SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURAL NETWORK
GENERIC COFFEE STANDARDS

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1. ECOSYSTEM CONSERVATION

1.1. Conserve Ecosystems On and Near the Farm

1.1.1 Ecosystems (lakes, streams, wetlands, forest patches, etc.) must be marked, mapped, protected, conserved, and recuperated where possible.

1.1.2 New and expanding farms must not degrade, damage or destroy ecosystems.

Indicators 1.1.2

- New production areas cannot be sited in primary forest, advanced secondary forest, or in areas protected by law.
- Agriculture is not allowed in designated parks, refuges, corridors or buffer zones unless it is part of a management plan approved by the SAN and the relevant government agencies.

1.1.3 Deforestation is prohibited. Native forests are strictly preserved.

1.2. Protect Forests and Reforest Where Possible

1.2.1 Areas not suitable for cultivation should be reforested or otherwise restored to a natural state. All reforestation and recuperation of ecosystems must be done with native species in order to improve wildlife habitat. In cases where it has been demonstrated that native species can seriously limit crop production – or where there is no available stock material of native species for propagation -- exotic species that have been adapted to the region may be used.

Indicator 1.2.1

- Existing forest patches must be conserved and measures must be taken to improve their value as wildlife habitat. These measures can include declaring them refuges or private reserves, enrichment plantings, and restoration. Commercial extraction of firewood or lumber from native forests is prohibited except when it is managed and certified.

1.2.2 Reforest and/or conserve the existing vegetation along the banks of rivers, ravines, and other critical areas.

1.2.3 Public roadsides must be forested.

1.2.4 If the farm uses agrochemicals, all workplaces and housing must be protected by a vegetative barrier.

1.2.5 In those regions where coffee has traditionally been cultivated beneath shade trees, producers must maintain or establish a canopy cover of mixed native trees.

Indicators 1.2.5

- The shade must be diversified with at least 12 species of native trees, and the species must be well distributed around the farm.
- The density of shade tree species must be at least 70 trees per hectare (1 hectare is

equivalent to 2.47 acres) or 50 per manzana.

- Emergent trees must be present and well distributed throughout the farm.
- The shade must have diverse structure, with at least two strata present.
- Enough of the shade tree must be evergreens (non-deciduous) to provide continuous habitat, enrich the soil, help control erosion and help reduce unwanted, ground-level plant growth.

1.2.6 Pruning must be planned and managed to maintain biodiversity and wildlife habitat.

Indicators 1.2.6

- After pruning, enough foliage must remain to meet the needs of wildlife.
- Pruning must be timed to meet the needs of resident and migratory wildlife.
- Epiphytes, fruits and flowers must be conserved where possible.

Complimentary Indicator 1.2.6

* In those areas where firewood is a primary energy source, the farmer should establish woodlots of fast-growing trees to supplement the firewood that can be harvested during pruning. Firewood extraction from natural forest areas is prohibited, except in managed projects approved by the SAN.

1.3. Prevent and Control Fires

1.3.1 The use of fire to clear land or control unwanted vegetation is prohibited.

1.3.2 Farmers must have a fire-prevention plan and, where appropriate, fire-suppression equipment.

1.3.3 In fire hazard areas, workers should be trained in fire prevention and control.

2. WILDLIFE CONSERVATION

2.1 Protect and enrich habitat

2.1.1 Critical habitats within the farm must be identified and managed with biodiversity conservation objectives.

2.1.2 Where possible, establish biological corridors of native vegetation to unite forest fragments and allow wildlife to migrate between parks, refuges, conservation areas and other protected areas.

2.2 Protection Strategies

2.2.1 Planned and constant measures must be taken for the protection and recuperation of biodiversity, especially for threatened and endangered species and their habitats.

2.2.2 No hunting or commercial collection of flora and fauna or threatened or endangered species (UICN 2000) or of species included in the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) with the exception of the cases where the species comes from a licensed wildlife farm, registered

nursery and is managed in fulfillment with local and international legislation(some exceptions made for regulated programs and subsistence communities – see indicators).

Indicators 2.2.2

- Workers and local people can collect forest products for subsistence purposes. This activity should be managed to ensure sustainability.
- Regulated hunting of common species is allowed if studies prove that the target population can support it and if the hunting practices are authorized by the proper government authorities. Hunting regulations on the farm must be at least as strict as national laws and also approved by the certifying body.
- Slingshots are prohibited except for subsistence hunting.
- Hunting is prohibited in forest preserves – including those on the farm.
- Commercial collection of plants such as epiphytes and other Natural Forest Products is prohibited except for sustainably designed, managed and approved projects.

2.3 Proper Location of Farms

2.3.1 Production units cannot be located where they can generate negative effects on national parks, forest reserves, wildlife refuges, buffer zones or other conservation areas, public or private.

