
Guidelines for Sustainable Development of Natural Rubber

(Draft for consultation)

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1. Preface

As one of the four major industrial raw materials, natural rubber integrates agriculture, forestry, industry, finance, politics and other attributes. The natural rubber industry has been affected not only by the international market demand, volatility of financial markets and other macro-environment, but also rubber industry development strategy, management model, production and operation practices. In particular, along with global industrialization, the demand of natural rubber has been dramatically increased. Natural rubber plantation has been concentrated to the most suitable areas with favorable climate and regions of poor agricultural and economic basis, resulting in great challenges to the local society, economy and environment. In the other hand, challenges for sustainable development of natural rubber have been rising accordingly.

To help enterprises engaged in natural rubber investment identify and manage challenges regarding sustainable development. China Chamber of Commerce of Metals, Minerals & Chemicals Importers & Exporters (CCCMC) takes a lead to develop the Guidelines for Sustainable Development of Natural Rubber (hereinafter referred to as "Guidelines") based on the development characteristics of rubber industry, by referring to ISO 26000: Guidance on Social Responsibility, as well as relevant laws and regulations, international conventions, social responsibility standards, principles, initiatives and other applicable documents

The guiding principle and applicable scope of the Guidelines is developed with consideration of investment risks management and prevention, inclusive development and multi-win-win purpose. The Guidelines aim to help enterprises identify, avoid and response risks throughout investment, plantation, processing and other stages. Guidelines regarding implementation of due diligence management are proposed. It will be helpful for enterprises in developing sustainable development policy, establishing sustainable investment management system. It also provides basic guidance for compliance management of rubber supply chain, to ultimately achieve co-development with the hosting country and maximize the long-term benefits.

China Chamber of Commerce of Metals, Minerals & Chemicals Importers & Exporters (CCCMC) has the right to interpret the Guidelines, and promote the implementation of the Guidelines in the rubber industry. The Guidelines will be updated by CCCMC according to the actual situation in consultation with stakeholders.

2. Applicable scope

These Guidelines mainly apply to business practices of investment, plantation and

processing of natural rubber. The Guidelines can also be used by downstream enterprises in natural rubber industry and other organizations in their supply chain management.

Supervision organizations and financial institutes and other stakeholders can also use the Guidelines while making financing and monitoring decisions related to natural rubber industry.

3. Guiding principles

Sustainable development of natural rubber should adhere “innovation, coordination, green, open, sharing” philosophy, commit to achieve the United Nations goal of sustainable development.

3.1 Legal compliance and lawful business operations

Abide by all applicable laws and regulations, and respect relevant international codes of conduct, including contents covered by international law, international conventions and the International Customary Law. Lawful business operations shall be pursued.

3.2 Respect for human rights and secured rights and interests

Respect human rights and labor rights, understand and evaluate the risks in human rights and labor uses involved in business practices along supply chains and adopt appropriate precautionary measures to mitigate such risks, so as to protect human rights and labor interests in a more effective manner.

3.3 Site-specific considerations with respect for differences

Consider the natural environment (including but not limited to climate, soil and hydrology) and social context (including but not limited to politics, legislation, culture, religions and customs), respect differences and highlight site-specific appropriateness.

3.4 Open, transparent and fair competition

Timely disclose decisions and activities with significant impacts on economy, society and environment. Maintain communications with various stakeholders. Take part in the market competition on a fair and equal basis. Against corruption and maintain healthy competition.

3.5 Green and low-carbon development and integrated benefits

Identify the environmental impacts of business practices, apply measures to minimize the negative impacts and maximize the positive ones through effective approaches such as integrated agricultural management to achieve a win-win development of both ecological and economic benefits.

3.6 Inclusive development and shared value

Respect, consider and respond the interests of stakeholders including authorities, local communities employees and both upstream and downstream enterprises. And feedback to the societal concerns and needs by creating sharable value and sharing both costs and returns in the value chain to achieve inclusive development.

4. Due diligence and responsible management

The actual and potential impacts to stakeholders and sustainable development due to economic activities during investment, plantation and processing of natural rubber should be evaluated. The evaluation results should be incorporated into the management system to establish countermeasures and take actions. The effectiveness of adopted measures shall be tracked and situation of impacts mitigation shall be reported and disclosed.

4.1 Due diligence system

4.1.1 Due diligence policy

4.1.1.1 Due diligence policy should be formulated, implemented and developed in line with the characteristics of their own business, products or services and based on their actual and potential impacts on stakeholders and sustainable development. Commitment to identify, avoid and mitigate adverse impacts inherent in business practices during natural rubber investment, plantation and processing shall be stated.

4.1.1.2 Due diligence policy should clearly state that responsible management is pursued in a continuous and dynamic manner due to risks vary dependent upon the changes in enterprises' business and management practices.

4.1.1.3 The due diligence policy should be clearly disseminated to employees, clients and suppliers of involved enterprises, and be accessible by the public and other stakeholders.

4.1.1.4 The due diligence policy may provide standards to be followed or referred to for responsible due diligence management, such as the Guidelines.

4.1.2 Management framework

4.1.2.1 An appropriate internal management system should be established to ensure the due diligence policy incorporate into the process of management.

