

# Stakeholder Engagement Process

Trustea Sustainable Tea Foundation

6, Meghnad Saha Sarani, 5th Floor, Lake Range,

Kolkata - 700026

[www.trustea.org](http://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>

Date of the last Revision – 15.02.2023



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## 1. Definition –

Stakeholder Engagement is defined as **the process that trustea uses to engage stakeholders to achieve trustea's objectives, the growth of tea supply chains, and providing consumers with tea that is environmentally sustainable, socially responsible, and economically viable.**

## 2. Purpose –

Key elements of stakeholder engagement are as follows -

- To keep the organization's goals and processes relevant to stakeholders
- To help meet the challenges and respond to complexity in the area of operation
- To keep abreast and make changes based on the evolving scientific and technical knowledge
- To operate ethically, with trust and credibility
- To understand the changing dynamics in the industry
- To include new scientific developments
- To ensure environmental sustainability and good ethical practice
- Infuse changes or additions to strengthen the Code's credibility
- To receive objective & fact-based feedback
- To collate collective ambitions and help build collaborations for transformation
- To build public trust

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## 3. Scope –

tSTF provides the following services in the field of Sustainability, Environment, and Livelihood –

Management and governance of the voluntary trustea sustainability Code of conduct for the Indian tea industry, comprising of large & small tea growers, bought leaf factories, and tea estates.

Management and governance of an assurance scheme to verify and certify compliance with the Code.

Implement partnerships to support accessibility and understanding.

Advocacy with regulatory bodies, industry, consumers, retailers, and NGOs.

Supporting other routes to economic viability

## 4. Process – to create shared value

Inclusion of interested parties –

### **Coexisting with Stakeholders**

Stakeholders, by definition, refer to individuals and organizations that are affected by the activities of trustea either directly or indirectly and may have an influence over trustea's business. Thus, they play a significant role in the overall growth and development of trustea. As responsible corporate citizens, we consider it our responsibility to develop and retain an amicable relationship with all our stakeholders and to consider valuable input from them to strengthen trustea's work in all aspects. In practice, we believe in extensive engagement with all our stakeholders throughout the year to understand their concerns and address their issues.

tSTF is non-discriminatory and inclusive. It makes particular efforts to understand the context and perspectives of disadvantaged stakeholders and ensure their participation in decision-making. We identify and engage with our stakeholders both formally and informally. Through these interactions, we attempt to strengthen our relationships with them. The stakeholders are empowered to participate; their input ensures that the organisation's sustainability objectives reflect the issues that matter most. We engage with our stakeholders on various platforms that are detailed below. The key concerns that emerge out of these interactions have also been compiled and made available publicly through the Yearbook, and Impact Report and also available in the trustea's internal feedback/grievance portal.

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**4.a) Stakeholder Mapping:** tSTF reaches out to a wide group of stakeholders to inform, consult and facilitate participation through various means. It involves a balanced and representative group of stakeholders in decisions that will affect them.



## trustea Stakeholders

**4.b) Definition of the addressed stakeholder –**

- **Small Tea Growers** – Farmers having own or leased land for tea leaf production and supply the produced leaf to the tea manufacturing factory (10.12 hectors of area)
- **trustea Certified Entity & Industrial Trade Bodies** – The tea manufacturing Estates or Factories that are certified under trustea code and the association of those entities.

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- **trustea's employees** – Direct or contractual employment under trustea Sustainable Tea Foundation
- **Implementing Partner** – Organization or Individuals who is empanelled by trustea to provide hand holding support to the registered entities under trustea
- **Funding Agency** – Provide grants to the program
- **Local Community in tea growing areas** – Surrounding human settlement area of the tea cultivation zone
- **Government / Statutory and Regulatory Bodies** – Legal entities that are relevant to the operation of the Tea Industry
- **Employees in tea estates, STGs and in factories** – All skilled, semi-skilled or unskilled personnel who works in the Estate, factory, small tea growing areas, self-help groups or similar who do not fall in the categories of the management staffs
- **Oversight Bodies** – Authorities that oversee the matters which may affect the scheme's operability
- **NGO & Civil Society Organization** - Non-State, not-for-profit, voluntary entities that represent a wide range of interests and ties which may include community-based organizations as well as non-governmental organizations.
- **Approved Certification Body** – Certification Bodies that fulfilled the enrolment criteria under trustea
- **Tea Buyers (TB)/ Auction House / Tea traders** - Organization who buy trustea certified sustainable tea. A place of disposing the teas produced by manufacturers to a wide range of buyers in a competitive manner for fair discovery of price
- **Voluntary Standards applicable to tea supply chain** – Standards which are in operation in India and applicable to the tea industry.

**4.c) “Interested parties”** are those stakeholders who receive services of Trustea Sustainable Tea Foundation, who may be impacted by the services, or those parties who may otherwise have a significant interest in the program.

