



Policies for the Development of Green Seal™ Environmental Leadership Standards

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These Policies are subject to revision.
Contact Green Seal to confirm that this version is current.

THE MARK OF ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

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Green Seal Standards Development Policies

Green Seal is a non-profit organization founded in 1989. Green Seal's mission is to work towards environmental sustainability by identifying and promoting environmentally responsible products, purchasing, and production. This is achieved through its standard setting, certification, and education programs. Green Seal's Environmental Standards include requirements to reduce, to the extent technologically and economically feasible, the environmental impacts associated with services and the manufacture, use, and disposal of products. Set on a category-by-category basis, Environmental Standards focus on significant opportunities to reduce a product or service's environmental impact.

1. General:

The policies outlined in this document apply to the developing, revising, approving, reaffirming, and withdrawing American National Standards developed by Green Seal. Green Seal develops and maintains standards for the purpose of recognizing environmentally preferable products and services to enable market transformation to environmental sustainability.

1.1. Environmental Leadership Standards: Green Seal shall conform to the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 14020 and 14024 standards for ecolabel programs in addition to the criteria outlined by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Global Ecolabelling Network (GEN).

1.2. American National Standards: Green Seal shall conform with the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) Essential Requirements and submit all ANSI required forms when intending to develop American National Standards.

1.3 Policy Principles: The following principles pertain to the standard development process and related policies.

Balance: Interests shall not be dominated by any single interest category.

Consensus: A substantial agreement has been reached by directly and materially affected interest categories. This signifies the

concurrence of more than a simple majority, but not necessarily unanimity. Consensus requires that all views and objections be considered, and that an effort be made toward their resolution.

Due Process: Procedures used to ensure that any person (organization, company, government agency, individual, etc.) with a direct and material interest has a right to participate by: a) expressing a position and its basis, b) having that position considered, and c) appealing if adversely affected. This is to allow for equity and fair play.

Openness: Participation in the development of a standard as a stakeholder shall be open to all persons who are directly and materially affected by the activity in question. There shall be no undue financial barriers to participation. Participation shall not be conditional upon membership in any organization, or unreasonably restricted on the basis of technical qualifications or other such requirements. Timely and adequate notice of any action to create, revise, reaffirm, or withdraw a standard, and the establishment of a new consensus standards committee shall be provided to all known directly and materially affected interests. Notice should include a clear and meaningful description of the purpose of the proposed activity and shall identify a readily available source for further information.

Consideration of views and objections: Prompt consideration shall be given to the written views and objections of all participants, including those commenting on the Project Initiation Notification System announcement or public comment listing in *Standards Action* or related activity. Effort will be made to resolve all expressed objections accompanied by comments related to the proposal under consideration. If resolution is not achieved, each such objector shall be informed of the appeals process. Unresolved objections, attempts at resolution and any substantive change made in a proposed American National Standard shall be reported to the consensus body in order to afford all members of the consensus body an opportunity to respond, reaffirm, or change their vote.

2. Organization:

2.1. Committees: Committees shall be established by Green Seal and comprised of the following components:

2.1.1. Standards Committee: The Standards Committee is responsible for:

- Proposing and developing standards that are consistent with Green Seal's mission and the policies outlined in this document.
- Ensuring that environmental, health, and safety issues are properly addressed in standards.
- Overseeing the standard development and approval of standards.
- Responding to requests and appeals and other matters outlined in these policies.

2.1.1.1. The membership of the Standards Committee comprises a subcommittee of the Green Seal Board of Directors, the President of Green Seal, the Vice President of Standards at Green Seal, and optional experts, staff, or contract employees.

2.1.1.2. The Chair of the Standards Committee is the Vice President of Standards at Green Seal.

2.1.2. Project Committee: The Project Committee is typically identified by the standard's name or identifying number (ex. GS-37 Revision Project Committee). The Project Committee is responsible for:

- Establishing and maintaining all project committees (Registered Stakeholders, Voting Body), subcommittees (Development Subcommittee), and task groups.
- Establishing and maintaining rosters for all project committees, subcommittees, and task group memberships.
- Completing all tasks for development, proposal, and approval of the standard in a timely manner.
- Providing timely communication to all parties involved in the project
- Overseeing that the project is conducted in accordance with the policies outlined in this document.
- Adjudicating all view and objections encountered during review processes and balloting.
- Sending any unresolved objections to the Standards Committee.
- Serving as the project Secretariat
 - Ensuring compliance to the policies outlined in this document.