3. FAIR TREATMENT AND GOOD CONDITIONS FOR WORKERS

3.1 Employment policies should improve the standard of living for workers and their families.

3.1.1 The employer must implement a labor policy that includes compliance with the relevant national legislation, ILO conventions, other international conventions ratified by the national government, and the SAN standards.

3.2 Contracting Labor

3.2.1 In hiring, there shall be no discrimination for reasons of race, color, sex, religion, social status, political beliefs, nationality, affiliation with unions or other collective bargaining groups, sexual orientation, or marital status.

3.2.2 Hiring should be done directly by the farm or company and not through third parties.

3.2.3 Workers must receive compensation equal or superior to the legal minimum wage and the regional average appropriate for the kind of work performed.

3.2.4 National child labor laws for agriculture must be enforced.

3.2.5 Any kind of forced labor is prohibited.

3.3 Freedom to organize, freedom of opinion

3.3.1 The employer must guarantee the rights of workers to organize and negotiate the terms of their contracts in accordance with ILO conventions 87 and 98.

3.3.2 The employer must inform employees about planned farm management or organizational changes and the possible social, environmental and economic impacts of these changes.

3.4 Occupational Health and Safety

3.4.1 All workers, permanent and seasonal, shall be provided with basic services and working conditions that are safe, clean, orderly and sanitary.

3.4.2 Workers should receive the proper training and equipment to handle agrochemicals, run farm implements or operate machines.

3.4.3 Workers with potentially hazardous jobs should have access to medical checkups to ensure that they are fit for such activities.

3.5 Housing and Basic Services

3.5.1 All workers, permanent and seasonal, who reside on the farm should have adequate and dignified housing and access to basic services.

3.5.2 Workers and their families should have access to education, medical care, public transportation and recreational facilities.

4. COMMUNITY RELATIONS

4.1 Consult communities

The interests of community groups and local inhabitants must be considered during the planning and development stages of agricultural activities when these developments directly affect their living situation.

4.2 Respect for community resources

Areas of social, cultural, biological, environmental, and religious significance must be preserved.

4.3 Community development

Communities adjacent to the farm should have priority of employment as well as training opportunities that would prepare them to participate in the activities of the agricultural company.

4.4 Possession and use of the land

The legally responsible representatives of the agricultural activity must prove their ownership or long-term right to use the land.

4.5 Shared resources and responsibilities

Producers should help protect community watersheds and forests, contribute to the local economy and accept their fair share of costs of community infrastructure (schools, roads, water supplies, etc.)

4.6 Environmental education

Educational programs should be developed. In addition to the training required by the certification program, farm manager, workers, and their families should have access to classes on environmental protection, sanitation, health, hygiene, gender issues and so on. These programs must be designed to accommodate the culture, language and literacy level on the farm.

5. INTEGRATED CROP MANAGEMENT

5.1 Integrated Pest Management

5.1.1 Integrated Pest Management (IPM) must be employed, emphasizing physical, cultural, mechanical, and biological practices to control pests. If pesticides are used, priority must be given to reduce and eventually eliminate them.

Indicator 5.1.1
Pruning of the canopy cover to increase ventilation and illumination can control some pests/diseases and increase others. Pruning for crop protection must be based on monitoring of pest/disease levels.

5.1.2 A monitoring and evaluation system must be established to determine when and where the pest populations reach threat levels; this monitoring regulates the use of agrochemicals to just those areas and those times when they are needed to protect the farmer from grave economic risk or failure.

5.1.3 Farmers using agrochemicals must demonstrate continual reductions in the toxicity and quantity of chemicals used and rotate products to prevent the buildup of tolerance.

5.2 Permitted and Prohibited Agrochemicals

5.2.1 Pesticides must be registered for use on the particular crop, and approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), as well as national agencies.

5.2.2 Chemical products banned in their country of origin or prohibited by national or international agreements may not be used. This includes the “Dirty Dozen” list of the Pesticide Action Network.

5.3 Transport of Agrochemicals.

5.3.1 Personnel and vehicles carrying agrochemicals must have the proper training

and equipment to minimize the risk of accidents and spills and to contain a spill if one does occur.

5.3.2 The farm must have an emergency plan to deal with spills or other contamination events. Those responsible for implementing the plan must demonstrate that they are familiar with it and understand it. All workers should be trained in emergency procedures at least once a year.

5.4 Storage of Agrochemicals

5.4.1 Agrochemicals must be stored in areas exclusively designated and designed for this purpose. The storage area must be located at prescribed distances from offices, houses, water sources, protected areas, and storage areas for fuels and lubricants.

