

Plant Health Standard Setting Procedure

1. Introduction

This document outlines the procedure by which the Plant Health Management Standard (PHMS), which forms the basis of the Plant Healthy Certification Scheme (PHCS), is reviewed and revised by the Plant Health Alliance (Alliance). Plant Healthy Ltd is the agreed legal entity responsible for undertaking the administrative duties involved in running the PHCS.

As the agreed legal entity for administration purposes, Plant Healthy Ltd is the official *scheme owner*¹ and is responsible for ensuring that all *scheme documents*¹ are fit-for-purpose. The PHMS is a scheme document of the PHCS and this Standard Setting Procedure sets out how the requirements of the PHMS are periodically reviewed and updated in a sequence of steps that are authorised by the Alliance.

Plant Healthy Ltd management welcomes feedback from stakeholders on any aspect of the PHMS, including feedback on this Standard Setting Procedure. Feedback can be provided by emailing info@planthealthy.org.uk.

All feedback and comments received between PHMS revisions will be noted and where relevant, considered at the subsequent review of the PHMS.

To ensure that this Standard Setting Procedure remains fit for purpose it will be reviewed following each substantive revision of the PHMS, taking account of any improvements or alterations identified during the revision process.

¹ [How to develop scheme documents Guidance for ISO technical committees, 2019](#)

2. Stakeholders

Stakeholder engagement and collaboration are essential principles² of PHCS. Therefore, a core aim of Plant Healthy Ltd and the Alliance is to ensure that appropriate stakeholder groups are established and are included in the process of reviewing and revising the PHMS.

PHCS stakeholders comprise a wide range of organisations including government departments and agencies, industry bodies, third sector organisations, scheme member representatives, policy specialists and technical experts.

The table below outlines the range of stakeholder groups to be engaged with as part of the process to review and update the PHMS.

| Stakeholder Group | Composition | Role in the Standard Setting Procedure |
|--|--|---|
| Plant Health Alliance (meets twice a year at six-month intervals) – Chaired by: Chair of Plant Healthy Ltd. | UK government departments and agencies, trade bodies, third sector organisations and individual specialists. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for agreeing to commence a review of the PHMS. Responsible for signing off each revised version of the PHMS. |
| Plant Health Alliance Working Group (meet once a month) – Chaired by: PHy Ltd Project Director. | Project Director, Module leads and other relevant specialists. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for setting the timeline for each substantive review of the PHMS and ensuring progress is maintained. Ensure that other relevant schemes are aware of the Standard Setting Procedure. |
| Plant Health Alliance Technical Advisory Group – Coordinated by: Technical module lead. | Certification Body representatives, and representatives of the UK Plant Health Service. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aim to align PHMS with relevant regulatory frameworks. Provide technical advice to improve and develop the PHMS. Recommend to the PHA when a review of the PHMS is needed as per section 3.1. |

² [ISEAL Code of Good Practice for Sustainability Systems](#)

3. Review and revision of the Plant Health Management Standard

3.1 Standard Review

The PHMS is reviewed and updated if appropriate at least every three years to ensure its continued relevance and effectiveness relative to its objectives. With approval of the Alliance the PHMS may be revised more frequently where legislative, scientific or technical advances determine that a review is required. If a review outside of the minimum three year requirement is required then the technical specialist at Plant Healthy Ltd will raise the subject to the Working Group to initiate the process.

The review process considers all feedback received between revisions of the PHMS, other stakeholder feedback (during the revision process) and discussions with the Technical Advisory Group and the Certification Bodies authorised to carry out audits against the PHMS. If a revision to the PHMS is necessary the timeline for the revision will be defined, ensuring the process is concluded in a timely manner.

3.2 Consultation

A draft of the proposed changes to the PHMS will be made available on the Plant Healthy website for consultation. Existing members and applicants to the PHCS, and the Trustees of Plant Healthy Limited, will be made aware of the consultation and invited to provide feedback. The length of consultation will be defined by the scale of the review proposed, however there will be a minimum review period of 1 month on all consultations.

Following consultation, all relevant feedback will be discussed with the Technical Advisory Group with a view to consider what should be included in the revised version of the PHMS. The Plant Healthy Ltd technical specialist will revise the PHMS in accordance with the recommendations of the Technical Advisory Group. The Technical Advisory Group will check that the revisions made are in line with their recommendations

3.3 Approval

An email will be sent to all Alliance members containing a copy of the final draft of the revised version of the PHMS and details on all changes, additions and removals that have been made from the previous version. All members will be given 14 days to respond with their decision or to request more information from the Technical Advisory Group if this is required (in which case, such information should be provided without delay, sent to all Alliance members, and a further 14 days allowed). In order for the new version of the PHMS to be approved then, as a minimum, a majority of the Alliance members expressing a view must give their approval. Defra, together with the Scottish and Welsh governments, will be asked to approve any substantive changes to the PHMS. If consensus cannot be reached among these three bodies, the matter will be decided by a majority vote of the three governments or, in the absence of a consensus between any two of the three governments, the proposed changes to the Standard will not be accepted.

3.4 Publication

The revised version of the PHMS will be published on the Plant Healthy website at least 3 months before the implementation date. During this period members and applicants will be able to choose which version of the PHMS they are audited against, but all must be audited against the new version from the implementation date. The revised PHMS is also sent to all existing and applicant members by email with an explanation of the substantive changes.

3.5 Non-substantive changes

From time to time, non-substantive changes to the Plant Health Management Standard may be needed (e.g. typographical error). The Working Group will be made aware of these changes and the process will be overseen by the Project Director, compliance and technical personnel working for Plant Healthy Ltd. There is no need for a formal review process and a notification of the changes will be available on the Plant Healthy website.

3.6 Urgent changes

Where urgent changes are needed to the PHMS the Alliance will define and agree to the appropriate procedure in consultation with the Alliance Working Group and the Technical Advisory Group. An example of when an urgent change may be required is when legislative changes need to be included in the PHMS (i.e. Section 1 – Regulatory Requirements) or considered in terms of how such legislative changes relate to all requirements in the current version of the PHMS.

4. Decision making

Where possible, all decisions are made on consensus and in line with clause 6.10: *Consensus decision-making* of the *ISEAL Code of Good Practice for Sustainability Systems*². In order to reach consensus, the Technical Advisory Group will use the following communication methods will be used to establish whether there is agreement:

- a. Face-to-face meetings
- b. Meetings via video or remote conferencing facilities
- c. Email communication

For the above communication methods, where a stakeholder makes no comment within a defined timeframe this will be deemed to be an acceptance of the proposed updates to the PHMS.

The process for approval will be on the basis set out in section 3.3 of this procedure.

5. Records

Records of all PHMS revisions are kept for at least 5 years. This includes comments received from stakeholders as part of the consultation. Where previous versions of scheme documents are removed from the website, they can be requested by stakeholders by emailing director@planthealthy.org.uk