- Documenting project progress, documents, comments, ballots, and other relevant business
- Providing administrative services to all committees
- Submitting documentation to ANSI, when required

2.1.3. Registered Stakeholders: Registered Stakeholders is open to all interested parties and shall represent all interest groups, there are no membership requirements. Green Seal staff, Board Members, and affiliates are not permitted to be Registered Stakeholders. Producers, users, and general interest groups are contacted by Green Seal before or in conjunction with the initiation of the project to solicit registration. Producers are typically industry representatives who produces, assembles, distributes, or sells materials, products, systems, or services covered in the scope of the standard. Trade association representatives are included in this membership classification. Users are typically members who purchase, use, or specify materials, products, systems, or services covered in the scope of the standard. User/consumer association representatives are included in this membership classification. General interest groups typically include third-party product certifiers / testing laboratories, standards developers, non-profit organizations, or government groups. Registration ensures party is registered to a project they are interested in participating in and provides Green Seal contact information and correct identification of interest group membership. Membership provides for communication about project progress and involvement in development of draft materials. Each standard project has a single and unique group of Registered Stakeholders.

2.1.4. Voting Body (Consensus Body): The Voting Body is a balanced representation of the stakeholders registered for the project. As a result, the Voting Body is open to any interested party, and there are no membership requirements and the membership changes for each project (see 2.1.3). The Voting Body may be either 1) all stakeholders registered or 2) a re-apportionment of the stakeholders registered. The re-apportionment is used when the registration is unbalanced. This is done to ensure lack of dominance by one or more interest group. In this case no single interest group can comprise greater than a majority of the membership of the Voting Body. Each voter has one vote that will be counted. When re-apportionment is done, that vote would comprise a portion of their interest group (so rather than cutting off registration for that interest group, all are available to vote and a weighted approach is used).

2.1.4.1. Members per organization: There shall be a limit of one voting member from each company or organization.

2.1.5. Subcommittees and Task Groups: Subcommittees and Task Groups may be established by Green Seal for the purpose of assisting the Project Committees in drafting standards, considering comments or negative votes on portions of the standards, interpretations, and other advisory functions. A roster of all members shall be maintained by the secretariat.

2.1.5.1. Development Subcommittee may be formed from the Project Committee to research and develop background information and a proposed standard. This committee may also serve additional roles needed by the Project Committee. Membership may include experts and consultants not otherwise involved in the project.

2.1.5.1.1. The Development Subcommittee Leader/s shall be a member of the Project Committee. The Development Subcommittee Leader shall serve as the subcommittee's secretariat and organize the meetings, communications, and recommendations and document decisions and actions made by the subcommittee.

2.1.5.2. Task Groups may be formed to address a specific issue during the development of the standard. Task Groups are responsible for providing recommendations to the Project Committee.

2.1.5.2.1. Task Group Leader/s shall be a member of the Project Committee. The Task Group Leader, shall serve as the group's secretariat and organize the meetings, communication, and recommendations and document decisions and actions made by the group.

2.1.6. Observers and Experts: Observers are permitted at any project meetings, upon approval by the appropriate Chair/Leader. Individual experts may be invited to address the project's needs.

2.2. Meetings: Project meetings may be organized by the Project Committee or subcommittees and task groups as needed and at the discretion of the appropriate leaders or as directed by the Project Committee.

2.2.1. Notification of meetings shall be at least 30 days for in-person meetings and at least 2 weeks for all other meetings (on-going

meetings do not require this minimum notice). An agenda shall be prepared and distributed with the meeting notice.

2.2.2. A quorum is not needed to take actions from any project meetings, since voting on the standard is not conducted in these meetings. However, appropriate proxies can be invited with approval from the appropriate chair/leader.

2.2.3. Meeting summaries shall be distributed by the secretariat within two weeks following the meeting. If there is dispute or disagreement about the meeting notes, they must be made within one week of issuance of the notes.

