GPSNR POLICY FRAMEWORK

For Sustainable Natural Rubber Production and Sourcing
(GPSNR Ordinary Member Companies)

Endorsed by the GPSNR Executive Committee and adopted at the 2nd General Assembly by GPSNR Members on 23 September 2020
The Global Platform for Sustainable Natural Rubber (GPSNR) is committed to promoting the uptake of sustainable natural rubber in the global marketplace by addressing forest and other ecosystem conversion, biodiversity loss, human and labor rights violations and inequity in the natural rubber supply chain. Upon joining GPSNR, members sign a commitment to uphold the 12 Principles of Sustainable Natural Rubber.

To support its members in translating the 12 Principles into concrete commitments that can be implemented, monitored and measured, GPSNR has developed these Policy Components.

GPSNR recognizes that how a company should best incorporate the Policy Components into its commitments will vary depending on the company’s position in the supply chain, and as such will provide examples that are specific to each supply chain node to support the appropriate adoption of the Policy Components.

The Policy Components are aligned with the principles and guidelines laid out in the UN Global Compact, the UN Guiding Principles for Business and Human Rights, the International Bill on Human Rights, and the International Labour Organization Fundamental Conventions.
This document outlines the main components that GPSNR requires its ordinary company members to include in their sustainable natural rubber production and purchasing policies and other documents. Each company member shall develop, publish and implement a policy or other documents that include the GPSNR Policy Components adapted to the particular context and supply chain position.

Implementation Guidance will also be developed for industrial producers, processors, manufacturers and end users, with a focus on continuous improvement and on a risk-based approach. While the policy components are applicable for all company members, implementation actions will differ based on a company’s position in the natural rubber supply chain.

Ordinary company members will adopt a policy or other documents that incorporate the Policy Components by 23 March 2021 (six months after the General Assembly voted to adopt the Policy Components). Companies can request an extension of three (3) months with the possibility of a one-time renewal from the Secretariat if they demonstrate that they are actively implementing a process to adopt the policy requirements. New ordinary company members will have six (6) months to adopt a policy or other documents with the Policy Components from the time of joining. New members can request an extension of three (3) months with the possibility of a one-time renewal from the Secretariat provided they demonstrate that they are actively implementing a process to adopt the policy requirements.

As appropriate, policies and other documents shall be publicly available in English and other applicable local languages.

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1. Smallholders/small natural rubber growers (natural rubber plantation of no more than 50 ha.) and small trader members are not required to develop and implement a formal policy, although they are required to adhere to buyers’ policies, and if they are members, are required to sign the GPSNR Founding Members statement that includes the 12 GPSNR principles. Civil society members also are not required to develop and implement a formal policy, but sign the GPSNR Founding Members statement upon joining as well. In 2020-2021, GPSNR will hold consultative processes with smallholder/small NR grower members and civil society organizations to develop an appropriate policy equivalent for each stakeholder category. These policy equivalences will reflect the shared responsibility of all GPSNR members to make sustainable natural rubber mainstream in the marketplace.
02 POLICY COMPONENTS
## 02. POLICY COMPONENTS

All GPSNR ordinary company members commit to the following:

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<th>Top Theme</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1 Commitment to Legal Compliance</strong></td>
<td>1.1 Complying with applicable local, national and international laws on human rights, labour, land use, and the environment.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1.2 Working against corruption in all of its forms including extortion and bribery.</td>
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<td><strong>2 Commitment to Healthy, Functioning Ecosystems</strong></td>
<td>2.1.1 Producing and sourcing natural rubber in a way that does not contribute to deforestation or degrade High Conservation Values (HCVs). Identification and management of areas for development and conservation follow the methodology and guidance consistent with the HCV Approach and with the High Carbon Stock Approach (HCSA).</td>
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<td>2.1.2 Natural rubber from areas deforested or where HCVs have been degraded after the cutoff date of 1 April 2019 is considered to be non-conforming with this policy element.</td>
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<td>2.2 Supporting the long-term protection of natural forests and other ecosystems and their conservation values, and restoring or supporting restoration of deforested and degraded rubber landscapes.</td>
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<td>2.3 Not using open burning/fire in new or ongoing operations for land preparation, land management, waste management, or any other reason other than in justified and documented cases of fire break establishment, waste management for sanitary reasons where public garbage collection is not available, phytosanitary and other emergencies.</td>
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<td>2.4 Protecting wildlife, including rare, threatened, endangered and critically endangered species from poaching, over-hunting and habitat loss in areas under company management and supporting wildlife protection activities in areas of influence.</td>
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<td>2.5 Protecting water quantity and quality, preventing water contamination from agricultural and industrial chemicals, and preventing erosion and sedimentation.</td>
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<td>2.6 Protecting soil quality, preventing erosion, nutrient degradation, subsidence and contamination.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2.7 Preventing the development of or sourcing from natural rubber plantations on peat, regardless of depth, extent, or status (wet, drained or dry).</td>
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**3 Commitment to Respecting all Human Rights**

