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PROGRAMME

Technical Advisory Board

SUMMARY

This document details the role and functioning of the Technical Advisory Board (TAB), the independent governing body overseeing the Standard. The purpose of the TAB is to offer scientific and technical insights to ERS, and to guarantee the accuracy and robustness of its tools and methodologies.



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NORMATIVE REFERENCE

This document must be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- [ERS Programme](#)
- [ERS Governance](#)
- [Standard Revision Procedure](#)
- [Code of Ethics and Business Conduct](#)
- [Rules of Procedure](#)



Technical *Advisory* Board

ROLE

1. **Submission.** The TAB mandates the Secretariat to draft Standard Revision Propositions in line with the [Standard Revision Procedure](#).
2. **Review.** Once the Secretariat has drafted and submitted a Standard Revision Proposition to the TAB, it is responsible for assessing all amendments and additions from the proposition. Depending on the TAB's decision, a Standard Revision Proposition can be approved or sent back to the Secretariat for revisions.
 - 2.1. **Working Groups.** In cases where specific scientific or technical expertise is required, the TAB may mandate the Secretariat to assemble a Working Group dedicated to reviewing a specific Standard Revision Proposition. The appointment procedure and role of Working Groups are specified in the [Working Groups](#) section of this document.
3. **Approval.** The TAB has authority over any changes to the Standard, and is therefore the only Entity responsible for approving standard revisions. Its decisions are final and cannot be contradicted by ERS. A Working Group cannot make the final approval decision.

APPOINTMENT PROCESS

1. First Appointment Process

- 1.1. During the first appointment process, the Executive team mandates the Secretariat to put together a Technical Advisory Board. To do so, the



Secretariat sources and interviews potential candidates according to the following criteria:

- 1.1.1. The number of candidates should be twice the number of seats.
- 1.1.2. The TAB must represent a variety of technical expertise, including remote sensing, livelihoods, ecological restoration and carbon markets.
- 1.1.3. The TAB must be available starting January 2024.
- 1.2. The Secretariat submits the best candidates to the Executive team who makes the final appointment decision.

2. Regular Appointment Process

When the mandate of a TAB member ends, or if a TAB member is excluded from the TAB, the regular appointment process applies.

- 2.1. The Secretariat must publish a call for application for a minimum duration of 30 days.
- 2.2. The Secretariat then establishes a shortlist of potential candidates that emerged from the call for application.
 - 2.2.1. Current TAB members are encouraged to submit potential candidates.
 - 2.2.2. The number of proposed names must be at least twice the number of empty seats.
- 2.3. This list is reviewed by the Executive team, which selects potential TAB members in line with the appointment criteria.



COMPOSITION OF THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY BOARD

1. **Group members.** The TAB shall comprise a group of up to ten independent experts.
2. **Mandate duration.** TAB members are appointed for two-year mandates, and for a maximum of three terms, whether consecutive or not.
3. **Appointment criteria.** The Secretariat appoints TAB members using the following criteria:
 - 3.1. **Experience.** TAB members must have leadership and organisational management experience.
 - 3.2. **Expertise.** TAB members must have demonstrated technical expertise in ERS-related fields, especially in ERS' three pillars (Ecological recovery, Carbon, and Livelihoods). Members must also show proficiency in related fields (such as carbon markets and remote sensing) to offer complementary perspectives and increase the Standard's legitimacy.
 - 3.3. **Diversity.** The pool of candidates should include representatives from different Stakeholder groups. Candidates must represent different gender, ethnicity and come from various continents.
 - 3.4. **Quotas.** To guarantee the representation of all relevant stakeholder groups, the TAB needs at least one representative of the following groups:
 - 3.4.1. Researchers and academics;
 - 3.4.2. Non-Governmental Organisations;
 - 3.4.3. Project developers;
 - 3.4.4. Local communities.



4. **Conflicts of interest.** To guarantee the independence of the TAB, its members must avoid conflicts of interest with ERS, and must sign the [Declaration of interest](#). Furthermore, if TAB members find themselves in a conflict of interest situation, they should:
 - 4.1. **Disclose the conflict.** TAB members should openly acknowledge their conflict of interest to fellow TAB members and the Secretariat.
 - 4.2. **Recuse themselves if necessary.** Depending on the nature and severity of the conflict, it may be appropriate for TAB members to remove themselves from the decision-making process entirely.
5. **Duties.** In line with the appointing criteria, TAB members must adhere to the [Rules of Procedure](#) and to the [Code of Ethics and Business Conduct](#), and agree with their role and mandate by signing the Terms of References.
6. **Exclusion.**

Members may be excluded from the TAB by the Secretariat, upon proposal of at least one other TAB member. TAB members can only be excluded on the following grounds:

- 6.1. They violate the provisions of the [Code of Ethics and Business Conduct](#) concerning conflicts of interest or confidentiality or any other duty assigned to them.
- 6.2. A court mandate restricts their ability to exercise their powers or rights.
- 6.3. They missed two TAB meetings without prior notice.
- 6.4. Criticism arises from their business reputation or involvement in commercial, political, or lobbying activities, which could harm ERS reputation.

