

RMS STANDARD DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE POLICY

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About GreenBlue

GreenBlue is an environmental nonprofit on a mission to accelerate the transition to a regenerative, just, and sustainable materials economy. GreenBlue is the parent nonprofit of seven projects, including the Sustainable Packaging Coalition, How2Recycle, and The Recycled Material Standard. Through these projects and their hundreds of members, GreenBlue strives to be the most reliable and accurate source of truth compelling the packaging value chain to construct environmentally regenerative, socially responsible systems. Learn more at <https://greenblue.org/>.

About the Recycled Material Standard

The Recycled Material Standard is a third-party certification standard with a mission is to make recycled materials verifiable, valuable, and viable at scale. By creating a universal chain of custody framework for the global recycled supply chain, we champion certification as a catalyst for meaningful industry advancement, where recycled materials become the norm, not the exception.

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Introduction

GreenBlue's RMS Standard Development and Maintenance Policy is applicable for the development voluntary standards under the RMS program as well as ongoing maintenance of standards.

The objectives of this policy are to ensure:

- that development and maintenance of RMS standards follows a robust and consistent process with balanced stakeholder participation.
- the standard development process is inclusive and transparent to affected stakeholders and that stakeholders have sufficient opportunity to contribute to development.
- new standards effectively meet their intended goals.
- that standards are auditable and feasible to comply with.
- that the development of RMS standards complies with international best practices and principles for standard setting (e.g. ISEAL Codes of Good Practice for Sustainability Systems).

Key Principles for Standard Design

The design process will consider pre-existing standards that cover similar areas including areas of overlapping scopes.

Criteria for conformity with the standard will be clear, objective and verifiable.

The standard will be science based and will also consider regulatory and market conditions.

The standard will consider adaptability for regional implementation and will also consider the scale of participating organizations.

RMS standards are not intended to restrict trade in any way or to give preference for a geographic region, a specific technology or to provide an advantage to one company over another.

The RMS Technical Development Committee will be managed with balanced representation to ensure that no single stakeholder group dominates the development process.

Key Principles for Maintenance of RMS Standards

The RMS has adopted a continuous maintenance process in the spirit of openness and effective improvement in an effort to ensure that the standards meet the expectations of stakeholders.

The RMS maintenance process is grounded in the key principles of transparency, collaboration and continuous improvement.

RMS Standards and relevant documents are made available at www.rmscertified.com so that all interested stakeholders can participate in the ongoing maintenance process.

The RMS Advisory Committee will be managed with balanced representation to ensure that no single stakeholder group dominates the maintenance process.

Governance, Roles & Responsibilities

The primary contributors to the development and maintenance of the Recycled Material Standard include:

- GreenBlue Staff
- RMS Advisory Committee (AC)
- RMS Technical Development Committee (TDC)

GreenBlue Staff

GreenBlue staff is responsible for the following:

- Ensuring that standards are developed and maintained in accordance with this policy
- Selecting members for committees with appropriate stakeholder representation and subject matter expertise
- Drafting and leading execution of project plans
- Keeping information about the standard development process publicly available including the estimated time line and how to participate
- Documenting and sharing feedback with the TDC from public comment periods
- Preparing presentations and resources to help inform the committees on key topics
- Facilitation of meetings and public consultations
- Keeping record of the standard development activities for a minimum of five years including the following:
 - a. Stakeholder mapping
 - b. The TDC membership
 - c. Project plan
 - d. Draft versions of the standards released for public consultation
 - e. Summary of public consultation process

A public call for participation in the Technical Development Committee will be sent to GreenBlue stakeholder e-mail lists, shall be published on the RMS website, and shall include additional information for consideration to be included in the group.

GreenBlue will collect and process all applications and prepare a summary for the RMS Advisory Committee including its recommendations for appointment.

Consideration for appointment will include a review of:

- Statement of interest to participate in the TDC, and

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- A resume or CV highlighting relevant work experience, and
- Feedback from the RMS Advisory Committee.

GreenBlue may designate another party to assist with these responsibilities.

The RMS Advisory Committee

The RMS Advisory Committee is a multi-stakeholder group that serves as the consensus body for ongoing maintenance of the standards.

The committee is comprised of individuals representing brands, manufacturers, nonprofit groups and sustainability services. Any party interested in participating in the Advisory Committee may contact GreenBlue for consideration.

Responsibilities of the Advisory Committee related to standard development and maintenance:

- Provide independent perspectives and expertise to the ongoing maintenance of the RMS Program
- Review all RMS standards for objectivity and credibility
- Review evidence pertaining to the RMS Complaints and Appeals process

The RMS Technical Development Committee

GreenBlue is responsible for determining the composition of the Technical Development Committee (TDC) to ensure the most credible and effective outcome for a new standard. The TDC will be comprised of representatives of companies and organizations that have agreed to serve on a voluntary basis.

Consistent with best practices, this multi-stakeholder group will typically be comprised of 9-11 individuals that represent the following types of organizations:

- Brands and retailers (including importers and distributors)
- Supply chain primary manufacturers (e.g., raw materials and recyclers)
- Supply chain converters and fabricators
- Civil society (e.g., government, academia, and non-profits)
- Other professional services (e.g., consultants, certification bodies)

Selection of members will consider subject matter expertise as well as geographic representation.

Staff members representing trade associations shall not be appointed; however, associations may be consulted through the development process.