4.1.2.2 The due diligence approach shall be included into the processes of interdepartmental business management and coordination among different business segments shall be pursued, in particular where the incentives for business segments might conflict with the enterprise's sustainable development and due diligence policy.

4.1.2.3 A grievance system applicable to operational level should be established with focus on impacts by economic practices during natural rubber investment, plantation and processing; and related industrial mechanism should be involved to underpin and improve the risk alarm system.

4.1.3 Stakeholder collaboration

4.1.3.1 Information management system and communication mechanism for due diligence and responsible management should be established, to improve the collaborative synergy with stakeholders in avoiding and mitigating negative impacts.

4.1.3.2 Risk prevention measures should be formulated in the relationship with business partners and stakeholders, such as including requirements and expectations for suppliers and partners regarding sustainable development in business contracts and/or written agreements.

4.2 Risk identification and assessment

4.2.1 Background assessment

4.2.1.1 Both internal and external factors that might affect or are impacted by the process of natural rubber investment, plantation and processing should be identified and defined, both positive and negative.

4.2.1.2 The stakeholders involved in due diligence and responsible management as well as their needs and expectations, especially those in relation to compliance, should be identified and defined.

4.2.2 Risk identification

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- 4.2.2.1 The actual or potential adverse impacts and alarm signals related to its own products, services and business relationship should be identified, and the probability and severity should be evaluated.
 - 4.2.2.2 When necessary, risks identification could be carried out through on-site risk assessment on their own or in collaboration and with the assistance of internal or independent external experts or organizations.
 - 4.2.2.3 Consultation should be carried out with possibly affected groups and other stakeholders when appropriate, based on the nature and context of natural rubber investment, plantation and processing activities.
 - 4.2.2.4 Periodical risk identification and impact assessment should be conducted, in particular prior to launching new activities or relationships and making major decisions on business or changes (e.g. new market access, acquisition of new land, introduction of new products or service, policy changes, etc.), or when responding to or predicting the changes of business environment (e.g. increasing social tension).

4.3 Risk prevention and mitigation

4.3.1 Coordinated management

- 4.3.1.1 Relevant internal accountabilities and procedures should be coordinated to incorporate risk assessment results into the whole organization in a horizontal form. Risk management plan should be designed and implemented to prevent and mitigate adverse impacts.
- 4.3.1.2 Senior management staff should take responsibilities for eliminating such impacts and ensure the effective management through proper internal decision-making, budget allocation and monitoring.

4.3.2 Responsive actions

- 4.3.2.1 After incorporating risk assessment results related to natural rubber investment, plantation and processing into the management process, appropriate actions shall be taken to address the risks.
- 4.3.2.2 The adoption of specific actions depends on whether the enterprise/organizations causes or contributes to these adverse impacts or whether they are directly related to its products or services through its business relations. Meanwhile it also depends upon its leverage in eliminating these risks.
- 4.3.2.3 If there is leverage in avoiding or mitigating risks, the leverage should be used against the risks and measures should be taken to strengthen it. When it lacks

such leverage and is unable to strengthen it, it may consider terminating the risky business relationships and evaluate the due potential negative impacts.

4.4 Effectiveness tracking and reporting

4.4.1 Effectiveness tracking

4.4.1.1 The effectiveness of actions and measures taken should be tracked to verify whether the risks have been mitigated or eliminated.

4.4.1.2 Effectiveness tracking should be proceeded with appropriate quantitative and qualitative indicators and take into account both internal and external feedbacks, including those from the affected stakeholders.

4.4.1.3 Supplementary assessments may be carried out for risks in need of mitigation when necessary as the real situation varies.

4.4.2 Progress reporting

4.4.2.1 Due diligence policy and associated practices should be reported to stakeholders, including the identified risks and measures taken to mitigate them. In particular when the affected stakeholders propose their requirements or have concerns, an official report on how to address the relevant negative impacts should be provided.

4.4.2.2 The report should provide sufficient information and apply the form and frequency proportionate to the risks and accessible by targeted groups or individuals. It should be ensured that related report will not bring about further negative impacts for the affected stakeholders.

4.4.2.3 The reporting forms may be diverse, including personal communication, online dialogue, consultation with affected stakeholders and official public reports (i.e. general annual reports, enterprise accountability or sustainability reports, online information and integrated financial reports and non-financial reports, etc.).

5. (Risk-based) investment appraisal

Investment appraisal is mainly based on predictable dynamic risks in terms of cultural and social environment, technology and economy or political changes. Rubber industry has a complex chain with agricultural, forestry, financial, political, economic and other attributes, given the high degree of uncertainty, dynamics and complexity in investment activities. Meanwhile, rubber investment is characterized as long investment cycle and slow return of profit. Investors and stakeholders should pay

more attention to risk assessment prior to investment. Risk assessment is an essential strategy for investment decisions.

5.1 Political, governance and social environment

5.1.1 Policy and governance environment

5.1.1.1 The political and governance environment of the host country at national, regional and local levels should be fully understood, including governance system, relationship between home country and host country both in the past and currently; governance capabilities refer to the host country's legal system and the court system, law enforcement capacity, degree of political intervention on business, the extent of corruption, social activity of citizens and their ability to fight for the rights of communities, the effectiveness of land use planning, and so on.

