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Fair Rubber Standards

Version 3.0



Fair Rubber - Make the World a better place

The aim of the Fair Rubber Association is the expansion and application of the concept of Fair Trade for products made from natural rubber. In the Fair Rubber Association, companies engaged in rubber products, Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs), and individuals work together. The ultimate aim of the Association is to thereby contribute to an improvement of the working and living conditions of the primary producers of natural latex (rubber), as well as promote the environmentally friendly production natural rubber, as chemical free production first and foremost benefits those engaged in the cultivation of the natural rubber.

The most important instrument of Fair Rubber is the Fair Rubber logo for products which fulfil the criteria of Fair Trade in natural rubber. The Fair Rubber Association in particular ensures the payment of the Fair Trade premium by buyers of natural rubber. The primary producers of rubber decide themselves how the Fair Trade premium is spent. Fair Rubber also helps, if requested, producer partners with FSC® certification.

What is Fairly Traded Rubber?

The low world market prices paid for rubber, make it very difficult for the tappers, plantation workers and small farmers to support themselves and their families with their own labour.

This is where the Fair Rubber Association wants to help. Paying a Fair Trade premium to the primary producers ensures to the extent possible that even during periods of depressed world market prices, the costs of production are covered and the suppliers have a surplus. Crucially this allows them to improve their working and living conditions. The decision as to how they would spend the Fair Trade premium, of course, remains with the primary producers.

Equivalences

There are certification systems that cover most of the requirements outlined in this document – but not all of them; hence acceptance as equivalent of these other systems runs short on some of the standards respectively. These standards requirements will need to be checked additionally as an add-on to the regular inspection.

1. Certification under EU-Organic or recognized PGS, or FSC is accepted as equivalent, if additional check points are included during inspection related to chapter 4.
2. Certification under Fairtrade International or FT USA is accepted as equivalent, if additional check points are included during inspection related to chapter 3.

Please find out more about the Fair Rubber Association, its members and suppliers, the products available with Fairly traded rubber, and much more – go to www.fairrubber.org.

An intro package to get involved as well as the constitution of the Fair Rubber Association can be found here:
<https://www.fairrubber.org/take-part/>


1. General Requirements

	Criteria and Indicators	HL	SH	Means of Verification
1.1	Mission Statement			
	There shall be a publicly available policy endorsed by the owner or most senior manager explicitly stating the long term commitment to forest management practices consistent with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).	X		<i>Policy document</i>
1.2	Legal Land tenure			
	The plantation/cooperative shall demonstrate documentation (included associated maps) with clear evidence of legal, long term forest management customary or use rights to manage the lands and to utilize the forest resources under evaluation.	X	X	<i>Documentation</i> <i>Maps with boundaries</i> <i>Interviews with forest management staff, local stakeholders and government agencies</i> <i>Additional guidance:</i> <i>Legal Use rights may be associated with</i> <i>- fee-simple ownership</i> <i>- long-term or renewable lease rights</i> <i>- long-term or renewable exclusive management agreements</i> <i>- other mechanisms allocating long-term or renewable management rights and responsibilities to the forest manager</i>
	The plantation/cooperative shall provide evidence that local communities either have a clear and direct control over the forest operations or that they have delegated such control with free and informed consent to other agencies.	X	X	<i>Documentation (written agreements)</i> <i>Interviews with forest management staff and representatives of local communities</i>
1.3	Local Communities			
	The plantation shall identify, evaluate and document the social impacts resulting from its operations, in consultation with the people and groups (both men and women) who are directly affected by the management operations.	X		<i>Interviews with Forest Managers and local communities</i>
	The plantation shall demonstrate how it has incorporated the results of its evaluation of social impacts into its management planning and operations.	X		<i>Interviews with Forest Managers and local</i>