Standard Development Process

The standard development process follows a series of steps including:

- Notification of stakeholders
- Assembly of Technical Development Committee (TDC)
- TDC meetings and subcommittee meetings held as needed
- Preparation of draft standard for public comment
- Public comment period (or multiple periods as deemed necessary)
- Revision of standard as needed
- Publication of new standard

Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder engagement is a critical aspect of the standard development process as it brings forth diverse perspectives and expertise and leads to more robust and innovative solutions.

GreenBlue shall conduct stakeholder mapping to identify potential group members and other parties which may be affected by the standard.

GreenBlue will notify key stakeholders of the development of standards and how they can participate in the process.

GreenBlue will publicly report on key milestones through the standard development process and provide updates as needed for public comment periods.

Assembly of Technical Development Committee & Charter

TDC members will agree to a charter indicating their commitment to contribute to the standard based on their subject matter expertise, industry experience and knowledge of standards. The charter shall include details on:

- Roles and Responsibilities
- Participation and attendance criteria
- Decision making processes

All committee members will be asked to adhere to anti-trust guidelines as well as GreenBlue policies on the following subjects:

- Confidentiality
- Conflict of Interest

TDC members will also be asked to review the goals and scope of the standard, a project plan, and timeline prior to making a commitment to serve the committee.

TDC members are expected to serve the duration of the standard development process with a minimum commitment of two years, not to exceed five years.

If a member leaves the group, GreenBlue will determine whether the member should be replaced. In such a case, GreenBlue will consider the stage of the development process, the expertise of remaining members and other related factors.

Process & Decision Making for Development

Through the development process, the TDC will be responsible for reviewing and contributing to the following:

- The project plan for the standard
- The standard draft made available for public consultation(s)
- The final standard

Decision making shall be made through consensus among members of the TDC.

Consensus is defined as general agreement, but not necessarily unanimity, further characterized by the absence of sustained opposition to substantial issues.

In the event consensus is not reached, a majority vote shall be required for settling disagreements.

Voting shall be conducted with a formal balloting process. Proxies are not allowed and each voting member will have the ability to cast a single vote with the following options:

- a. Affirmative
- b. Affirmative with comments (comments shall be considered editorial)
- c. Negative with reasons including specific working on recommended changes to resolve objections.
- d. Abstain. Abstentions should also be accompanied by an explanation but no further action is required.

GreenBlue reserves the right to make final decisions regarding standard content and shall publicly disclose any decisions, including reasoning, that differs from a decision reached by the TDC.

Public Comment

Following the development of the standard, an initial public comment period will be held for at least 60 days.

If substantive issues are brought forth through public comment, a second public consultation on a second draft will be held for at least 30 days.

The public consultation process will include:

- A public announcement
- Targeted outreach to key stakeholders identified through stakeholder mapping
- A publicly available draft of the standard under review
- A feedback mechanism
- A summary that includes key topics and how they were addressed, to be shared publicly.

Publication of Standards

Standards will be made available to download (at no cost) from GreenBlue's website for the RMS program: [RMScertified.com](https://www.rmscertified.com).

Standard Maintenance Process

RMS standards will be maintained on a **continuous maintenance** schedule, meaning that any part of the standard is open for comment or proposals at any time. Any properly submitted proposals shall be considered and acted upon in accordance with the established revision cycle for the RMS.

Requests for clarifications, interpretations, or proposed revisions can be made by contacting:

GreenBlue

Phone: 434.817.1424

E-mail: rms@greenblue.org

Web: <https://www.rmscertified.com>

Such requests shall include documentation describing the relevant issue and need for revision.

Required information includes

- the submitter's name, affiliation and contact information
- reference to the appropriate standard
- proposed text (e.g. wording to be added, revised or deleted)
- the reason for the proposed revision.

Approval Process & Decision Making for Revisions

Revisions to the standard shall be approved by the Advisory Committee through a formal balloting process. Proxies are not allowed and each voting member will have the ability to cast a single vote with the following options:

1. Affirmative
2. Affirmative with comments (comments shall be considered editorial)
3. Negative with reasons including specific working on recommended changes to resolve objections.

4. Abstain. Abstentions should also be accompanied by an explanation, but no further action is required.

Affirmative ballots must be received from two-thirds of those voting before revisions shall be adopted.

GreenBlue reserves the right to make final decisions regarding standard content and shall publicly disclose any decisions, including reasoning, that differs from a decision reached by the Advisory Committee.

Revision Cycle

Revised versions of the RMS will be published no more than annually, if a revision has been approved by the Advisory Committee. If revisions occur more frequently than annually, an addendum will be published on an as-needed basis. In the event that no revisions are issued for a period of four years, action to revise, reaffirm, or withdraw the RMS shall be initiated during the fourth year.

Public Consultation for Revisions

Upon significant revision of the standard, a draft of revised documents will be made available for public consultation. All comments received shall be compiled and a written synopsis of how each material issue has been addressed will be issued.

Notification of Revisions

Certified participants will be notified by email of all pending changes along with details pertaining to the required conformance deadline. Notifications will be delivered to the primary contact listed in the RMS Certificate Database.

In most cases, participants will be required to conform to any standard revisions by their next audit. Unless otherwise stated, certified participants will have at least 90 days to address any revisions to RMS standards. In cases where revisions have been announced, participants may request extensions to their audit cycle in order to allow for the minimum 90-day adoption period.

Requests for Interpretations of Standards

Written inquiries requesting interpretation of RMS Standards may be submitted to GreenBlue. GreenBlue will maintain a compilation of interpretations to help inform guidance documents and implementation tools.

Any revisions to the standard resulting from requests for interpretations shall be processed in accordance with these Policies.