5.1.1.2 Based on above items, assessment of investment risks should be conducted. And solutions should be designed to prevent and manage risks, mitigate adverse political, economic and social impacts in the host country. Investment in areas with serious political and social issues should be carefully considered.

5.1.1.3 Internal corporation governance system should be established. Declaration or policy on moral business behaviour should be prepared and implemented. Compliance management and transparency operation mechanism should be established to prevent and control potential bribery or any forms of corruption in the supply chain, and ensure those policies and mechanisms would be put into practices.

5.1.2 Human rights and indigenous people' s rights

5.1.2.1 In accordance with International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, potential impacts on human rights might be caused by natural rubber operation should be assessed, including rights of food accessibility, appropriate housing, and freedom of speech, assembly and association. The assessment should cover various stages, including rubber plantation, initial processing, secondary processing, rubber products manufacturing / sales.

5.1.2.2 It should be ensured that operation activity and business partners involved in products or services providing do not have any violation of human rights, and comply with the UN "Protect, Respect and Remedy" framework on business and human rights.

5.1.2.3 Specific impact assessment on proposed project site where indigenous people live should be carried out. The special status of indigenous people and their

rights to land and natural resources on which the survival of its generations should be respected, to avoid adverse effects.

5.1.3 Community relationship and participation

5.1.3.1 In the early stages of any investment, local communities should be involved into project development, and local residents should be informed about project planning and its impact, to obtain their free, prior, and informed consent.

5.1.3.2 A practical communication mechanism should be jointly launched with affected communities; and consultation with local community should be initiatively taken to strengthen communication and information exchange with local community, as the key stakeholder.

5.1.3.3 Further understanding of local communities, cultures, values, religions and traditions should be pursued, to better respect and uphold it. By consulting with relevant community, the importance tradition, culture and spiritual values or places which might be adversely affected due to business operations should be identified, and preventive measures to avoid or minimize the adverse effects should be taken.

5.1.3.4 When considering a new rubber project involving land acquisition, the impact of proposed project on local food security must be fully understood. Smallholders should be involved into rubber production system as part of its business model, for example, supporting outsourcing and helping them get required inputs, credit and loan and land.

5.1.4 Cooperation with civil society

5.1.4.1 Civil society organizations who can provide insightful views on local politics, economy, society, environment and land and have significance influence on local community and citizens should be identified. Continuous communication and cooperation with civil society should be maintained both before and throughout investment.

5.2 Land ownership

5.2.1 Relevant laws and regulations applicable within the jurisdiction

5.2.1.1 Before considering any land-related investments, various laws and regulations and legal procedures related to investments in land within the jurisdiction of that particular country should be studied; and responsibilities and obligations defined by these laws and regulations should be assessed, to understand the costs arising from being compliance with the laws and regulations, including

appropriate staff training, regular supervision and inspection of compliance, as well as addressing and correcting non-compliance issues by establishing internal accountability system. In some countries, local officials may grant licence in violations of the law, in this case, enterprises should carry out due diligence to ensure compliance with proper legal process.

5.2.2 Land customary ownership and assessment

5.2.2.1 Comprehensive due diligence investigation and assessment of land tenure status in the proposed project area should be carried out, including customary land rights, understand local customary laws and practices related to water, forest and other natural resources. Participation of local non-governmental organizations, experts and communities should be highly encouraged to effectively understand and document the current situation of legal customary land tenure in the proposed project site.

5.2.3 International standards relevant to customary land rights

5.2.3.1 In order to ensure compliance with customary land rights, the free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) principle must be followed. Based on the principle, related parties should ensure the citizens with legitimate tenure rights and may be affected fully understand the relevant information prior to any decision to participate consultation, seek their support, and to respond to their views. Taking into account existing power imbalances among parties, participation of individuals and groups involving in the decision-making process should be ensured in an active, free, effective, meaningful and informed way.

5.2.3.2 As an integral part of free, prior and informed consent principle, communication with local communities, government officials and civil societies should be conducted by using local language; so that consensus on any potential impact by proposed project could be reached by all stakeholders. If the expected impact is considered too great, or people refuse to carry out the proposed project, or failed to agree on a compensation, other options should be considered.

5.2.3.3 No new investment on rubber production or rubber processing should take place on the land without free, prior and informed consensus of local communities and indigenous peoples. This also includes lands with legal ownership, leasing permit, concession or operation license.

5.2.3.4 Indigenous peoples shall not be forcibly removed from their lands or territories. Resettlement of customary land tenure holders should only take place when the free, prior and informed consent principle is implemented, and the compensation plan is agreed with the possibility of moving back.

5.2.4 Land transfer and recovery

5.2.4.1 In the beginning of the project involving land lease or time-limited land use concession, how to transfer the land back to the host country or local community after the end of project shall be considered. Conditions of land transfer (including ways and requirements of land transfer) should be discussed as part of the free, prior and informed consent process.

5.3 Natural environment

5.3.1 Assessment of land form and land use

5.3.1.1 Selection of project site should consider the transportation costs, as well as traffic conditions, geographical location and cost effectiveness.

5.3.1.2 At the preparation stage, land use plan and planting plan should be formulated based on topographic maps or field survey results.