				<i>communities Management plan Operational plan</i>
	The plantation/cooperative shall maintain regular and ongoing consultation with the people and groups (both men and women) who are directly affected by its operations in order to identify social impacts and the potential to avoid or reduce such impacts on an ongoing basis.	X	X	<i>Interviews with Forest Managers and local communities Documentation Records</i>
	A documented dispute resolution procedure shall exist to resolve conflicts with local peoples through consultation aiming at achieving agreement or consent, avoiding damage to property, resources, rights, and livelihoods.	X	X	<i>Procedures Interviews with forest management staff and local stakeholders</i>
	Where grievances are raised, they shall be responded to promptly and fairly.	X	X	<i>Records Interviews with forest management staff and local stakeholders</i>
1.4	Internal Control System (ICS)		SH	
	A basic ICS is in place which includes the following: - appointed and competent ICS staff responsible for the overall management of the ICS - basic general and social/environmental/labour relevant data on producer level, regularly updated: - number of workers typically hired, - important data related to the follow-up of specific environmental aspects; - risk-based internal inspections, with – at least 1 inspection per year for Large and Medium cooperatives, - at least 1 inspection every 3 years for small cooperatives; - an improvement system for non-compliances, with written improvement plans for critical issues.		X	

2. Social Standards

	Criteria and Indicators	HL	SH	Means of Verification
2.1	Rights of workers to organize and voluntarily negotiate with their employers	X	X	<i>SH above 20 permanent employees or according to national law if this is stricter.</i>
	Interested workers shall be able to form and/or join organizations of their choice (including	X	X	

	labour unions) without fear of intimidation or reprisal,			<i>Interviews with forest management staff, workers and labour union representatives</i>
	Interested workers shall be able to organize and bargain collectively,	X	X	<i>Interviews with forest management staff, workers and labour union representatives</i>
2.2	No Discrimination			
	The company does not discriminate, support or tolerate discrimination on the basis of race, colour, gender, sexual orientation, disability, marital status, HIV/AIDS status, age, religion, political opinion, union or workers' representative bodies, national extraction or social origin, or any other condition in recruitment, promotion, access to training, remuneration, allocation of work, termination of employment, retirement, general treatment in the workplace or other activities.	X	X	<i>Documents and records Interview with forest management staff, forest workers and local stakeholders</i>
2.3	No forced or bonded labour			
	The company does not directly or indirectly engage in, support or tolerate forced labour, including bonded or involuntary prison labour. The company/cooperative must explain this to all workers.	X	X	<i>Documents and records Interview with forest management staff, forest workers and local stakeholders</i>
2.4	No Child Labour			
	The company does not employ children under the age of 15 or under the age defined by local law, whichever is higher.	X	X	<i>Documents and records Interview with forest management staff, forest workers and local stakeholders</i>
2.5	Remuneration			
	The company/cooperative shall pay wages that meet or exceed minimum forest industry standards or other recognized forest industry wage agreements where these are higher than the legal minimum wages. When none of these exist, The company/cooperative shall through engagement with workers develop mechanisms for determining living wages	X	X	<i>Documents and records Interview with forest management staff, forest workers and local stakeholders</i>
2.6	Employment Conditions			
	Terms and conditions of employment shall be clearly specified	X	X	<i>Policies and procedures Documentation (contracts) Interviews with forest management staff and local contractors</i>

	The plantation shall demonstrate that each employee enjoys the same basic rights and benefits (remuneration, training, etc.), which meet or exceed all legal requirements and those provided in comparable occupations in the same region.	X	X	<i>Contracts Records (of payment) Interviews with forest management staff, local contractors and Labour Union representatives</i>
	The plantation shall ensure that all employees have social insurance (or equivalent) to provide compensation and/or ongoing support in the event of redundancy or work place injury.	X	X	<i>Documentation Records Interviews with forest management staff, and workers</i>
	The company/cooperative shall promote gender equality in employment practices, training opportunities, awarding of contracts, processes of engagement and management activities.	X	X	<i>Documents and records Interview with forest management staff, forest workers and local stakeholders</i>
2.7	Health and Safety			
	Plantation managers and supervising workers shall have a working knowledge of national laws and/or regulations covering health and safety of employees and their families.	X		<i>Documentation (availability of applicable guidelines/regulations) Training records Interviews with forest management staff, local contractors and Labour Union representatives Field observations</i>
	Safety and health requirements shall be taken into account in the planning, organization and supervision of operations.	X	X	<i>Policies and procedures Operational plans Field observations Interviews with forest management staff, workers and contractors</i>
	Workers shall be provided with personal protective equipment appropriate to the tasks they have been assigned.	X	X	<i>Policies and procedures Field observations Interviews with forest management staff, workers and contractors</i>
	Workers shall be prohibited from working without the personal protective equipment that has been provided.	X	X	<i>Policies and procedures Field observations</i>

