

## Standards Committee Meeting 13<sup>th</sup> September 2023 Summary notes

**Standards Committee Participants:** Ainsley Butler, Purvi Shah, Didier Backaert, Sabrina Karib, Joelle Ponnelle, Jennifer Hillard, Sara Yood, Maggie Gabos, Trisevgeni Stavropoulos, Laurant Massi, Noora Jamsheer, Charlene Nemson, Marie-Charlotte.

**Apologies:** Coline Lemaitre, Eleonora Rizzuto, Tehmasp Printer, Ilan Keplan, Pippa Howard, Salah Hussein, Sara Yood.

**RJC Management Team:** Suzanne Brooks (Senior Standards Manager), Caroline Watson (Assistant Standards Manager), Yagmur Masmaz (Senior Certification Manager).

### Materials circulated in advance of call:

- Meeting presentation slides.
- Standards Committee Minutes for August.
- Briefing note and additional documents on COP scope expansion.
- Options for CoC eligible recycled material.

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## 1. Introduction, Committee minutes and actions

Co-Chair, Purvi Shah gave an introduction. The Committee was reminded of the RJC's conflict of interest policy and anti-trust statement and was given an overview of the agenda for today's call. Participation was noted by the RJC Senior Standards Manager. August minutes approved by Didier Backaert and Maggie Gabos.

Summary of actions following the last meeting. Approvals on guest of the Committee and non-industry committee are pending. Scope expansion brief was circulated and drop-in session held. Drop-in session scheduled for LGMS. 3 day in person meeting dates confirmed for December, and support for non-industry is being looked into. Committee term extensions to take place.

## 2. General updates and Committee matters

Purvi Shah gave an update of the G7 statement on the trade of diamonds from Russia. A summary was provided of the collective industry approach to provide a recommendation to the G7, led by the WDC. The proposal went under consultation and is being reviewed by G7 officials. A summary of the proposal was provided, as well as the assurance framework which involved different industry members, including the RJC.

Further conversations are ongoing with ISO regarding joining the working group on recycled gold. RJC attended a recent meeting as a guest. Conversations with stakeholders are also ongoing regarding the recycled definition.

### General updates

2023 [Annual Progress Report](#) has been released, with an interview from Ainsley. RJC will be hosting a guest lecture at the University of Warwick on responsible sourcing, and will also be participating in ISEAL member's week. The standards team are looking into sending team members on a shadow audit for learning. The standards team is also recruiting, with interviews for a Coordinator taking place, and a job description being written for a General Manager. An introduction will soon take place for the new Operations Director and the Standards Committee.

### 3. Standards programme updates

#### COP update

Updates ongoing for changes and comments arising from the committee drop-in sessions and additional comments. Benchmarking research underway on under-represented topics for climate and emissions and Diversity and inclusion (D&I). Ainsley Butler agreed to support on RJC cross-recognition against new and emerging standards as part of the research/benchmarking. ISEAL Independent Evaluation internal planning ongoing. RJC Standard Setting Procedure shared in social platforms for stakeholder comment (ISEAL requirement). Further discussion to be had on topics arisen in the drop-in sessions, including a necessary decision on the proposed scope expansion for coloured gemstones, pearls and coral. SCO members to forward further COP revision comments.

#### CoC update

Follow up drop-in session held in August to get feedback on remaining areas, with feedback to be added into a summary document and circulated to the Committee. Drop-in feedback and responses being addressed and standard being revised. RJC to finalise and circulate next working draft to Committee for comment, followed by Committee approval of draft for next public consultation.

#### LGM update

LGMS Taskforce proposed candidates and Terms of Reference (ToR) are with Executive Committee (ExCo) for approval. Drop-in session planned for 20 September. A summary of topics for the discussion was given. In response to a query, it was clarified that governance conversations on LGM representation are ongoing.

#### EU Recognition

Re-application submitted on 6<sup>th</sup> July with EU Commission acknowledgement on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> July. The reapplication deemed admissible by the commission. Assessment to begin and a result expected within 9 months.

#### Training update

Two member webinars planned for September: Self-assessment: How to prepare for your RJC Audit; COP 6 & 7 Ask me Anything. Further employee modules and updates to the Employee Welcome & Learning Pack complete. Employee training on COP 6 & 7 completed at offsite meeting in London. Auditor training review is ongoing, and outline for the new training structure developed. Overview of upcoming training was given.

### 4. Questions for committee

#### Scope expansion

A special drop-in session was held on the scope expansion, with the goal to achieve committee consensus - on approaching the 3 separate decisions the expansion covering all coloured gemstones, pearls and coral. The discussions centred on information, resources and timing. It was noted there needed to be an interim approach and set workplan to take it back to the beginning, with steps in place to allow us to move forward in an informed and structured way. There was strong support for the need to understand the full extent of the expansion and to have the right people and resources in place, whilst ensuring members and their supply chains are not being put under excessive or undue pressure to meeting the requirements. The committee also discussed the importance of the guidance and how these are critical to the success of the expansion, for our members and for the RJC. Expertise will be needed to develop these. Interim steps are; Identification, what are the risks and value add; Fact finding and people that can bring the right expertise; Be as present as possible without jeopardizing members; Communicate and implement in an informed and credible way with clear guidelines in place. We need to be transparent with our approach, and manage expectations along the way. At the same time, internal resources will need to be considered. It is proposed to set a forward-looking workplan through the upcoming COP revision phases to deliver and implement a scope expansion, with

defined interim steps and timeframes. More time is needed and expertise to do a credible job and within a defined set of timelines. It was noted to potentially by a committee member to use the LGMS as an example for how to expand RJC scope. Committee member suggested that to look at reviving the taskforce and start looking at topic again and the necessary expertise. Agree it's important to take steps now, begin the process and take a phased approach. One committee member raised reservation on expansion to some materials, agreed looking into risks and finding expertise is important in order to make informed decision on the expansion. It was further noted to look into what already exists for coral and pearls in terms of certification or schemes on the protection of oceans and ecosystems where you can farm such products.

The committee was asked to vote on this approach: Agreed: 11, Disagreed 0. It was noted that Senior standards manager would reach out to those not on the call for their decision.

Recycled options circled:

Options for the approach to include the revised recycled in the CoC standard were circulated and the committee were asked for their vote on which to use for the draft.

Option 2 received 6 votes, and Senior Standards Manager welcomed further votes by email.

**AOB**

Further updates were given on RJC Recruitment. Committee were reminded to send any additional written feedback on COP draft standard as soon as possible. RJC to communicate receiving ExCo approval on new Committee members and Guest of the Committee concept. Meeting dates for 2023 and 2024 were shared.

Co-chair, Purvi Shah thanked the Committee and closed the August meeting.