**3.1** Respecting and protecting internationally recognized human rights (including upholding the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights [UNGPs]) by avoiding causing or contributing to adverse human rights impacts and preventing or mitigating any harm linked to company operations.

**3.2** Establishing and maintaining a company grievance mechanism (consistent with UNGP effectiveness criteria) to receive complaints and remedy adverse impacts they have caused due to production and sourcing.

**3.3** Recognizing and protecting the customary, traditional and communal land tenure rights of indigenous peoples and local communities (IP/LC) including:

- Carrying out operations in accordance with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)
- Ensuring ongoing land tenure and access rights
- Upholding traditional rights of access for hunting and gathering of animals and plants for the purpose of subsistence and indigenous cultural and religious traditions, customs and ceremonies

**3.4.1** Ensuring that, prior to any activity that might affect IP/LC rights to their lands, territories, and resources, their free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC) is secured. This includes when planning, establishing, restoring, or transforming corporate plantations and/or industrial sites, as well as associated infrastructure. The FPIC process is done in a culturally appropriate manner and follows credible accepted methodologies and associated GPSNR guidance. IP/LC have the right to give or withhold their consent to any activity that is subject to the FPIC process.

**3.4.2** Where operations impinge on IP/LC rights, compensating or accommodating IP/LC through appropriate, mutually agreed measures reflecting and described in the negotiated outcomes of the FPIC process.

**3.4.3** Adopting measures to provide remedy through mutually agreed procedures in cases where the company previously has caused or contributed to the appropriation of or harm to the lands, territories, or resources of IP/LC without securing FPIC. Implementation is jointly monitored by the community and the GPSNR member and/or by mutually agreed third party(ies).

**3.5** Establishing ongoing, effective, culturally appropriate channels of dialogue with indigenous people and local communities.

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2. The accepted methodologies to be followed for the FPIC process are:

### 3.6 Upholding applicable labour rights and labour laws in the jurisdictions where operating, the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, and the intent of the International Labor Organization’s eight core conventions. This includes:

- Freedom of association and collective bargaining (ILO Convention No. 87 and No. 98)
- No forced labour (ILO Convention No. 29 and its 2014 Protocol)
- No child labour (ILO Convention No. 138 and No. 182)
- Decent living wages
- No discrimination (ILO Convention No. 111 and No. 100)
- Legal working hours
- Safe and healthy workplaces
- No abusive practices (ILO Convention No. 105)
- Gender equity

Safeguards apply to all workers, including contract, temporary and migrant workers.

### 4 Commitment to Community Livelihoods

- **4.1** Supporting decent living conditions of local communities (e.g., drinking water, adequate housing, sanitation).
- **4.2** Supporting the right to food and food security of individuals, households and local communities.
- **4.3** Supporting the economic, social and cultural rights of local people, including through access to education and employment.

### 5 Commitment to Increased Production Efficiency

- **5.1** Offering or supporting training for natural rubber producers, including smallholders, to improve yield and quality.
- **5.2** Managing operations to minimize rate of energy usage.
- **5.3** Managing operations to maximize natural resource efficiency.
- **5.4** Minimizing and mitigating carbon emissions.
## 6 Commitment to Systems and Processes to Drive Effective Implementation of Policy Components

To implement and demonstrate progress toward fulfillment of the above Policy Components, members further commit to:

| 6.1  | Setting public, timebound and geographic-specific targets and milestones with their associated indicators/metrics for applying its commitments. |
| 6.2  | Embedding commitments into decision-making processes, systems, and performance metrics of corporate management, relevant business units, joint ventures, and company affiliates and subsidiaries. |
| 6.3  | Maintaining an active, regular stakeholder dialogue to provide relevant information, and to afford opportunities for feedback and suggestions related to fulfillment of the company’s commitments. |
| 6.4  | Participating in/supporting multi-stakeholder planning and policy efforts that uphold the GPSNR principles at a landscape, jurisdictional or other spatial level. |