				<i>Interviews with forest management staff, workers and contractors</i>
	All tools, machines, and equipment, including personal protective equipment shall be in safe and serviceable condition.	X	X	<i>Policies and procedures Field observations Interviews with forest management staff, workers and contractors</i>
	Where workers stay in camps, conditions for accommodation and nutrition shall comply at least with those specified in the ILO Code of Practice on Safety and Health in Forestry Work.	X	X	<i>Policies and procedures Operational plans Field observations Interviews with forest management staff, workers and contractors</i>
	No work likely to jeopardize health, safety or morals shall be carried out by anyone under the age of 18.	X	X	<i>Policies and procedures Field observations Interviews with forest management staff, workers and contractors</i>
	An effective first aid programme shall be in place, including worker training in basic first aid and the provision of readily accessible first aid kits with up to date supplies.	X	X	<i>Policies and procedures Field observations Interviews with forest management staff, workers and contractors</i>
	There shall be a written emergency plan in case of serious injury to any forest worker or contractor, which includes provision for timely evacuation to an appropriately equipped medical facility.	X		<i>Policies and procedures Field observations Interviews with forest management staff, workers and contractors</i>
	In case of accidents, the plantation shall cover all costs associated with the worker's recuperation and damage to their health	X		<i>Policies and procedures Field observations Interviews with forest management staff, workers and contractors</i>
	There shall be provision for the safe transport of workers to and from their place of work	X	X	

				<i>Policies and procedures</i> <i>Field observations</i> <i>Interviews with forest management staff, workers and contractors</i>
	The plantation shall maintain accurate and up-to-date work-related health and safety records (including risk evaluation and accident records) and has taken appropriate measures to avoid repetition of any accidents that have occurred.	X		<i>Records</i> <i>Interviews with forest management staff, workers and contractors</i>
	All workers and contractors shall have had relevant training in safe working practice and where required or appropriate hold the necessary skills certificates.	X		<i>Documentation</i> <i>Records</i> <i>Interviews with forest management staff, workers and contractors</i>
	All employees and their families shall be informed of and take part in prevention and control programs for illnesses or diseases endemic to the area that affect forest workers or their families.	X	X	<i>Documentation</i> <i>Records</i> <i>Interviews with forest management staff, workers and contractors</i>

3. Environmental Standards

	Criteria and Indicators	HL	SH	Means of Verification
3.1	The rate of harvest of latex shall not exceed levels which can be permanently sustained.			
	Guidelines for tapping shall be marked on the rubber trees for angle and length of the cut.	X	X	<i>Field observations</i> <i>Interviews with forest management staff</i>
	1st tapping of the block shall commence when 60% of the trees in the clearing reaches a girth of 50cm, measured over bark at a height of 120cm from the highest point of graft union.	X	X	<i>Field observations</i> <i>Records</i> <i>Interviews with forest management staffs</i>
	All rubber trees having a girth lesser than 45cm shall not be tapped at the growth stage mentioned above.	X	X	<i>Field observations</i>

				<i>Interviews with forest management staff</i>
	The amount of latex harvested shall not inflict systematically on the tree health or increase the tree's vulnerability to diseases. Tapping shall be as close as possible to the vascular cambium, but without injuring the delicate cells.	X	X	<i>Field observations Records Interviews with forest management staffs</i>
	There shall be no evidence that the harvesting of material from the site is reducing the potential productivity of the soil in the long term.	X	X	<i>Records Field observations Interviews with local experts and forest management staff</i>
3.2	Use of Pesticides and handling chemical waste			
	Where chemicals are used, there shall be an up-to-date list of all pesticides used, including trade name, active component, quantity of active ingredient used, date of use, location of use and reason for use.	X	X	<i>Records of used chemicals Invoices and receipts Field observations</i>
	Where chemicals are used, all staff and contractors involved with their use shall have received training in handling, application and storage procedures.	X	X	<i>Training records Field observations Interviews with forest management staff and contractors involved with the use of chemicals</i>
	Where chemicals are used, procedures for safe transport, storage, handling, application and emergency cases are implemented.	X	X	<i>Procedures and records Field observations</i>
	An up-to-date list is kept of off-site locations for the disposal of all chemicals, containers, liquid and solid non-organic wastes (including fuel and oil).	X	X	<i>Records</i>
	There shall be a documented system in place for collecting and keeping such waste safely, and for safe transportation to the listed locations.	X	X	<i>Review documented system Field observations Interviews with forest management staff</i>
	There shall be no evidence that waste products are disposed of other than at the listed sites, and in accordance with environmentally appropriate and safe methods and applicable legal requirements.	X	X	<i>Field observations Interviews with stakeholders, forest management</i>