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## Determining the interest of the stakeholders for engagement:

Stakeholders	What stakeholders seek from trustea	What trustea seeks from stakeholders	Organisations as on 15.02.2023
<b>Funding Agency (FA)</b>	Proper budget allocation & prudent financial management of the Foundation. Increase the pool of sustainability tea in the Indian tea market.	Timely release of the fund to ensure smooth overall operation	Hindustan Unilever Tata Consumer Products Gujrat Tea Producers and Packers
<b>Certified Entities (CE) &amp; Industrial Trade Bodies (ITB)</b>	Proper advice & support for implementing the trustea code requirements so as to ensure that the investments in conducting the assessments support the overall business objectives.	Full compliance to all the applicable code requirements, especially the MFAs & ZTFAs.	List of valid certified entities Indian Tea Association United Planters' Association of Southern India Assam Bought Leaf Tea Manufacturers' Association
<b>Tea Buyers (TB)/ Auction House / Tea traders</b>	Expect timely availability of certified tea for the market. Promote sustainability in the tea supply chain. Availability of the proper information on the source of the sustainable tea offer to the buyer and helping to fetch the right price to the producers	Helping to promote the procurement and sale of sustainably produced tea through their business practices. Infuse the supply chain with more and more sustainably produced tea. Expect them to give feedback on the availability, requirement, and expectations of the tea trade.	J. Thomas Paramount Tea Marketing Global Tea Contemporary Brokers Hindustan Unilever Tata Consumer Products Gujrat Tea Producers and Packers
<b>Employees in tea estates, STGs and in factories</b>	Train them to carry out their work in a safe way. Ensuring the grievance redressal mechanism. Improvement in worker welfare and livelihood particularly in relation to wages, occupational health and safety, and fair treatment at all levels.	Follow all the protocols related to sustainability, health and safety, and food safety protocol in their work and create a discrimination and harassment-free workplace.	(Connected through assessment interviews and training)
<b>Local communities in tea growing areas (LC)</b>	Operation of the tea growing and manufacturing facility in harmony with the community. Safe & healthy environment	To be a partner in our efforts to enhance biodiversity and sustainability by providing feedback on the program's impact.	Small tea growers' sustainability platform Women safety accelerator fund

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<p><b>Implementing Partners (IP)</b></p>	<p>Training on the code requirement. Coordination with the entities and with the tea buyers and release of the funds to ensure smooth operation</p>	<p>Proper advice &amp; support for implementing the trustea code requirements at the entities so as to prepare them for an acceptable &amp; successful external audit by the CBs. IPs are expected to ensure full compliance with regulatory requirements, implementation, and maintenance of good management practices, and continual performance improvement for the handholding entities.</p>	<p>Tea Research Association Action for Food Production Reviving the Green Revolution National Skills Foundation of India</p>
<p><b>Approved Certification Bodies (CB)</b></p>	<p>CBs would expect the Secretariat to support proper &amp; pragmatic interpretation of the code and periodic updates on the regulatory framework as well as necessary user-friendly software support to facilitate timely deliverables to the entities.</p>	<p>CBs are expected to perform an impartial, unbiased, objective &amp; fact-based assessment of the entities to verify compliance with the code requirements.</p>	<p>Control Union DNV IMO TUV India SGS OneCert Cotecna Indocert</p>
<p><b>Government/ Statutory &amp; Regulatory Bodies (S&amp;R) Relevant to the Tea supply chain</b></p>	<p>The S&amp;R bodies would require the entities to comply with the regulatory framework at all times. At times seeking clarification on the new laws and relevant matters.</p>	<p>Timely &amp; Periodic updates are expected from the various regulators to create a level playing field for compliance and ensure ease in code requirements.</p>	<p>List of legal requirements for certified entities as per the code</p>
<p><b>Oversight Bodies (OB)</b></p>	<p>The OBs would require the entities to comply with the accreditation / sector-specific norms (for scheme owners) at all times.</p>	<p>Consultation for any policy changes. Timely dissemination of public information &amp; Periodic updates is expected from the oversight bodies on any matters affecting the scheme’s operability.</p>	<p>ISEAL BSI for the ISO certification of trustea Foundation</p>
<p><b>NGOs &amp; Civil Society</b></p>	<p>Should respond to the concern &amp; interests which is relevant</p>	<p>They contribute to the program by responding to the consultation, becoming the</p>	<p>UN Women IDH ETP STGSP</p>

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<b>organizations (NGO/CSO)</b>		partner in the program management	WSAF
<b>Employees &amp; Contractors working on behalf of the trustea Secretariat</b>	Employees would also expect fair treatment, a non-biased approach, gender equality, and a healthy working environment.	Employees are to be effective & efficient with a high degree of integrity towards the Company and follow all the relevant policies. Project the right image of the organization to the external	Turstea Employees & External vendors
<b>Small Tea Growers</b>	Support to facilitate sustainable agricultural practices. Also help to improve livelihood through gains in profitability, productivity, and access to services.	Carry out farming in a sustainable way and is legally compliant. To provide fairer treatment to their employees.	Confederation of Indian Small Tea Growers' Associations Certified STGs of trustea verified entities
<b>Voluntary Standards applicable to the tea supply chain</b>	Engage with trustea for consultation on standard related topic	Seek their input in substantial code revision.	Fairtrade, Global-Gap, Rainforest Alliance, and similar (if applicable)