3. Procedures:

3.1. Project Initiation and Notification: At the initiation of a standard project to develop, revise, or reaffirm an American National Standard, notification shall be transmitted to ANSI using the Project Initiation Notification System (PINS). Stakeholder registration is also conducted during this period. The Green Seal web site is updated to include an announcement about the project initiation and the stakeholder registration process. Further, Green Seal complies with the PINS requirements as set out in 2.5 of the ANSI Essential Requirements as well as the policies on Consideration of Views and Objections as set out in 2.6 of the ANSI Essential Requirements. The minimum notification period is 45 days.

3.2. A Proposed Standard or Revision shall be made available for public review following the PINS period; appropriate notification shall be made to ANSI with BSR-8 form. Stakeholder registration is also conducted during this period. Green Seal shall comply with the policies of Consideration of Views and Objections as set out in 2.6 of the ANSI Essential Requirements. The minimum time for review is 45 days.

3.3. Balloting and Voting: The Voting Body shall review new standards, revisions to existing standards, reaffirmations of existing standards, and withdrawals through a ballot process, following the Proposed Standard or Revision.

3.3.1. The ballot is prepared by the Project Committee and made available to the Voting Body.

3.3.2. The balloting period shall be a minimum of two weeks. The balloting deadline shall be included on the ballot. Ballots received after the closure date shall not be counted. In the event of fewer than a majority vote, the balloting period shall be extended and communicated to the entire Voting Body.

3.3.3. Each member of the Voting Body shall have one vote. A member shall vote one of the following options:

- Affirmative;
- Affirmative, with comment;
- Negative, with reason/s. Reason for a negative ballot shall provide recommended action for resolution to objection. A negative ballot that is not accompanied by a written explanation shall be recorded as such with no further action required;
- Abstain, with reason/s. An abstention ballot that is not accompanied by a written explanation shall be recorded as such, and no further action shall be required.

3.3.4. The proposed standard or revision is adopted with a 2/3 affirmative ballot total, when the majority of the Voting Body (greater than 50%) completed a ballot (including abstentions), complying with the policies on Evidence of consensus and consensus body vote as set out in 2.7 of the ANSI Essential Requirements.

3.3.5. Consideration of views and objections: Following the guidance provided in 2.6 of the ANSI Essential requirements, prompt consideration shall be given to the written views and objections of all participants. Effort will be made to resolve all expressed objections accompanied by comments related to the proposal under consideration. If resolution is not achieved, each such objector shall be informed of the appeals process. Unresolved objections, attempts at resolution and any substantive change made in a proposed American National Standard shall be reported to the consensus body in order to afford all members of the consensus body an opportunity to respond, reaffirm, or change their vote.

3.3.6. Ballots can only be changed by the individual who cast the ballot, or upon written request by the individual who cast the ballot.

3.3.7. A summary of voters and ballot results will be made available to ANSI.

3.4. The Issued Final Standard will be made available within three months of approval. The final standard shall be posted on the Green Seal web site, with notification to Registered Stakeholders, and available to any

party upon request. ANSI shall also be notified of the final standard with a BSR-9 form.

3.5. Maintenance and Review of Standards: Once the standard is issued it shall be reviewed by the Standards Committee, at least every five years. The review will evaluate the market, regulatory, life cycle, and technical progress, to determine if the standard should be reaffirmed, updated, or withdrawn. An extension from ANSI can be applied for standards that haven't completed reaffirmation, revision, or withdrawal within the five years. No American National Standard under periodic or continuous maintenance shall maintain that status beyond 10 years from the date of last approval.

3.5.1. Editorial revisions to a standard can be made between review periods, as long as they do not affect the intent or requirements of the standard.

4. Communication and Correspondence:

4.1. Transparency: Green Seal aims to be open, prompt, and transparent through standards projects. Green Seal maintains a "Standards in Development" web page that includes documents and announcements related to active and recently completed projects.

4.2. External Correspondence: Inquiries relating to a Standard Project can be directed to the Secretariat/Project Committee.

4.3. Records: Records on the project must be retained while that standard is active, until it is revised or withdrawn. A revised or withdrawn standard's records shall be retained for a minimum of five years after its activity has changed status.

