 05.03.2026

trustea Sustainable Tea Foundation

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

www.trustea.org

For feedback, further information, and suggestions please write under the tab
“Trustea code related” in the link <https://www.trusteacms.in/feedback>



5.3.2 The announcement shall include:

- a) A brief and clear description of the scope and objectives of the consultation
- b) The justification of the need to introduce or revise the Standard
- c) The objectives the new Standard wants to achieve or the reason for revision
- d) The duration of the consultation
- e) The estimated timeline for completion of the proposed standard or revision
- f) The opportunity to submit written comments on the specific issues and approaches that should be addressed
- g) Contact details for sending comments.

5.3.3 trustea Secretariat shall proactively seek contributions from under-represented stakeholders or disadvantaged groups, using various means, including but not limited to face-to-face meetings, emails, workshops, or asking for support from facilitators who have direct contact with stakeholders.

5.3.4 trustea should proactively seek contributions from a balanced representation of stakeholder interests in public consultations.

5.3.5 Any proposed draft of a standard shall include at least one round of public consultation. A second round shall be required if substantive changes have been made since the first draft.

For a new standard, the second round of consultation shall be carried out irrespective of the changes made after the first consultation.

5.3.6 The first round of consultation on a proposed draft of a standard shall normally include a period of at least 60 days for the submission of comments.

The second round of consultation shall normally include a period of at least 30 days.

5.3.7 Before the end of the consultation period, the CDC shall evaluate if the views of all key stakeholder groups (including under-represented or disadvantaged stakeholders) are represented in the contribution and can instruct the secretariat to carry out adequate mitigation measures.

5.3.8 After each consultation, a synopsis of the comments received and how they have been addressed shall be produced. The synopsis shall be made publicly available and shall be sent to all parties that submitted comments.

5.3.9 The CDC shall amend the draft Standard, as necessary in light of the comments received and produce a final draft ready for approval (or second consultation if relevant).

5.3.10 When the CDC has completed the development or revision of the standard and has approved its content, the CDC shall inform the trustea Council that the final draft of the Standard is ready for approval.

Standard Setting and Revision Procedure

Date of the last Revision – 05.03.2026

trustea Sustainable Tea Foundation

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

www.trustea.org

For feedback, further information, and suggestions please write under the tab “Trustea code related” in the link <https://www.trusteacms.in/feedback>



5.3.11 In case trustea and CDC feels there is insufficient feedback or any unresolved substantive issues it may recommend another round of feedback if it is deemed necessary after a detailed review.

5.3.12 All original feedback received shall be displayed in the section where the comments are displayed without any prejudice to the merit and acceptance of the comment.

5.4 Decision Making

5.4.1 The CDC shall aim to make decisions by consensus.

5.4.2 If consensus is not possible for any specific issue or criteria /indicators and the results in a deadlock, whereby opposing parties express a sustained opposition on a substantial issue the CDC shall refer the matter to the Council, who shall seek to resolve the issue in question and make a decision by consensus.

Deadlock on an issue shall not prevent the continuation of the standard development process and the CDC shall continue on all other issues not directly affected by the matter causing the deadlock. The Council may consider issuing specific instructions for the continuation of the work.

5.4.3 Should the Council not be able to resolve the matter whereby opposing parties express a sustained opposition on the substantial issue, the Council shall resort to a vote as determined in the By-Laws of the Council.

5.5 Approval of the Standard

5.5.1 No decision shall be made by the Council unless a quorum as defined in the Council by-Laws is present.

5.5.2 The trustea Council confirms that the process followed by the CDC has been in line with the standard-setting/revising procedure.

5.5.3 The Council shall seek to make all decisions by consensus (absence of sustained opposition).

5.5.4 In the case where the Council is unable to reach a consensus, the Council shall resort to a vote as determined in the By-Laws of the Council.

5.5.5 In the case of rejection of the draft prepared by the CDC the Secretariat shall seek to establish the reasons for rejections and forward them to the CDC for consideration. The CDC shall then reconvene.

5.6 Note for council approval:

- i. the quorum is achieved when at least one member from each defined category is present.
- ii. Therefore if a category has one member, then a quorum is achieved when that category is present. Also, we have simplified the language under “9.b” in the council charter to remove the confusion.
- iii. The meetings are conducted in hybrid mode both physical and online so that we are able to get attendance from all the members.

Standard Setting and Revision Procedure

Date of the last Revision – 05.03.2026

trustea Sustainable Tea Foundation

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

www.trustea.org

For feedback, further information, and suggestions please write under the tab “Trustea code related” in the link <https://www.trusteacms.in/feedback>



iv. The pre-read of the meeting we shared with all the members alongwith the draft minutes for obtaining feedback. The minutes including the decisions are adopted only after getting any feedback/comment after circulation of the same to each and every member of the council.

v. if any emergency situation leads to a member being unable to join the meeting after confirmation, then the council go ahead taking the leave of absence into consideration if it is justified. In such cases, the above point number “iv” will provide an opportunity to give his opinion and feedback.