				<i>staff and contractors</i>
3.3	Waste			
	Waste generated through harvesting operations, on-site processing and extraction shall be minimised, e.g. by using it to protect soils or skid trails. Waste shall be disposed in an environmentally appropriate manner.	X	X	<i>Field observations</i>
3.4	Ecosystems and Biodiversity			
	All forest operations with a potential negative environmental impact shall have written guidelines, defining acceptable practices which are available to forest managers and supervisors, with regard to erosion control and to protection of water resources.	X	X	<i>Records Maps Field observations Interviews with local experts and forest management staff</i>
	The guidelines shall include as a minimum specific provisions to prevent erosion by identifying areas which are susceptible to erosion, in which harvesting and other disturbance is prohibited.	X	X	<i>Guidelines in management plans and/or operational plans specifying protection of wetland, water sources and streamside protection zones Maps Field observations Interviews with local experts and forest management staff</i>
	The plantation/cooperative shall have conducted an assessment to identify High Conservation Values (HCVs), in consultation with conservation organizations, regulatory authorities and other local and national stakeholders.	X	X	<i>Interviews with local and national stakeholders, environmental organizations, local and national experts and forest management staff HCV assessment documents</i>
	All identified HCVs are described in the management plan, providing site-specific information to be taken to enhance the identified attributes, following a precautionary approach.	X	X	<i>Revision of management plan or related documents Interviews with forest management staff</i>
	Rare, threatened and endangered species and their habitats (e.g. nesting and feeding areas) that are present or are likely to be present within the forest area shall be identified and listed using the best available expertise and information available (e.g. IUCN red list).	X	X	<i>Management plans and supporting documents Maps Interviews with stakeholders, local experts and forest managers</i>
	The management plans and other relevant policies and procedures shall clearly identify actions that are taken to protect, maintain or enhance the presence of rare, threatened or	X		

	endangered species and their habitats.			<i>Management plans and supporting documents Maps Operational / harvesting plans Interviews with personnel and contractors.</i>
	Where information exists on rare, threatened and endangered species and their habitats, specific management activities (and/or restrictions) designed to protect the local biodiversity shall have been defined and implemented.		X	<i>Management plans and supporting documents Field observations Interviews with forest management staff</i>
	The plantation/cooperative shall have systems in place in order to ensure that all measures are taken against illegal or unauthorized hunting, fishing, trapping or collection.	X	X	<i>Policies and procedures Records of collection Field observations Interviews with stakeholders, forest managers and government agencies</i>

4. Fair Trade Standards

	Criteria and Indicators	HL	SH	Means of Verification
4.1	Fair Trade Premium and Joint Body	X		
	A Joint Body with elected worker members and appointed advisors from the management is created, with the purpose of managing the Fair Trade Premium for the benefits of all workers. The number of workers' members in the Fair Trade Premium Committee (FPC) is significantly higher than the number of management advisors. In the case of multi-estates there are JB's at each affiliated plantation to the multi-estate. There may also be a central JB at the head office.	X		<i>An FPC has been created with elected worker members and appointed advisors from management.</i>
	The Joint Body has and follows terms of reference (ToR), in accordance defining: - The aims of the Joint Body; - The composition (who are the members); - How workers members of the Joint Body are elected; - Procedures of the Joint Body determining at least terms of office, frequency of meetings, how decisions are made, criteria for selection of Fair Trade Premium projects,	X		<i>The ToR has complete set of requirements. The ToR is followed. The terms of reference have been approved by the general assembly of workers.</i>