5. Appeals:

Appeal can be made by an interested party or Registered Stakeholder that is affected by any action or inaction of the project. Green Seal is not required to address appeals related to the mission, goals, and principles of the organization. The appeal process shall meet the requirements set out in ANSI Essential Requirements.

5.1. Complaint: A written request by the concerned party shall be emailed to the Project Committee Secretariat within two weeks of the action, or inaction, objected to. An appeal must include standard name and the specific issues, citing any attempt to date for resolution.

5.2. Response: The Project Committee shall respond to the objector within 30 days, addressing the stated concerns and making reasonable attempts for resolution, in writing to the appellant, specifically addressing each allegation of fact in the complaint to the extent of the respondent's knowledge.

5.3. Appeal Panel: If resolution is not achieved through reasonable efforts or inactivity by the Project Committee, the written appeal and related documentation shall be forwarded to the Standards Committee. The Standards Committee shall form an Appeals Panel, with input and/or agreement by the appellant. Members from the Project Committee are permitted on the Appeals Panel, but are unable to vote. The other members of the Appeals Panel shall be members of the Standards Committee and any additional members needed to address the issue. The appeals panel shall consist of at least three individuals knowledgeable as to the policy and other concerns related to the appeal who do not have demonstrably real or apparent conflicts of interest with the subject of the appeal or the person filing the appeal. The Standards Committee and the appellant will select the members of the appeals panel. If the appellant and the Standards Committee cannot agree on the composition of the panel within fifteen-days from the start of the selection process, Green Seal may appoint the panel. The appellant must demonstrate adverse effects, improper actions, or inactions, and the efficacy of their requested actions. The Appeals Panel must respond to the complaint within 30 days, stating its conclusions.

5.4. If resolution is not achieved at the completion of the appeals process, the appellant shall be notified that further appeals can be forwarded to ANSI.

5.5. When resolution is achieved, the resolution is made available to ANSI.

6. Legal Considerations:

6.1. Copyright: Green Seal copyrights final standards to protect publication rights.

6.2. Patent Policy: Green Seal does not cite patents in its standards since it is the intent for the standard to be transparent and open to all who want to participate. Green Seal also does not patent its standards or methods, since the intent is to maintain an open and transparent process. Further, although Green Seal does not intend to incorporate or cite patents, Green Seal shall comply with Patent Policy in 3.2 of the ANSI Essential Requirements.

6.3. Commercial Terms: Green Seal does not endorse any product or service, nor is it financially linked to the success of any product or service. Further, the standards cannot provide financial incentive for Green Seal for selection of criterion or methods, nor can there be a commercial advantage for a particular party. Further, Green Seal shall comply with the Commercial Terms and Conditions polices in 3.2 of the ANSI Essential Requirements.

7. Metric Policy:

The International system of units (SI) is the preferred unit of measurement.

8. Revisions to Policies:

The policies outlined are maintained by Green Seal and the Standards Committee. Revisions to these policies shall be submitted to ANSI for review and approval.

9. American National Standards:

Upon completion of the standard project, the following or evidence thereof will be made available to ANSI:

- a) Title and designation of the proposed American National Standard;

- b) Indication of the type of action requested (that is, approval of a new American National Standard or reaffirmation, revision, or withdrawal of an existing American National Standard);
- c) A declaration that applicable procedures were followed;
- d) A declaration that the proposed standard is within the scope of the previously registered standards activity;
- e) A declaration that no significant conflicts with another American National Standard have been identified or that any identified significant conflict was addressed in accordance with these procedures;
- f) A roster of the consensus body that indicates: the vote of each member including abstentions and unreturned ballots, if applicable; the interest category of each member; and a summary thereof;
- g) A declaration that all appeal actions related to the approval of the proposed standard have been completed;
- h) A declaration that the criteria contained in the ANSI patent policy have been met, if applicable; and
- i) Identification of all unresolved negative views and objections, with names of the objector(s), and a report of attempts toward resolution.

When a standard is designated an “American National Standard,” it means that all of ANSI’s requirements for consensus, due process, public review, and ANSI review have been met.