5.3.1.3 The land form and land use status of proposed investment land should be identified.

(1) Locations of wetlands (swamps, lakes, water bodies, floodplains) and rivers within proposed investment land or concession land should be identified based on land form map, as well as its size; and thus the masterplan of development, land use planning and environmental protection plans could be developed accordingly.

(2) It shall be avoided to plant rubber on land with high conservation values (HCV), including areas with concentrations of species diversity (HCV1), intact forest landscapes and large landscape-level ecosystems and ecosystem mosaics (HCV2), rare, threatened, or endangered ecosystems, habitats or refugia (HCV3), basic ecosystem services in critical situations (HCV4), sites and resources fundamental for satisfying the basic necessities of local communities or indigenous peoples (HCV5) and 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 (HCV6).

(3) Regarding proposed investment land covered by different types of vegetation, areas with high carbon stock values (HCS) should be identified, namely the medium-high density natural forest, and be protected from land clearing for rubber plantation.

5.3.2 Agroclimatology

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- 5.3.2.1 Agroclimatic conditions for rubber cultivation include average annual rainfall at 1500-4000 mm, preferred annual rainy days between 100-150 days, and relative humidity at 80% - 90%. The favourable agroclimatic conditions for rubber growing and latex production include mean monthly temperature at 20–30°C, minimum temperature not less than 18°C, annual sunshine time of 2000 hours or above, at least 6 hours a day.
- 5.3.2.2 It should be considered whether the proposed investment area is wind-prone areas, due to the fact that construction of windbreaks will increase investment while reduce the actual rubber planting area. Strong typhoons will cause a large area of rubber trees uprooted or trunk-snapped, which will inevitably result in the total loss of latex producing ability or a reduced yield of the area.

5.3.3 Soil and topography/terrain

- 5.3.3.1 The suitable areas for rubber plantation should be at elevation below 900 meters, better at elevation below 500 meters, and best at elevation below 200 meters.
- 5.3.3.2 In order to prevent soil from erosion, it is advisable not to plant rubber in areas with slope of more than 25 degrees, where the natural vegetation within the proposed site should be maintained or be replaced by some other tree species with less frequent disturbance rather than rubber trees.
- 5.3.3.3 The suitable soil for rubber cultivation is of high fertility with good texture, while the arid and infertile sandy soil is not suitable.
- 5.3.3.4 The soil type and its physical properties of proposed site should be identified through studying the exposed surface of the soil, augur check, field soil survey and lab analysis. Physical limitations and size of areas with each limitation should be determined based on soil texture, structure, bulk density, porosity, permeability and colour. Soil physical properties are important determinants in soil suitability evaluation due to its relatively constant nature as compared to soil chemical properties that are changeable easily at any time.
- 5.3.3.5 Representative soil samples should be collected from the proposed project site at pre-determined distance to analyse its chemical properties, including soil mineral solubility, inherent level of various minerals, especially macro elements, organic matter content (at least \geq 1.5-3.0%), soil pH (4.5-6.5 more appropriate), cation exchange capacity, etc.
- 5.3.3.6 Land suitability evaluation should be conducted based on the present climatic and soil conditions of the proposed site against the requirements of rubber trees for climate and soils. Conclusions from the evaluation as part of the feasibility report could form the basis for the preparation of land clearing plan,

planting plan and proposed site development plan.

5.3.4 Biodiversity conservation

5.3.4.1 Information on tree species, vines and herbs of cultural value and other uses should be collected. In the process of preparation and implementation of site development plan and planting plan, precautions and effective measures should be taken to protect those species in question.

5.3.4.2 Rare, threatened and endangered birds, mammals, reptiles and other wild animals should also be protected according to relevant laws and regulations.

5.3.5 Environmental conditions for rubber processing plant

5.3.5.1 Natural conditions of the site for rubber processing plant should be identified, including topography, meteorology, hydrology and geology, to evaluate if the proposed site is suitable for raw rubber processing plant and satisfying requirements of local planning.

5.3.5.2 Social and economic conditions surrounding the proposed site should be identified as well including transportation, power supply, collaboration conditions, etc., to ensure meeting basic conditions for the construction. Sources and consumption of water, electricity, gas and other power, and the extent of local supply to meet the demand of the processing plant. If applicable, due diligence and analysis should be carried out.

5.3.5.3 Residential areas, cultural and educational areas, water source catchment, historical sites, scenic tourist spots and nature reserves surrounding the proposed construction site should be identified. Distance between the above areas and proposed construction site should meet requirements of relevant environmental and sanitation regulations. Meanwhile, care should be taken to identify the requirements and restrictions on the distance of the processing plants to their concerned areas for the reason of local religions and/or culture as well as other cultural beliefs.

5.3.5.4 The existing quality of air, surface water, groundwater, and noise level surrounding the proposed site, should be identified. Assessment should also be made on the possible conflict between the existing and future environmental quality and its superposition effects.

5.3.5.5 Identification and estimation of smoke and smell, effluent, noise, ash and other wastes generated from plant construction and operation should be made and treatment principles or requirements of related laws and regulations be defined. Compliance plan and design should be prepared against environmental requirement on the construction of the processing plant and the "three wastes" discharge

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- 5.3.5.6 In the case that the proposed processing plant is independent of any rubber plantations, the local methods of collection of latex and other second products and possibility of supply to the plant should be identified, to determine the forms and specifications of raw rubber to be produced. The forms and specifications should meet requirements of local industrial policy, industrial development plan, technological policy and products structure.
- 5.3.5.7 The total demand for resources should be estimated and potential environmental impact be assessed. Compliance of environmental protection and ecological balance, as well as the environmental impact on the local economy should be assessed as well.
- 5.3.5.8 Impacts of products on the local technological progress, and impact of advanced technology on labour saving and provision of employment opportunities should be explored.