<p>documentation, and which reports should be delivered, what happens to the Joint Body if company is decertified or dissolved;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Internal regulations, responsibilities, especially who is responsible for finances; - That all decisions on Fair Trade Premium use are approved by the annual general assembly (GA) of all workers; - The delegate system for the GA where applicable; - How the interests of migrant and seasonal/temporary workers are taken into account; <p>In the case of multi-estates, there is a system for elected delegates to represent each affiliate plantation if a central Joint Body exists.</p> <p>The terms of reference are approved by the general assembly of workers and made available in appropriate languages to workers.</p>			<p><i>The terms of reference are made accessible to the workers in appropriate languages.</i></p> <p><i>In case a central FPC exists, there is a system for elected delegates to represent each affiliate plantation.</i></p>
A separate Fair Trade Premium account is established and worker representatives from the Joint Body, and a management representative, are joint signatories.	X		<i>A separate Fair Trade Premium bank account is established. Both, workers representatives from the FPC and a management representative are joint signatories for the bank account.</i>
All worker members on the Joint Body (JB) are democratically elected by workers. This process is in line with the terms of reference and properly documented. Management advisors are appointed by management.	X		<i>The election process is in line with the ToR and properly documented</i>
The composition of the Fair Trade Premium Committee reflects the composition of the workforce, taking into account gender, work areas, community membership, union membership, and where applicable, migrant, temporary/seasonal and subcontracted workers.	X		<i>The make up of the FPC reflects the composition of the workforce.</i>
<p>Management participates actively and responsibly in the Joint Body through its advisors and assists and supports the workers in the administration of the Fair Trade Premium.</p> <p>Management advisors to the JB have a non-voting advisory role. They have the right to block expenditure, if proposed Fair Trade Premium use is illegal, fraudulent or if it has a demonstrable negative structural, financial or social impact on the company.</p>	X		<p><i>The management representatives in the FPC are regularly present in meetings and assist and support the workers in the administration of the Fair Trade Premium without leading the process and without imposing their views.</i></p> <p><i>There is evidence that management has not voted in the Fair Trade Premium plan approval.</i></p>
<p>The Joint Body meets and consults with the workers to understand workers' needs and to discuss project ideas regularly.</p> <p>These information and consultation meetings are held during working hours and according to a meeting schedule previously approved by the management, but do not necessarily have to be held during a general assembly of all workers.</p> <p>The results of these meetings are recorded.</p>	X		<p><i>Meetings are held regularly during working hours according to an approved plan.</i></p> <p><i>Most minutes can be found, even in loose sheets AND the decisions are recorded, even if not fully clear and signed.</i></p>
The Joint Body, as a result of the consultation with workers, prepares a yearly Fair Trade	X		<i>A yearly Fair Trade Premium Plan is prepared after</i>

	Premium plan that takes into account the needs of all the various groups of workers.		<p><i>consultation with workers</i></p> <p><i>The needs of all the various groups of workers are taken into account.</i></p> <p><i>Budgets are there for all the projects in the Plan and are reasonably close to expected Fair Trade Premium Income and priorities have been set.</i></p> <p><i>Each project in the Fair Trade Premium Plan has descriptions that include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• Purpose and objectives;</i> <i>• Target group(s)/beneficiaries (e.g. men, women or all workers, migrant and temporary workers, family members; community);</i> <i>• Activities;</i> <i>• Roles and responsibilities;</i> <i>• Project budget (total / annual);</i> <i>• Project start and end date;</i> <i>• How the project will be monitored;</i> <i>• Date of approval of project by GA.</i>
	The Joint Body administers the premium funds responsibly. There is no evidence of favouritism and fraud in the management of the Fair Trade Premium.	X	<p><i>A documented risk assessment is undertaken for all major projects and reported on at the GA.</i></p> <p><i>All loans and investments are carried out with all necessary formalities and guarantees.</i></p>
	The Fair Trade Premium benefits workers, their families and their communities through Fair Trade Premium projects that address their needs and preferences as decided and adequately justified by workers.	X	Yes/No
	The Joint Body monitors and reports annually on the activities carried out with Fair Trade Premium money and on the progress of existing projects to a general assembly of workers. The report is documented.	X	<p><i>The FPC makes available to all workers an annual report with information on its activities and the progress of existing Fair Trade Premium projects, including the following information:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• Details on overall Fair Trade Premium income received, expenditures and balance;</i> <i>• A description of each project that is planned, on-going concluded within the last reporting cycle;</i> <i>• If the activities were carried out. Reason if not.</i> <i>• When were they carried out?</i> <i>• At what cost?</i> <i>• Was the objective achieved or are any further actions needed?</i>

