

ASI Standards Benchmarking and Harmonisation Procedure

V1 –28 June 2019

1 PURPOSE

The Aluminium Stewardship Initiative (ASI) aims to harmonise with relevant external Standards and Schemes wherever possible and appropriate, in order to enhance collaboration, reduce unnecessary duplication, and inform ASI's learning and continual improvement.

This procedure describes the identification, benchmarking and review of external Standards and Schemes for potential harmonisation with, including recognition by and of, ASI Standards.

Implementation of this procedure aims to:

- improve responsible production, sourcing and material stewardship of aluminium, as per ASI's mission
- increase uptake of ASI membership and certification through support of recognition and harmonisation between relevant Standards and Schemes
- inform the next revision cycle of the ASI Standards (particularly where the ASI Standard may be lower in performance requirements by comparison).

The harmonisation processes in this procedure have been developed with reference to the ISEAL Codes of Good Practice (Standards Setting Code, Impacts Code and the Assurance Code) and the ISEAL Sustainability Benchmarking Good Practice Guideline.

This procedure must be read in conjunction with the ASI Standards Setting Procedure and the ASI Assurance Manual.

2 SCOPE AND APPLICATION

This procedure covers:

- The steps to identify and review relevant external Standards and Schemes for benchmarking and harmonisation with ASI Standards and Assurance program
- The framework for having the ASI Standards recognised by external Standards and Schemes.

The scope of benchmarking and harmonisation activities will review available information regarding:

- Scheme management and standards-setting processes
- Standards requirements – related to Performance and/or Chain of Custody – and supply chain scope
- Assurance methodologies including requirements for conformance, oversight and reporting
- Nature and types of claims that can be made.

This procedure describes roles and responsibilities for the ASI Secretariat and the ASI Standards Benchmarking and Harmonisation Working Group (SBHWG).

3 DEFINITIONS

ASI Standards	Includes the ASI Performance Standard and the ASI Chain-of-Custody Standard.
ASI Standards Benchmarking and Harmonisation Working Group (SBHWG)	<p>ASI Working Group convened by the Standards Committee to review a range of relevant externally recognised Standards, Certification Schemes and Parallel Initiatives for benchmarking and harmonisation with ASI Standards.</p> <p><i>SBHWG will be used in this document as the abbreviation for ASI Standards Benchmarking and Harmonisation Working Group.</i></p>
ASI Working Group	A group comprised of experts and interested stakeholders convened by the Standards Committee to address and review a particular topic or task related to standards programs.
Accreditation (Accredited)	Third party attestation related to a conformity assessment body conveying formal demonstration of its competence to carry out a specific conformity assessment task (ISO/IEC 17000).
Auditor	An independent person or organisation Accredited to carry out audits.
Certification (ASI Certification)	<p>An attestation issued by a Third Party, based on the results of an audit by an Auditor, that the required level of conformance has been achieved against the applicable Standard and for the documented certification scope.</p> <p>ASI Certification is an attestation, based on the results of a certification audit by an ASI accredited Auditor, that the required level of conformance has been achieved against the applicable ASI Standard and for the documented certification scope.</p>
Certification Scheme	<p>A set of common requirements for Third Party accredited Auditors conducting Certification audits against a certifiable Standard.</p> <p><i>Examples of Certification Schemes include those for international Standards such as ISO 14001, ISO 45001, SA 8000, etc. or those for sector or supply chain Standards with Third Party audits such as Forest Stewardship Council or the Responsible Jewellery Council for their respective Chain of Custody Standards.</i></p> <p>See also Parallel Initiative</p>
Member	<p>An entity or group of entities that is a current member of one of ASI's six membership classes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production and Transformation (eligible for ASI Certification) • Industrial Users (eligible for ASI Certification) • Civil Society • Downstream Supporters • Associations • General Supporters <p>The use of Member in the Assurance Manual usually means an ASI Member (or an Entity under its Control) seeking ASI Certification.</p>