5.4 Economic stability

5.4.1 Financing

- 5.4.1.1 Various factors affecting natural rubber plantation and investment should be identified. Their investment might be exposed to a combination of diversified risks caused by natural environment, international finance, political and social unrest, economic crisis, production technology, etc., so a pre-investment risk assessment will be necessary.
- 5.4.1.2 Both upstream and downstream economic forms of natural rubber should be discerned. The economic status and marketing modes of the natural rubber plantation and processing industries as well as the downstream rubber consuming industries should be identified to rationally evaluate the economic tendency and provide pre-assessment of the impacts of changes in economic forms by the time of yielding.
- 5.4.1.3 Investment cycle should be defined. Natural rubber plantation and processing and its placing on the market require long-term investment. Considering time-consuming investment, tardy returns, and changeableness of rubber industry, rational investment estimation and professional financial analysis should be provided.
- 5.4.1.4 Funding source and financing plan shall be identified. Feasible financing channels and patterns shall be determined and investment funds shall be secured, and risk precautionary and control measures shall be provided.
- 5.4.1.5 Foreign exchange risks should be identified. Risks generated by foreign exchange variation, which sometimes might be decisive for the success in investment, should be considered in the course of overseas investment and

transactions, such as exports and imports.

5.4.1.6 Risks on investment scale and monopoly should be identified. Both positive and negative impacts of investment scale on the local economy and society shall be considered, in particular, the economic impact of large-scale investment on smallholders or small cooperatives should be considered, to invest in an appropriate and modest way.

5.4.2 Market environment

5.4.2.1 The supplies and demands on the market should be identified. Study and analysis on supplies and demands should be carried out at different levels, such as worldwide, specific to proposed area of investment, suppliers, traders, consuming areas, etc. Emphasis might be given to the saturation state of supplies and demands in the consuming areas when applicable.

5.4.2.2 The potential, existing and future intensity and influence of market competition should be identified. Their impacts on investment should be evaluated if applicable.

5.4.2.3 Relevant policies and their impacts should be identified, including analyzing the policies in both exporting and importing countries involved in the investment and the economic openness of the proposed project areas, and evaluating the policy impacts on the projects.

5.4.2.4 The impacts of political and social unrest by analyzing the military status, political situation and social stability in both exporting and importing countries involved in the investment and their surrounding areas, studying their impacts on investment and business. If applicable, analysis of high-risk investments under the influence of non-economic factors should be carried out.

5.4.2.5 Impacts of logistics chain should be identified. Natural rubber is a kind of bulk commodity, and thus the local transportation and logistics will severely restrict the output performance of the projects. Therefore, analysis as well as rational estimation on public entities and infrastructures should be conducted, such as transportation vehicle, infrastructure, transportation devices and costs and intensity.

5.4.3 Talents and technology

5.4.3.1 Talents and resources in need should be identified. Technology is heavily needed throughout rubber plantation, processing, trading, and transporting, so study on the accessibility of technology and talents should be conducted, with emphasis on needs analysis of rubber plantation and processing technologies and talents, talents majoring in finance and business, and labor

force, including quantity and accessibility.

- 5.4.3.2 The importance of natural rubber species and product types should be identified. The rubber species is related with environment, climate, soil, etc. and the downstream consuming market. The species applied for plantation and processing should be determined and the habits and requirements of consumers shall be taken into account when applicable.
- 5.4.3.3 The importance of technology should be acknowledged. Balances between technology and investment, technology and outputs, technology and profits, technology and labour availability should be analyzed. When appropriate, the provision of technical training and support in project areas should be considered, and evaluation of technology sourcing and advanced technology should be conducted, technology introduction should be considered.
- 5.4.3.4 The important role of facilities and equipment should be identified. Sources and accessibility of facilities, equipment, automation and internet needed in the process of production and their impacts on product performance shall be analyzed, with types and sources of these equipment identified.

6. Rubber plantation and processing

This chapter is risks oriented, covering social and political, market, technology, management and policy. The impacts of uncertainties could be positive or negative. The positive impacts might provide opportunities for improvement. Against the negative impacts, measures can be adopted to avoid risks, take advantages of risks by seeking opportunities, eliminate the source of risks, change possibility and consequences of risks, share risks or delay/mitigate the risks by wise decision-making; so that the occurrence of unanticipated events can be prevented or reduced.

Internal and external situation should be acknowledged, to reduce uncertainty, expected loss and management cost, to achieve sustainable development.

6.1 Social responsibility

6.1.1 Rights of communities and indigenous peoples

6.1.1.1 The rights of local residents and indigenous peoples in farming on, passing through and using the land should be respected, to ensure no violation of existing legal land, water and forest tenure. Measures to address or mitigate the destructive impacts of their business practices on the land and local communities should be taken to strengthen the positive impact.