6. Publications and Implementation of *trustea* Standards

6.1 Publication and Record-Keeping

6.1.1 The approved final draft Standard shall be published on the *trustea* website within 7 days of approval. *trustea* will promptly inform its stakeholders of the revised standard and transition period, in particular certification bodies and, where feasible, certified enterprises.

6.1.2 All approved Standards shall be in the English language and *trustea* does not publish the original document in any other language. Organizations may translate for the purpose of training but the English version shall always be the final document for interpretation.

6.1.3 All approved standards shall include a contact point where requests for clarification and general feedback can be sent.

6.1.4 As per 4.3 all approved Standards shall include the date of the subsequent scheduled review.

6.1.5 *trustea* shall keep a file of all records made during standards development and revision activities (consultation comments, how they were taken into account, list of stakeholders, interested parties involved, draft and final versions of the standard, etc.) and these shall be made available on request.

6.1.6 All records related to Standard development and revision activities shall be kept for at least five years, or the next revision if it is earlier

6.1.7 The first issue of the revised standard will indicate the next revision by date as five years from the date of issue. If there is any revision prior to that the same will be recorded in the revision history. A holistic full-scale review has to be conducted within a maximum period of five years unless advised by the council to do so earlier based on circumstances as described in point no 4.6

6.1.8 Nomenclature of the code revision will be as below –

X.Y.Z

Major and critical Revision – X

Conversion of code category for critical criteria or legal – Y

Conversion of code category for other criteria or minor change in text criterion or sub-criterion – Z

Standard Setting and Revision Procedure

Date of the last Revision – 05.03.2026

trustea Sustainable Tea Foundation

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

www.trustea.org

For feedback, further information, and suggestions please write under the tab
“Trustea code related” in the link <https://www.trusteacms.in/feedback>



6.1.9 When a revised code is published for the first time the transition period will be mentioned along with the issue date.

6.2 Implementation

6.2.1 Before full-scale implementation as per the implementation plan, three test audits will be carried out in each of the three tea growing regions (North East, South, and West Bengal) by selecting one representative type of unit as below –

- i. Estate
- ii. Estate and Bought Leaf
- iii. Bought Leaf Factory

6.2.2 The results of the test audits will be evaluated by the CDC jointly with the auditing agency and any change if required which does not alter the requirements of the approved code will be carried out to make the code objectively auditable. These changes will be incorporated and notified before the new code is rolled out.

6.2.3 trustea certification cycle is for 2 years. After the adoption of the new standard, the following process will be considered based on the certification type:

1. New Entity -

- a. If NOC has not been issued based on the previous standard they will be taken to the new standard
- b. If NOC has been issued on the old standard, then the entity will be certified on the old standard and the new standard will be applicable at the time of the renewal.

2. For decertified/Non-Renewal Entities:

certified units that do not renew within 90 days of the expiry of the certificate, the renewal will be done on the old standard if done within six months of decertification or expiry, as the case may be.

3. Renewal:

If any entity's renewal is one year or more after launching the new standard, the renewal will be done in the new standard. If it is less than one year then the renewal will be done to the old standard.

Certificate holders shall be given a period of a maximum of two years to come into compliance with any revised Standards.

6.2.4 Pilot Rollout:

- a. Detailed records of the pilot rollout process that will be carried out with a focused group of representative auditees to understand the audit process for all the requirements. These audits will focus on ease of objective assessment, including feedback from the auditees on the field will be prepared in addition to the assessment report.

Standard Setting and Revision Procedure

Date of the last Revision – 05.03.2026

trustea Sustainable Tea Foundation

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

www.trustea.org

For feedback, further information, and suggestions please write under the tab
“Trustea code related” in the link <https://www.trusteacms.in/feedback>



- b. Relevant stakeholders/ experts may be invited to be a part of the pilot assessment.
- c. During the Pilot Rollout the focus will be to assess the ease of auditability and understanding of the requirement by the auditee.
- d. Outcomes of the pilot assessment that impact the standard will be compiled and changes will be made according to clause number 6.3 – 6.6.

6.3 Making changes

6.3.1 Non-substantive changes:

Non-substantive changes may be incorporated by the trustea Secretariat after informing the CDC via e-mail and formalise in the next CDC meeting.