Parallel Initiative	<p>A recognised Standards and assessment program, similar to a Certification Scheme, but does not result in Certification.</p> <p><i>Examples of Parallel Initiatives include those that are internationally recognised but not part of a formal Certification Scheme such as the International Finance Corporation Standards or the Equator Principles adopted by financial institutions, or other international standards and guidelines widely recognised such as the Global Reporting Initiative Guidelines or the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights. Other examples of Parallel Initiatives include specific sustainability schemes only practised or recognised in a particular region or location, or for a specific product or industry sector such as buildings or supply of energy, or a particular part of the supply chain such as mining or recycling.</i></p>
Scheme	Collective term used in this procedure to mean a Certification Scheme and/or a Parallel Initiative.
Standards Committee	ASI Standards Committee as defined in the ASI Governance Handbook.
Stakeholders	Individual or group interested, concerned with or directly affected by a Standard.
Standard	Document that provides, for common and repeated use, rules, guidelines or characteristic for products or related processes and production methods, with which compliance is voluntary. (ISEAL Code of Good Practice for Setting Social and Environmental Standards).
Third Party	<p>A person or body independent of the person or organisation being evaluated, and of material interests in that person or organisation.</p> <p><u><i>For ASI the Third Party must be independent of the ASI Member seeking ASI Certification.</i></u></p>

4 REFERENCES

- ASI Assurance Manual
- ASI Chain of Custody Standard
- ASI Chain of Custody Standard Guidance
- ASI Claims Guide
- ASI Complaints Mechanism
- ASI Communications Procedure for Changes to ASI Documents
- ASI Governance Handbook
- ASI Performance Standard
- ASI Performance Standard Guidance
- ASI Standards Benchmarking and Harmonisation Working Group Terms of Reference
- ASI Standards Setting Procedure
- ISEAL Code of Good Practice for Setting Social and Environmental Standards
- ISEAL Code of Good Practice for Assessing the Impacts of Social and Environmental Standards
- ISEAL Code of Good Practice for Assuring Compliance with Social and Environmental Standards
- ISEAL Sustainability Benchmarking Good Practice Guide (draft v0.2, 1 March 2019)

- ISO/IEC Guide 2 Standardization and related activities -- General vocabulary

5 PROCEDURE

There are five main components which contribute towards the potential harmonisation of external Standards and Schemes with the current ASI Standards and for consideration in future reviews of the ASI Standards. This is illustrated in Figure 1:

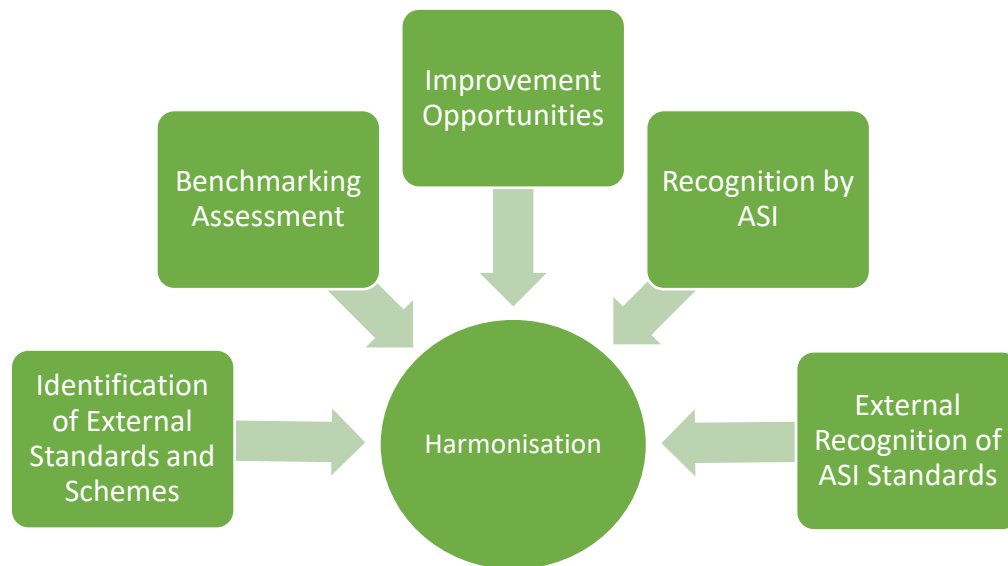


Figure 1 Harmonisation of ASI Standards

Each component is described below.

5.1 Identification of external Standards and Schemes

1. The ASI Secretariat and the Standards Benchmarking and Harmonisation Working Group (SBHWG) will periodically (at least annually) identify and review new, or changes to existing, external Standards and Schemes for potential harmonisation.
2. Any ASI Stakeholder, including Members, Standards Committee and/or Working Group participants, Auditors, and Schemes, can also identify and propose external Standards and Schemes for potential harmonisation with the ASI Standards and Assurance program.
3. The ASI Secretariat and/or the SBHWG will review the proposed external Standard and Scheme to determine if it is relevant and material to ASI, and agree whether to carry out a benchmarking assessment (5.2).