6.1.1.2 On major issues related to the rights and interests of communities and

indigenous peoples, extra time and resources should be set aside to identify the impact of rubber projects on neighboring communities. Consultations with local residents and indigenous peoples should be carried out prior to any activity. The projects related information should be disclosed to seek public comments through appropriate manner. Questions and inquiries raised by local residents and indigenous peoples should be responded.

6.1.1.3 The impacts on health and safety of community groups should be fully considered, and measures should be adopted to address or mitigate such impacts. If the company has security forces, the minimum security forces should be requested to intervene with the security issues.

6.1.2 Labour rights

6.1.2.1 Labour management system specific for rubber industry should be established in accordance with requirements of local laws and regulations. Based on equity, voluntariness, consensus and honesty, labour contracts should be signed with employees. The labour contracts should be concluded in written forms, with explicitly prescribed terms about the applied salary calculation and payment methods.

6.1.2.2 According to requirements of local laws and regulations, child labour and mandatory overtime working shall be forbidden.

6.1.2.3 It should be ensured that recruitment, selection, payment, promotion, training, punishment, retirement, termination of contracts and other decisions are made based on objective views, regardless of the worker's gender, age, nationality, race, religion and marital status.

6.1.2.4 It should be ensured that employees are not subject to corporal punishment, assaulted in the working place. Any physical, psychological or verbal harassment or abuse in the working place shall be prevented and prohibited, including sexual harassment. Any acts of harassment and abuse shall not be aided and abetted.

6.1.2.5 Any form of forced labour at any stage of production shall not be used. The company shall not collect any cash or property from their employees or require them to provide any kind of guarantee, neither seize nor mandatorily require their ID cards or other documents.

6.1.2.6 Payment of wages to employees shall be made in accordance with labor contracts in due time and wages shall not be less than the local legal minimum wage. When piece rate wage or commission wage is applied, enterprises shall ensure the legality and rationality of payment calculation.

6.1.2.7 Establishment of workers' union should be supported in accordance with related laws, to protect the interests of employees.

6.1.2.8 Good working conditions should be provided for employees, which must be able to protect employees' health and safety. Employees should be clearly informed of risks related to health and safety, and emergency measures for unexpected events.

6.1.2.9 Vocational skills training and further education opportunities should be provided for employees. When applicable, special training funds should be established to help employees develop career development plans.

6.2 Environmental responsibility

6.2.1 Development of new rubber plantations

6.2.1.1 Environmental impact assessment should be carried out in accordance with requirements of relevant laws and regulations of the host country, based on which a master plan, land clearing plan, land use plan and environmental protection plan could be developed.

6.2.1.2 In developing the master plan, land use plan and land clearing plan, areas with high conservation values (six HCV) or land covered by medium-high density forests and nature reserves should be identified and set aside. Buffer zones between above areas and rubber stands should be created. The rubber stands should be fenced off by wire net from the buffer zone of large wild animal nature reserve or refugia, to reduce or prevent human-wildlife interaction injuries. Buffer zones (30 to 100 meters wide) should be set aside along streams and major rivers within the boundary of the proposed site to provide corridors for wildlife migration.

6.2.1.3 Buffer zones should also be established by planting other tree species (especially rare species and native species) to separate rubber stands from areas bordering housing sites either of plantation workers or local communities.

6.2.1.4 Prior to land clearing nurseries should be set up on a carefully-selected site near a reliable, year-round water supply on level or gently sloping land with fertile, well-drained and well-structured soils for the multiplication of planting materials so as to supply enough quality planting materials in the season of field planting.

6.2.1.5 Mechanical method can be applied for land clearing. However, burning after felling method should not be used. Maximum usage of timber must be pursued. Residual timber and other debris should be arranged along windrows for in situ decay and enrichment of the soil. If host plants of root diseases of rubber trees are found in the site, then light burning can be applied for eradication of any potential root disease sources once approved

by local government. Without the permission of the local government, no burning could be made. The adverse impact on the environment by light burning must be identified prior to application for permission.

- 6.2.1.6 Bench terrace and contour ledge should be constructed according to the slope degree of the proposed site. Soil conservation works should also be built. Contour planting should be practised. Whole clearing can be adopted for flat land and gently sloping land, straight row planting can be made in this case. However, in any case, downslope clearing and planting are not recommended. Strip clearing and holing clearing should be used for hilly land or land with steep slopes. Native vegetation should be retained between rubber rows and between plants, so as to reduce soil erosion and maintain higher biodiversity status.
- 6.2.1.7 If the proposed site is very hilly land, terraces and contour ledges with earth bunds should be constructed accordingly. The natural vegetation should be maintained on the slopes or leguminous cover crops, e.g., *Mucuna bruceata*, be established to reduce soil erosion from water and from wind.
- 6.2.1.8 Field planting plan should be made adequately by choosing those novel hevea clones with precocious characteristics, high yielding potentials and strong stress tolerance. Latex/timber clones are highly recommended.
- 6.2.1.9 After land clearing and preparation and before field planting, the interrows should be planted with vigorous leguminous creepers as cover crops, e.g., *Calapogonium mucunoides*, *Calapogonium coerrulum*, *Centrosema pubescens*, *Pueraria phaseoloides* or *Mucuna bruceata*. The established cover crops will cover the whole ground surface and maintain moisture of the soils under them during the immature period of rubber tree. They can also offer such benefits as minimization of soil erosion, suppressing of weeds while enrich the soil fertility through their nitrogen fixing mechanism and uplifting of soil nutrients.
- 6.2.1.10 During the immature phase of rubber plantations, short-term cash crops or even tree species may be planted along the interrows of rubber trees for additional income and to increase biodiversity as well as suppress weed growth.
- 6.2.1.11 Chemical fertilizers should be added judiciously to rubber plantations according to the nutrient status of macro elements of the rubber stands, the amount of nutrients contributed by the legume cover crops, tree ages, as well as nutrient diagnostic result of foliage and soil, to ensure no contamination of soil, groundwater and surface water from fertilizer application.
- 6.2.1.12 Integrated pest management should be applied to combine agronomic, biological, physical and chemical measures for effective control of pests and diseases and minimization of the use of pesticides and fungicides. If