- a) Changes must be summarised in the document and be communicated to all certified entities, certification bodies, implementing partners, and stakeholders
- b) The updated Standard shall be clearly identified with a new version number and date
- c) The most recent version shall be posted on the Trustea website

6.3.2 Urgent substantive changes

In case of any change in the country's legal requirements/ inclusion or exclusion of a clause in the existing chapters that impact the implementation that does not alter the basic code requirement may be done by intimation to CDC by the secretariat and approval opting electronically or by a meeting convened for the specific purpose. The same shall be regularised in the next council meeting. Such urgent changes have to be notified to all the stakeholders within 7 days of the change and to be updated in the website.

6.4 Changes post-publication

6.4.1 Up to six months after publication of a new/revised Standard and after informing the Council, trustea Secretariat can liaise with the CDC and suggest changes to fix potential gaps identified during the early stage of implementation of a new/revised standard.

6.4.2 The CDC shall approve the changes to the standard and inform the council accordingly for feedback if any.

- a) Changes must be summarised in the document and be communicated to all certified members, certification bodies, and stakeholders
- b) The updated Standard shall be clearly identified with a new version number and date
- c) The most recent version shall be posted on the trustea website within seven days of the change. The effective date shall always be the date of publication.
- d) The manager Assurance System is accountable for compliance to the process of publication of the code.
- e) In addition to the above the manager assurance system will send the latest standard document by email to all the relevant stakeholders.

Standard Setting and Revision Procedure

Date of the last Revision – 05.03.2026

trustea Sustainable Tea Foundation

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

www.trustea.org

For feedback, further information, and suggestions please write under the tab
“Trustea code related” in the link <https://www.trusteacms.in/feedback>



6.5 Complaints/ feedback mechanism

All complaints or feedback on issues related to standard setting and revision procedures will be submitted by the grievance tab on the trustea website. The grievance is automatically directed to the trustea code management system with a defined redressal and escalation matrix. The link to the same is given below - <https://www.trusteacms.in/grievance>

The above shall be collated and the action taken report submitted to the CDC for review.

6.6 The timeline for implementation as per 6.3.1 & 6.3.2 above, shall be as follows:

Non-substantive Changes – Changes to Govt. Mandated wages or wage agreements, Govt. notification on any public emergency will be implemented as per the applicable date and time. Trustea will make the best case effort to communicate the same to the concerned stakeholders however this does not absolve the entity from the accountability of implementation. If such a change requires any minor inclusion/exclusion from the code book the same will be applicable upon publication of the same on the trustea website.

Substantive Changes - The same is applicable within 90 days of publication after inclusion in the code book. This does not absolve the entity of any compliance requirement which may be required by the law in a shorter period.

6.7 Accountability for communication as per 2.9 & 2.10, lies with the assurance system manager of trustea to the identified trustea single point of contact in the certification body, implementing partners and verified entities who are in turn accountable for communication within their respective organisation.

6.8 In case of full-scale code revision the timeline will follow the transition rule defined in that respective revision process.

7. Record-Keeping Policy:

The following documents related to the change in the standard will be retained for a period of five years

- a. Standard-setting policy and supporting procedures.
- b. List of stakeholders contacted in the previous consultation along with specific feedback as recorded following clauses number 5.3.8 & 5.3.11.
- c. List of stakeholders who participated in previous consultations e.g. in the workshop could be Excel, an excerpt of the database).
- d. Comments and synopsis from the previous consultation, clause number 5.3.8
- e. Draft and final copies of the previous version of the standard.

Standard Setting and Revision Procedure



Date of the last Revision – 05.03.2026

trustea Sustainable Tea Foundation

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

www.trustea.org

For feedback, further information, and suggestions please write under the tab
“Trustea code related” in the link <https://www.trusteacms.in/feedback>

- f. Evidence to show how this information can be made available to stakeholders upon request (e.g. web page listing the records that are available for download).
- g. all documents related to the code revision will be retained based on the year of revision activity along with the final code. These records shall be made available if any request is received with a relevant purpose like research, comparison of code evolution, audits, etc.
- h. all the superseded code versions clearly marked “superseded on (date), for reference only” will be available for reference purposes on the website in a dedicated folder.
- i. Communication records shall be retained as evidence.
- j. trustea policy is to adopt a sustainable paperless operation and all documents on the website are free to download. However, if any request is received for a hard copy that is found to be reasonable due to the inability to obtain online copies, then trustea will make the hard copy available on request. trustea will not charge for this service.

Approved by: CDC
Date 07.06.2021-

Compiled by Anandita Ray Mukherjee
Date -21.06.2021

REVISION NO.: 0

APPROVED by: Rajesh Bhuyan (Director)
Effective from: 21.06.2021

Revision No - 2

25.07.2023

Revision No - 3

05.03.2026

Next Review

latest by 06.06.2029