If one or more of these criteria are met, removal from office of a TAB member can be considered. TAB members cannot be excluded without substantial material evidence and excluded TAB members must be notified of their exclusion at least 30



consecutive days in advance. Once a TAB member is excluded, a regular appointment process is initiated by the Secretariat.

WORKING GROUPS

1. **Mandate.** Working Groups can be formed whenever the TAB recognizes a need for additional expertise in a specific field or when addressing a specific topic. The need for a Working Group is assessed and justified by TAB Members collegially.
2. **Composition.** A Working Group is composed of up to two independent experts.
3. **Appointment criteria.** The appointment criteria for Working Groups are the same as for TAB members. TAB members cannot be part of a Working Group.
4. **Appointment process.** The appointment process for Working Groups follows the Regular Appointment Process of the TAB.

MEETINGS AND DECISION-MAKING

1. **First meeting.** During the first meeting of each year, TAB members read the annual agenda prepared by the Secretariat, and make the necessary adjustments.
2. **Frequency.** TAB members meet on a regular and ad-hoc basis. TAB members must participate in meetings unless notifying the Secretariat three weeks prior.
 - 2.1. **Monthly meetings.** All decisions and approvals should be made and validated during these meetings, according to the Standard Revision Procedure. These meetings happen once a month.



- 2.2. **Ad hoc meetings.** When necessary, an ad hoc meeting may be scheduled by TAB Members to discuss specific topics. TAB members may schedule a maximum of one ad hoc meeting every month.
3. **Minutes of meeting.** The Secretariat is responsible for drafting meeting minutes, to be signed by all TAB members.
4. **TAB decisions.** The TAB must write justifications for its decisions using the appropriate templates, in line with the [Standard Revision Procedure](#).

WORKING MODALITIES

- The working language is English for both written and oral communication.
- The following elements regarding TAB members will be disclosed on ERS' website:
 - Name;
 - Position within the TAB;
 - Short bio;
 - Portrait.
- **Remote work.** TAB members operate fully remote. ERS is responsible for providing the appropriate technological solutions to allow for the good functioning of the TAB.



ROLE & INDEPENDENCE OF THE SECRETARIAT

1. **Organization.** The Secretariat is responsible for organising the administrative and logistical aspects of TAB activities. This includes:
 - 1.1. Scheduling meetings;
 - 1.2. Drafting the agenda for each meeting;
 - 1.3. Drafting the meetings minutes.
2. **Independence and Transparency.** ERS recognises that the Secretariat holds a potential influence on the TAB. To avoid any interference with the TAB's activities, the Secretariat must comply to the following rules:
 - 2.1. Secretariat Agents must not interfere with the mission and decisions of TAB members. They should only interact with them regarding organisational and administrative matters.
 - 2.2. The Secretariat sends the minutes of meetings to all TAB members within seven consecutive days after the meeting. If a TAB member has not signed the minutes nor raised a concern seven consecutive days after receiving the minutes, the Secretariat can consider them accepted by default.
 - 2.3. All versions of all documents of the [Standard Revision Procedure](#) must be publicly disclosed on the [ERS website](#) to ensure full transparency of procedures. Any stakeholder may monitor ERS' activity and submit a standard-level grievance to ERS.
 - 2.4. To guarantee the independence of the TAB from all ERS Entities, the following rules apply to ERS Agents:
 - 2.4.1. **Sovereignty.** TAB decisions are sovereign and cannot be challenged or opposed formally or informally by any ERS Agent.



- 2.4.2. **Separation.** R&D, Certification and External Relations team members are prohibited from participating in any TAB activity.

COMPENSATION

1. TAB members are compensated by ERS for their services and intellectual contribution to the Standard. This compensation will be decided on a case-by-case basis, depending on each TAB member's seniority and field of expertise.
2. TAB members can receive compensation for travel-related expenses following ERS travel policy.
3. ERS occasionally calls for ad hoc meetings to tackle topics requiring TAB expertise. In such instances, TAB members may be asked to contribute to deliverables by joining or providing reviews and inputs. The compensation is determined on a case-by-case basis and is clarified before TAB members are asked to participate in such activities.



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