pesticides or fungicides must be used, pesticides with low toxicity internationally recommended or recognized should be applied. Application of herbicide should be avoided to undergrowth weeds which could be controlled through manual or electric mower slashing, if necessary.

6.2.2 Replanting of old rubber plantations

- 6.2.2.1 Replanting of old rubber plantations should be made regularly with novel clones with fast-growing capability, high yielding potentials and strong stress resistance, with the objective of achieving sustained high yield per plant and per ha, improving land utilization rate and productivity as well as economic efficiency, in addition to making full use of rubber wood.
- 6.2.2.2 Various preparations should be made before replanting operation commencement. A replanting plan and an updated rubber plantation development plan must be formulated of course. The layout of the whole rubber plantation should be adjusted by re-designing the overall arrangement of “mountains, water systems, rubber stands, eco-forests, roads and residential sites” by taking into consideration the new circumstances, requirements and sustainable agricultural concept.
- 6.2.2.3 Intensive tapping should be adopted for the rubber stands to-be-replanted 3 years prior to replanting. Multi-cuts can be made simultaneously on the same tree, preferably high panel tapping and low panel tapping at the same time.
- 6.2.2.4 Mechanical felling of the old trees could be undertaken in association with manual method. A caterpillar tractor equipped with tree dozers or other special stumping and grubbing blades can be used on flat land; while manual method can be adopted on hilly land where tractors are not accessible.
- 6.2.2.5 Rubber wood has objective economic values as it can be processed into finger-board, plywood, particle board, etc. Soon after felling, the two sides of raw wood from rubber trees should be treated with preservatives before subjecting to further preservative treatment and drying in the plant.
- 6.2.2.6 Land clearing should be conducted after felling of old rubber stands. Whole clearing should be adopted before re-construction of bench terraces and contour ledges as well as earth bunds for better soil erosion control.
- 6.2.2.7 New high-yielding, fast growing and disease-resistant clones, especially latex /timber clones are highly recommended for the replanting scheme for both higher latex yield and timber wood in the next plantation cycle.
- 6.2.2.8 Replanting of the old rubber plantations is a good opportunity for upgrading the plantation in every aspects and for better sustainability of the plantation concerned. Various plans should be formulated considerably beforehand. Environmental protection plan, should be newly made or revised before

implementation.

6.2.3 Establishment of rubber processing plant

- 6.2.3.1 Processing plants should be far enough away from the water source, residential areas, temples and windward areas in line with the local regulations, taking into account of land availability for warehouse and wastewater treatment plants, adequate water supply, electricity and manpower availability, distance to roads and rubber plantations and other factors, and relevant international provisions on pollution control for noise, air and water.
- 6.2.3.2 Disposal and treatment plans should be developed for wastewater, waste gas and solid wastes before relative facilities to be set up. Zero discharge of solid wastes should be pursued while no discharge of waste gas and effluent could be made unless discharge standards are met on the premise that permit was given by the local government. The noise level of machinery should be strictly controlled to the extent of no interfering to surrounding communities.
- 6.2.3.3 Effective measures should be taken to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- 6.2.3.4 New energy and water recycling method should be explored in the operation of the processing plant in order to reduce energy and water consumption by the processing plant.
- 6.2.3.5 It must be ensured that commitment to uphold quality policies in line with international standard ISO 9001, to collect latex and produce high quality sustainable natural rubber.
- 6.2.3.6 It shall be ensured that appropriate industrial testing standard in line with related specifications will be met for rubber testing and specification before shipment.
- 6.2.3.7 Technical support should be provided for small scale producer in the supply chain, to ensure qualified raw materials to be supplied.
- 6.2.3.8 Effluent discharged from processing plants of granular rubber, latex concentrate and smoked sheet rubber should be treated with anaerobic and aerobic pond system.
- 6.2.3.9 Effluent treatment ponds should be built at the initial stage of processing plant construction. Treated water that meets the discharge standard can be recycled and reused within the processing factory.