## 7 Commitment to Supply Chain Assessment, Traceability, and Management

<p>| 7.1  | Conducting supply chain mapping and assessing suppliers for social and environmental risk to prioritize risk mitigation actions. |
| 7.2  | Supporting traceability of natural rubber, at a minimum to an appropriate jurisdictional level, to know or control the conformance of purchased materials with GPSNR Policy Components. The level of traceability will differ for each “node” of the supply chain and will be documented, with justification for why the desired level of traceability may not be reached for all supply chains and plans to achieve this level. The appropriate jurisdictional level will be defined in the implementation guidance. |
| 7.3  | Communicating to all suppliers of natural rubber that material produced and processed in accordance and conformance with the GPSNR Policy Components will be preferred. Providing time bound requirements for meeting the policy requirements, and ensuring that supplier codes and contracts, engagement activities, and other mechanisms reflect these supplier expectations. |
| 7.4  | Regularly engaging the supply chain (both direct and indirect suppliers) to support their conformance with company commitments through effective incentives, support mechanisms, and purchase monitoring systems. |
| 7.5  | In instances of supplier non-conformance with GPSNR Policy Components, developing time-bound implementation plans to move towards conformance and/or remediation of past or ongoing harms. |</p>
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<td><strong>Commitment to Monitoring and Reporting on Progress Towards, and Conformance with, Policy Components</strong></td>
<td><strong>8.1.1</strong> Regularly monitoring progress toward company commitments in order to ascertain performance.</td>
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<td><strong>8.1.2</strong> Applying monitoring systems and practices to incorporate crowd-sourced information from local stakeholders and affected parties regarding non-conformance with commitments. Information sources may be informal or formal.</td>
<td><strong>8.2</strong> Reporting publicly on progress and outcomes related to the implementation of policy-related commitments at least annually.</td>
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**Applicable to producers:** monitoring of policy commitments at the production level and according to the topics covered under the scope of this policy

**Applicable to buyers:** monitoring of policy commitments through the following approaches: a) monitoring at the production level; b) monitoring of sourcing areas; c) monitoring of supplier management and control systems (including certification)
# Appendix 1: Definitions

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<td><strong>Child labour</strong></td>
<td>Work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child’s education, or to be harmful to the child’s health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development. Not all work done by children should be classified as child labour that is to be targeted for elimination. Children’s or adolescents’ participation in work that does not affect their health and personal development or interfere with their schooling, is generally regarded as being something positive (according to International Labour Organisation).</td>
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| **Conversion** | Change of a natural ecosystem to another land use or profound change in a natural ecosystem’s species composition, structure, or function in accordance with the HCVRN/HCSA rule base.  
  - Deforestation is one form of conversion (conversion of natural forests).  
  - Conversion includes severe degradation or the introduction of management practices that result in substantial and sustained change in the ecosystem’s former species composition, structure, or function.  
  - Change to natural ecosystems that meets this definition is considered to be conversion regardless of whether or not it is legal. |
| **Customary use rights** | Traditional common rule or practice that has become an intrinsic part of the accepted and expected conduct in a community, profession, or trade and is treated as a legal requirement. |
| **Cutoff date** | (Related to no-deforestation and no-conversion commitments): The date after which deforestation or conversion renders a given area or production unit non-compliant with no-deforestation or no-conversion commitments, respectively. |
| **Deforestation** | Loss of natural forest as a result of: i) conversion to agriculture or other non-forest land use; ii) conversion to a tree plantation; or iii) severe and sustained degradation.  
  - This definition pertains to no-deforestation supply chain commitments, which generally focus on preventing the conversion of natural forests (primary forests and HCV/ HCS areas).  
  - Severe degradation (scenario iii in the definition) constitutes deforestation even if the land is not subsequently used for a non-forest land use.  
  - Loss of natural forest that meets this definition is considered to be deforestation regardless of whether or not it is legal.  
  - The Accountability Framework’s definition of deforestation signifies “gross deforestation” of natural forest where “gross” is used in the sense of “total; aggregate; without deduction for reforestation or other offset.” |
| **Forced labour** | All work or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the said person has not offered himself voluntarily (according to International Labour Organisation). |
**Forest degradation**
Changes within a natural ecosystem that significantly and negatively affect its species composition, structure, and/or function and reduce the ecosystem's capacity to supply products, support biodiversity, and/or deliver ecosystem services. Degradation may be considered conversion if it:
- is large-scale and progressive or enduring;
- alters ecosystem composition, structure, and function to the extent that regeneration to a previous state is unlikely; or
- leads to a change in land use (e.g., to agriculture or other use that is not a natural forest or other natural ecosystem).