	<p>The company raises awareness about Fair Trade at all levels to ensure that workers understand the benefits of Fair Trade, in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The benefits of the Fair Trade Premium; - The different functions, duties and positions of the Joint Body, other Fair Trade related committees, and trade union/elected worker representatives. <p>The company ensures that the management at all levels, including supervisors, understands the implications of Fair Trade for the company's operations (e.g. time needed for meetings during working hours).</p>	X		<p><i>All levels of the company know and understand the Fair Trade concept AND its implications for the company's operations.</i></p> <p><i>Awareness raising has been carried out regularly AND the majority of workers understand Fair Trade benefits and structures.</i></p>
	The company explains to workers the purpose of the Fair Trade Premium and the role of the Joint Body before the workers are given the opportunity to nominate their worker members for election.	X		Yes/No
	The company provides means for training of Joint Body members	X		<p><i>Training for Fair Trade Premium Committee worker members is provided in order to ensure that they can carry out their functions.</i></p> <p><i>This training takes place partly during work time and is repeated for each newly elected or appointed representative.</i></p> <p><i>Annual training for Fair Trade Premium Committee worker members on participatory project planning and financial management takes place partly during work time.</i></p>
4.2	Fair Trade Premium for Smallholder Cooperatives		X	
	The structure of your organization must have a General Assembly as the highest decision making body where all major decisions are discussed and taken, equal voting rights for all members in the General Assembly, and a Board chosen in free, fair and transparent elections		X	<p><i>The statutes define the General Assembly as the highest decision-making body AND members have equal voting rights.</i></p> <p><i>The elections of the board are free, fair and transparent.</i></p>
	It needs to be clear who is a member of the organization. Therefore, there must be written rules to determine who can become a member and a record of the members must be kept.		X	<p><i>Clear criteria in statutes or other documents about who and how to become a member but no additional procedures.</i></p> <p><i>Member list with required information and a maximum of 10 % errors.</i></p>
	The rules that determine who can become a member must not be discriminatory.		X	<i>Membership rules exist and they are not discriminatory.</i>

	It must be explained to the members how they can participate in the organization so that they can have more control over it.		X	<i>The organisation provided explanations to some members and has a plan to cover all members.</i>
	A General Assembly is held every year.		X	<i>The annual General Assembly took place (even if not recorded/poorly called or recorded) OR postponed for understandable reasons.</i>
	Annual report, budgets and accounts are presented to the General Assembly for approval.		X	<i>All reports were formally presented to the General Assembly and approval is documented but minor mistakes are found in reporting.</i>
	You must plan and document at least one activity with the intention to promote the progress of your business, organization, members, workers, community and/or environment. The plan is called the Fair Trade Development Plan.		X	<i>You have developed a Fair Trade Development Plan with the descriptions, objectives, timelines, responsibilities and budget of all planned activities. The written plan contains all necessary details</i>
	Before you implement the Fair Trade Development Plan, you must present it to the General Assembly for approval. You must document the decisions.		X	<i>The plan was approved by the General Assembly and documented and later applied without changes or with justified changes that are approved ex-post.</i>
	You must have an accounting system that accurately tracks the Fair Trade Development Plan expenses, and in particular identifies the Fair Trade Premium transparently. You must be able to prove that the Fair Trade Premium is used in line with applicable rules.		X	<i>A system is implemented that allows tracking income and expenditure and identifying Premium acceptable: unintentional mistakes <1% found.</i>
	You must report the results of the Fair Trade Development Plan to the General Assembly every year and document this presentation.		X	<i>Written report presented to the General Assembly and approval is documented</i>
	You must design and start implementing a process that collects and analyzes the development needs in your organization.		X	<i>Process defined and implemented that captures the needs of members, workers and/or community.</i>