## 5. Deeper Engagement Approach –

To have open, respectful, and valuable feedback, tSTF follows a robust stakeholders' engagement approach covering all the relevant stakeholders where the opportunities for co-learning and to co-create new approaches are widely available that leads to a successful implementation in the pertinent field of potential system change. The consultation matrix also is applicable to consultation during the revision of the trustea code and periodic review of the **Standard Development and Revision Procedure**

The consultation Matrix is as follows –

Stakeholders	Feedback Forms	Website Posting &/or Feedback	In-person meeting	Online meeting	Pilot test	Interview	Online forum (e.g. emails, blogs)	Review published documentation	Public consultation on draft code revision after council ratification
Tea Buyers	X	X	X	X			X	X	X
Certified Entities (CE) & Producers Association (PA)		X	X		X	X	X		X

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Implementing Partners (IP)	X		X	X			X		X
Research Institute (RI)					X				X
Certification Bodies (CB)	X		X	X	X		X		X
Statutory & Regulatory Bodies (S&R)		X	X					X	
Oversight Bodies (OB)		X	X	X				X	
Social organization working with Tea Industry workers			X		X	X			X
Small Tea Growers Association (STG)	X		X			X	X		X
Social Organisation working with Local Communities (LC)	X								X
Employees (tSTF)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Sustainability standards scheme owners with relevance to trustea scope of work (O)		X						X	X
Auction House / Tea traders		X		X			X		X
Civil Society Organization, at large (CSO) / NGOs & Social organizations (NGO/S)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
Voluntary Standards applicable to tea supply chain		X							X



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Stakeholders’ consultation tentative plan at a scale with deeply embedded shared goals as follows –

Activity	Stakeholders involved	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
ToC	tS, FA, CE, IP, CB, OB, CSO	X		X	
MEL	All Stakeholders		X		X
Code Review (CDC)	tS, FA, IP, CB, PA, NGO/ CSO, O, RI	X		X	
Claims Management	tS, FA, CE, CB, TB, FA		X		X
trustea Council	tS, FA, IP, CB, CE, NGO/S, OB, CSO, FA, PA, RI		X		X
IP/CB/Entities Forum	tS, CB, IP, CE		X		X
Impartiality Board	tS, OB, IP, CB, CSO, NGO, FA		X		
Impact Study	tS, CE, NGO/S, S&R, S/V, O, CSO				X
Pilot Projects	tS, FA, IP, CB, CE, S/V	===== As needed & as per plan =====			
Public Consultation	All identified stakeholders	As and when Applicable			

## 6. Transparency and Reciprocity –

tSTF is determined to share learning and generated value with the stakeholders.

The means and frequency of connecting with stakeholders is as below.

Stakeholders	Frequency	Means		
		Feedback Forms	In-person meeting	Online meeting
Funding Agency (/FA)	Quarterly		X	X*
Certified Entities (CE) & Producers Association (PA)	Bi-Annual		X	X*
Implementing Partners (IP)	Quarterly		X	X*
Certification Bodies (CB)	Bi-Annual		X	X*
Statutory & Regulatory Bodies (S&R)	Annual	X		
Oversight Bodies (OB)	Annual	X		
Auction House/ Tea Trader / Tea Buyer	Annual	X		
NGOs & Civil Society organizations (NGO/ CSO)	Annual	X		
Employees & Contractors working on behalf of the trustea Secretariat & IDH (tS)	Quarterly		X	
Small Tea Growers Association	Bi-Annual			X
Employees in tea estates, STGs and in factories	Bi-Annual		X	X
Local Communities in tea growing areas	Annual	X		
Applicable Voluntary Standards	As and when required through Public consultation			

\* Online meeting option is exercised if in-person meeting is not feasible.

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## 7. Monitoring Stakeholder Engagement

Trustea will monitor engagement with each identified stakeholder group, and for each topic identified above. Monitoring will take place at least annually, and will focus on the frequency and depth extent of engagement in each topic.

## 8. Strategy to Ensure Balanced Representation

Trustea will evaluate data on stakeholder engagement generated through monitoring to assess where stakeholder groups may be under-represented. Trustea has already identified that this may be the case with local communities, and workers.

Where possible trustea will also assess whether active stakeholders represent all the important issues in their sector. This may be particularly important in the NGO/CSO stakeholder group.

Wherever a stakeholder group is identified as under-represented, trustea will undertake a review to assess what may be the constraints affecting that group, and draw up a targeted strategy to facilitate and strengthen engagement.

## 9. Review of Engagement Process

This stakeholder engagement process will be reviewed and updated as necessary (but at least annually) to ensure it is effective and that all stakeholders’ views are carefully considered.

Comments and suggestions are welcome. Please contact [raymukherjee@trustea.org](mailto:raymukherjee@trustea.org)

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