**Freedom of association**
The right for workers and employers to establish and join organisations of their own choosing without previous authorization (according to [International Labour Organisation](https://www.ilo.org)).

**High Carbon Stock (HCS) approach**
The High Carbon Stock (HCS) Approach is a methodology that distinguishes forest areas for protection from degraded lands with low carbon and biodiversity values that may be developed. The methodology was developed with the aim to ensure a practical, transparent, robust, and scientifically credible approach that is widely accepted to implement commitments to halt deforestation in the tropics, while ensuring the rights and livelihoods of local peoples are respected.

Information on references to the HCSA and its scope of applicability is available [here](#).

**High Conservation Values (HCVs)**
An HCV is a biological, ecological, social or cultural value of outstanding significance or critical importance, as defined by Common Guidance for Identification of HCVs. The six categories of HCVs are:

- **HCV 1: Species diversity**
  Concentrations of biological diversity including endemic species, and rare, threatened or endangered species, that are significant at global, regional or national levels.

- **HCV 2: Landscape-level ecosystems, ecosystem mosaics and IFL**
  Large landscape-level ecosystems, ecosystem mosaics and Intact Forest Landscapes (IFL) that are significant at global, regional or national levels, and that contain viable populations of the great majority of the naturally occurring species in natural patterns of distribution and abundance.

- **HCV 3: Ecosystems and habitats**
  Rare, threatened, or endangered ecosystems, habitats or refugia.

- **HCV 4: Ecosystem services**
  Basic ecosystem services in critical situations, including protection of water catchments and control of erosion of vulnerable soils and slopes.

- **HCV 5: Community needs**
  Sites and resources fundamental for satisfying the basic necessities of local communities or indigenous peoples (for livelihoods, health, nutrition, water, etc...), identified through engagement with these communities or indigenous peoples.

- **HCV 6: Cultural values**
  Sites, resources, habitats and landscapes of global or national cultural, archaeological or historical significance, and/or of critical cultural, ecological, economic or religious/sacred importance for the traditional cultures of local communities or indigenous peoples, identified through engagement with these local communities or indigenous peoples.

References are available [here](#).
| **High conservation value management area** | HCV Management Areas are areas in a site, management unit or landscape for which appropriate management decisions must be taken and implemented in order to maintain or enhance an HCV. |
| **Large SNR grower/Industrial SNR plantation** | Individual holder of natural rubber plantation that is above the maximum area limit defined as a smallholding (50 ha). See definition of small SNR grower below. |
| **Local community** | A group of interacting people living in and sharing a specific environment and place, and sharing common concern around local facilities, services, and environment and which may at times depart from traditional or State definitions. Such communities may attach particular meaning to land and natural resources as sources of culture, customs, history, and identity, and/or depend on them to sustain their livelihoods, social organisation, culture, traditions, and beliefs. Local communities may be legally or customarily known or designated using various terms, such as “traditional communities.” Like Indigenous Peoples, they may use and manage land in accordance with customary tenure systems and associated rights and may depend on their land for cultural and physical survival. Due to their similarities, the Framework refers to both ‘indigenous peoples and local communities’ and requires the same processes and respect for the rights of both groups, including with respect to property and the right to give or withhold Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC; see definition).* |
| **Natural ecosystem** | An ecosystem that substantially resembles – in terms of species composition, structure, and ecological function – one that is or would be found in a given area in the absence of major human impacts. This includes human-managed ecosystems where much of the natural species composition, structure, and ecological function are present. Natural ecosystems include: |
| | • Largely “pristine” natural ecosystems that have not been subject to major human impacts in recent history |
| | • Regenerated natural ecosystems that were subject to major impacts in the past (for instance by agriculture, livestock raising, tree plantations, or intensive logging) but where the main causes of impact have ceased or greatly diminished and the ecosystem has attained species composition, structure and ecological function similar to prior or other contemporary natural ecosystems |
| | • Managed natural ecosystems (including many ecosystems that could be referred to as “semi-natural”) where much of the ecosystem’s composition, structure, and ecological function are present; this includes managed natural forests as well as native grasslands or rangelands that are, or have historically been, grazed by livestock |
| | • Natural ecosystems that have been partially degraded by anthropogenic or natural causes (e.g., harvesting, fire, climate change, invasive species, or others) but where the land has not been converted to another use and where much of the ecosystem’s composition, structure, and ecological function remain present or are expected to regenerate naturally or by management for ecological restoration. |

Natural forest

A forest that is a natural ecosystem.