5.2 Benchmarking assessment

4. A benchmarking assessment will be carried out by the ASI Secretariat and/or the SBHWG to review the following Scheme-related aspects, as appropriate:
 - a) Scheme management and standards-setting processes
 - b) Overview of standards requirements and supply chain scope

- c) Assurance methodologies including requirements for conformance, oversight and reporting
- d) Nature and types of claims that can be made.
5. The benchmarking assessment will also review the following Standard-related aspects within the Scheme, as appropriate:
 - a) A comparison between relevant parts of the external Standard and relevant parts of the current ASI Standards – Performance and/or Chain of Custody
 - b) Whether the Standard is assessed to ‘Miss’, ‘Partially Meet’, ‘Meet’ or ‘Exceed’ the ASI Standard/s, and vice versa where relevant
 - c) Whether the Standard and Scheme can be harmonised into the current ASI Standards and assurance process, and if so:
 - i. The relevant steps and timeframes
 - ii. Whether there are additional evidence requirements or conditions that would need to be communicated to Members and/or Auditors in order for harmonisation to be implemented
 - iii. Which changes in elementAI would be required to support the harmonisation
 - d) Whether the Standard and Scheme is one that could recognise the ASI Standards, and if so, the next steps to be taken.
 - e) Whether the Standard and Scheme has aspects that can be considered for inclusion in the next ASI Standards revision cycle.
6. The ASI Secretariat and the SBHWG will report the results of the benchmarking assessment in the SBHWG’s meeting minutes, or other documentation, for communication to the ASI Standards Committee.
7. The ASI Standards Committee is responsible for reviewing and endorsing the recommendations made by the ASI Secretariat or the SBHWG, for further action as appropriate.

5.3 Improvement Opportunities

8. Benchmarking assessments may be used to identify improvement opportunities within ASI or within external Standards and Schemes.
9. If the benchmarking assessment (conducted in section 5.2) finds that the requirements of the external Standards and the associated assurance processes are greater than those defined in the ASI Standards or other ASI Documents, these will be logged by the ASI Secretariat for consideration during the next major ASI Standards revision process, defined in the ASI Standards Setting Procedure.
10. If the benchmarking assessment finds that the external Standard and Scheme has lower or different performance requirements, harmonisation within ASI may not be possible unless additional conditions and gaps to address the difference are imposed. This information may be shared with owner of the external Scheme as appropriate, particularly where they have requested a benchmarking assessment be conducted by ASI.

5.4 Recognition by ASI

1. A formal recognition of an external Standards and Scheme will be documented in the recognition table in the ASI Assurance Manual, and implemented through the associated recognition functionality in elementAl.
2. The ASI Board is responsible for approving the initiation of revision processes, as per the ASI Standards Setting Procedure.
3. For ASI recognition of a Standard and Scheme to take effect, it must be approved by the ASI Standards Committee and adopted by the ASI Board. Following approval, the ASI Secretariat will:
 - a. Update the recognition table in the ASI Assurance Manual and other ASI Documents as required
 - b. Update the associated recognition functionality in elementAl
 - c. Communicate changes in accordance with the ASI Communications Procedure for Changes to ASI Documents.
4. The ASI Secretariat and SBHWG will monitor the external Standards and Scheme for revisions and changes that may affect the recognition and harmonisation (See section 5.1).

5.5 External Recognition of, or Harmonisation with, ASI Standards

1. The ASI Secretariat will review the resources (time, financial, etc) required to have the ASI Standards recognised by, or harmonised with, the external Standard and Scheme. This may be determined on the basis of a benchmarking assessment (section 5.2) or via another form of internal assessment.
2. Following an assessment of priorities and available resources, the ASI CEO will determine, in consultation with the ASI Board where appropriate, whether to initiate a process to seek recognition of the ASI Standard(s) by the external Scheme.
3. Once approved by the CEO, the ASI Secretariat will work with the owner of the external Scheme. The ASI Secretariat will report progress on the recognition or harmonisation process to the ASI Board and the ASI Standards Committee as appropriate.
4. Once the external recognition or harmonisation is complete, the ASI Secretariat will publicly communicate the results as appropriate.

6 RECORDS

Records associated with the Standards benchmarking and harmonisation processes described in the Procedure will be maintained in Box by the ASI Secretariat for at least 5 years from the date the records were generated.

7 DOCUMENT CONTROL

Document Name	ASI Standards Benchmarking and Harmonisation Procedure
Document ID	ASI-PRO-10
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Approved By	CEO

Next Review Date	3 years or as required
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Please refer to the ASI Website for the latest version of this procedure.