5.4.2 The infrastructure and management of storage areas must be designed to reduce the risk of accident and negative impacts on human health and the environment. On-farm inventories of chemical products must be kept at a minimum. An account of this inventory must be maintained, and it must include a list of the stored products, their date of purchase, their expiration date, and use and safety information.

5.5 Application of Agrochemicals

5.5.1 Agrochemicals may only be applied by qualified, medically approved, adults, who have received the necessary training and personal safety equipment.

5.5.2 The proper dosage and mixtures as well as adequate equipment, including personal protection gear, must be used in any application.

5.5.3 The appropriate security measures for workers, local communities and the environment must be utilized, including re-entry restrictions as stipulated by the U.S. EPA.

5.5.4 Showering and dressing areas must be available for workers. There must be an exclusive area for washing personal protection gear and an exclusive station for washing equipment used to apply agrochemicals.

6. COMPLETE, INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT OF WASTES

6.1 Reduction

A program must be developed aimed at the reduction of residues, changing the purchasing practices and/or the substitution of production systems that generate waste products that contaminate the environment or that threaten the health of workers and the surrounding community. Suppliers should be required to take back empty vessels.

6.2 Reuse

The farm or producer must implement strategies for reusing the waste that can able to be reused. All materials should be used as many times as possible. Process waters can be used for irrigation.

6.3 Recycle

6.3.1 Organic wastes must by used to enrich the soil wherever possible.

6.3.2 The farm must implement a recycling system for non-biodegradable wastes (i.e. plastic, paper, wood, metals and glass).

6.4 Appearance

The farm must be clean, without unmanaged wastes and with minimal litter.

6.5 Final Disposition of Wastes

Residual and wastes must be managed in ways that minimize risks to human health and the environment.

7. CONSERVATION OF WATER RESOURCES

7.1 Protect Waterways

Buffer zones must be established along rivers, lakes, and ravines and around springs to control sedimentation and contamination. Changing the course of streams or otherwise significantly altering the natural hydrology is prohibited.

7.2 Rational Use

Water should be used wisely and recycled and reused wherever possible.

7.3 Contamination In bodies of water

All sources of pollution and contamination of bodies of water must be eliminated or reduced to levels accepted by national law and the program. Fertilizers, pesticides, fuels and lubricants require special handling.

7.4 Treatment of Residual Waters

All waters used in mills, washing facilities or housing must be appropriately filtered or treated before returning them to nature.

7.5 Monitoring

A program to monitor the physical, chemical and biological characteristics of drinking and residual waters must be established and maintained. The complexity of this program should be concordant with the size and intensity of the farm. The sample locations, schedule and quality parameters are set by the SAN.

7.6 Aquifer protection

Farmers exploiting subterranean waters must have measures in place to reduce the risk of over-extraction or contamination.

8. SOIL CONSERVATION

8.1 New Farms

Agriculture must be located on lands suitable for the proposed crop according to studies and soil classification maps.

8.2 Erosion Control

A soil conservation plan to minimize erosion must be implemented. The plan must consider the topography, type of soil, climatic conditions and agricultural practices of the area.

Indicator 8.2

- Should promote the conservation of soils by way of windbreaks, vegetative barriers, cover crops and contour and terrace planting must be employed where conditions warrant.
- Should promote the use of cultural practices in order to control weeds
- Should document and control those practices that in some way further erosion and other forms of degradation.

8.3 Soil Management

Farm management practices must promote the conservation and recuperation of the soil's fertility, quantity of organic material, biological activity, and structure.

Indicator 8.3

- The producer should develop a fertilization program based on analyses of foliage and soils.

9. PLANNING AND MONITORING

9.1 Planning

9.1.1 The producer must present a plan of objectives, goals, responsibilities, and a calendar of activities by which the social and environmental conditions of the farm will be improved in the short, medium, and long term. The detail and scale of this plan should be in concord with the size and intensity of the farm.

9.1.2 Prior to the implementation of new operations, processes, production systems or expansion into new areas, an evaluation of the social and environmental impact of these changes must be conducted.

9.2 Monitoring

9.2.1 The producer must implement a system to monitor social and environmental impacts. The complexity of the system is determined by the magnitude and intensity of the production systems and the on-farm and neighboring natural resources.

9.2.2 The monitoring and evaluation system must be periodic and able to produce sufficient information for the revision of the farm management plan if needed.

9.2.3 The farm must be able to demonstrate its compliance with the program standards and continual improvement of its social and environmental character.

9.2.4 Certified coffee must be kept segregated from uncertified coffee and a tracking system must be in place to distinguish and document certified coffee as it moves through the chain of custody toward the final market.

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For more information or for the complete standards contact the Rainforest Alliance or the Sustainable Agriculture Network member nearest you.

Email: CAN@RA.ORG

www.rainforest-alliance.org