1. Natural forests possess many or most of the characteristics of a forest native to the given site, including species composition, structure, and ecological function. Natural forests include:
   - Primary forests that have not been subject to major human impacts in recent history
   - Regenerated (second-growth) forests that were subject to major impacts in the past (for instance by agriculture, livestock raising, tree plantations, or intensive logging) but where the main causes of impact have ceased or greatly diminished and the ecosystem has attained much of the species composition, structure, and ecological function of prior or other contemporary natural ecosystems.
   - Managed natural forests where much of the ecosystem’s composition, structure, and ecological function exist in the presence of activities such as:
     - Harvesting of timber or other forest products, including management to promote high-value species
     - Low intensity, small-scale cultivation within the forest, such as less-intensive forms of swidden agriculture in a forest mosaic
   - Forests that have been partially degraded by anthropogenic or natural causes (e.g., harvesting, fire, climate change, invasive species, or others) but where the land has not been converted to another use and where degradation does not result in the sustained reduction of tree cover below the thresholds that define a forest or sustained loss of other main elements of ecosystem composition, structure, and ecological function.

2. The categories “natural forest” and “tree plantation” are mutually exclusive, though in some cases the distinction may be nuanced. Please see the Operational Guidance on Applying the Definitions Related to Deforestation, Conversion, and Protection of Ecosystems for further discussion of boundary cases.

3. For the purpose of corporate no-deforestation commitments, the focus is on preventing the conversion of natural forests.

Peat

A soil with cumulative organic layer(s) comprising more than half of the upper 80 cm or 100 cm of the soil surface containing 35% or more of organic matter (35% or more Loss on Ignition) or 18% or more organic carbon. Note for management of existing plantations in Malaysia and Indonesia, a narrower definition has been used, based on national regulations: namely soil with an organic layer of more than 50% in the top 100 cm containing more than 65% organic matter.

Protected area

Areas especially dedicated to the protection and maintenance of biological diversity, and of natural and associated cultural resources, and managed through legal or other effective means. Countries may use different legal terminologies to name and define protected areas covered under relevant national legal requirements.

Remediation and remedy

Terms used interchangeably or in combination with one another to refer to both the process of providing redress for a negative impact and the substantive outcomes that can counteract, or make good, the negative impact. These outcomes may take a range of forms such as apologies, restitution, rehabilitation, restoration, financial or non-financial compensation, and punitive sanctions (whether criminal or administrative, such as fines), as well as the prevention of harm through, for example, injunctions or guarantees of non-repetition.*

* Adapted from the UN Guiding Principles Reporting Framework
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Small SNR grower/ Smallholder</strong></td>
<td>Holder of natural rubber plantation that is relatively small in size and that has been verified to be in compliance with the SNR Criteria and Indicators. Each country has different definition on small growers, the threshold area of not more than 50 ha is set to define a small SNR grower for GPSNR.</td>
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<td><strong>SNR downstream user</strong></td>
<td>Organisation that manufactures finished or semi-finished products made of natural rubber.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SNR processor</strong></td>
<td>Organisation that processes raw natural rubber.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SNR trader</strong></td>
<td>Trading organisation (either individual or corporation) that is involved in the national or international trade of natural rubber.</td>
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### Supply chain transparency
- Transparency refers to the capture and transference of 'high-level' information along the supply chain.
- Supply chain transparency is an all-in strategy, requiring harmonious agreement of various moving parties. Strategic transparency is contingent upon the gathering of existing data, and building a knowledge base for existing supply chain activities and suppliers.
- Supply chain transparency requires companies to know what is happening upstream in the supply chain and to communicate this knowledge both internally and externally.

### Target date
The date by which a given company (or other commitment- or policy-issuing entity) intends to have fully implemented its commitment or policy.

### Traceability
The ability to follow a product or its components through stages of the supply chain (e.g., production, processing, manufacturing, and distribution).