6.3 Economic responsibility

6.3.1 Promoting economic development

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- 6.3.1.1 Investment activities and economic scale could have both positive and negative impacts on local economy. Increasing both incomes and employment opportunities of local residents should be considered to contribute in local economic development.
- 6.3.1.2 Trading of natural rubber involves various modes, such as futures, spot transactions and the corresponding derivatives. Different transaction modes result in different returns. The risks, controllability, profitability and benefits of different transactions should be analyzed, to define their respective proportion of business activities.
- 6.3.1.3 It is significant of the talent levels and accessibility in natural rubber industrial chain, such as plantation, processing and trade. Talents are needed at multiple levels; the accessibility of local talents should be analyzed to reduce investment costs. Meanwhile, talents introduction and outputs should be considered; local policies and control of foreign people should be studied to ensure composition and source of operation team.
- 6.3.1.4 Long investment cycle and revenue generation have a conflict or a blank period. In its long investment cycle, the gap between investment and revenue generation and efficiency should be considered, unpredictability of economy in a long term should also be considered, and measures should be taken.
- 6.3.1.5 Stakeholders management mechanism should be established, including identification of key stakeholders, methods and measures to communicate with key stakeholders and etc. Needs of local social development should be concerned, when applicable, to be actively involved in the activities for public interests and various social affairs to repay the local community.

6.3.2 Maintaining the normal market order

- 6.3.2.1 Investment scale could cause monopoly and antimonopoly. The business scale and operational activities should maintain a fair market order, to appropriately control economic scale, and pursue stable and orderly business operation.
- 6.3.2.2 Due to long investment cycle, market fluctuations, balance between investment and development should be concerned. Various difficulties and frustrations might be encountered during the market operation, so market and economic development rule should be rationally analyzed to prepare measures to mitigate impacts and achieve favourable and orderly competition.
- 6.3.2.3 Key events occurred during the operation should be identified and disclosed, in particular in regard to alteration of land rights, investing bodies and etc.
- 6.3.2.4 Significant technological reform and improvement of automation degree may reduce the demand for labour; changes in plantation scale and rubber species

may affect biological and ecological environment. Those major changes should be timely disclosed and disseminated; when applicable, comments and permission from local community and government should be pursued.

- 6.3.2.5 Changes in plantation patterns should be timely disclosed and disseminated; especially when plantation pattern may threaten ecological balance, and biodiversity, communication with local community and government should be carried out and permission should be obtained prior to its adoption.
- 6.3.2.6 Policy that clearly prohibits bribery and corruption should be established, and measures should be taken to prevent commercial bribery and other corruption.
- 6.3.2.7 Information collection and disclosure mechanism related to sustainable development and social responsibility should be established; progress in sustainable development and social responsibility should be regularly communicated with stakeholders in an appropriate way and disclosed. When applicable, Social Responsibility Report should be prepared and published referring to the Guidelines.
- 6.3.2.8 Appropriate information feedback and complaining system should be set up to solve internal and external comments, suggestions and complaints. Anonymity should be allowed for the complaining system and enterprises are responsible for protecting the privacy of complainants.
- 6.3.2.9 Investment activities should comply with related laws and regulations in both home country and host country. Capital-flow business in appropriate time shall be carried out to ensure the fund returns.

6.3.3 Payment of taxes, royalties and fees

- 6.3.3.1 Taxes and royalties involved in the exports and imports of natural rubber should be identified. Taxes and royalties should be paid for abidance by the exporting policy of the exporting country and the importing policy of the destination country.
- 6.3.3.2 Natural rubber is not only an agricultural product, but also a raw material for industrial products and a financial product, and thus it may be charged with agricultural taxes, industrial business taxes, financial product taxes, etc. Investors should be aware of and pay related taxes and fees.
- 6.3.3.3 The possible environmental pollution along with natural rubber supply chain should be identified. The discharge of the three wastes (waste gas, waste water and waste solids) might occur in the course of natural rubber plantation and processing. Therefore, environmental protection policies implemented in the localities should be studied to identify the conditions and requirements for the discharge. When necessary, pollution control should be carried out to

avoid environmental pollution, and pollution fees should be paid when applicable.

7. Application and implementation

It is encouraged to voluntarily use these Guidelines by related stakeholders. It is suggested that relevant users incorporate these Guidelines into the existing governance system and policies, and practice internally and externally.

When using the Guidelines, the following activities should be considered, including but not limited to:

7.1 Adjust policy framework

According to the Guidelines, direction of sustainable development should be determined, giving clear path of strategy, policy, system and mechanism to achieve the goal.

7.2 Improve institutional structure

Leading and promotion department should be set up, taking responsibility of Guidelines implementation. Specific, measurable or verifiable performance evaluation system should be established to ensure the operational and substantive of Guidelines implementation.

7.3 Guide daily governance

Guidelines application should filter into investment, procurement, production, human resources, communication with stakeholders and other activities in the daily management. Planning, monitoring and performance evaluation should be carried out to ensure the compliance with the Guidelines.

7.4 Raise awareness

Thematic lectures, training and other events should be organized to strengthen understanding and acceptance of the Guidelines by all departments, to enhance professional skills of Guidelines implementation.

7.5 Enhance information disclosure

The users should disclosure relevant information through media and other channels, including regularly publish corporate social responsibility reports; establish effective internal and external communication and evaluation mechanism; establish and improve stakeholders participation, dialogue, feedback, complaints and other communication mechanisms; accept stakeholders oversight and disclosure the monitoring process and results.

7.6 Conduct performances evaluation

Third party evaluation, responsible management of supply chain and other measures should be adopted to improve guidelines implementation and sustainable development.

8. Appendix

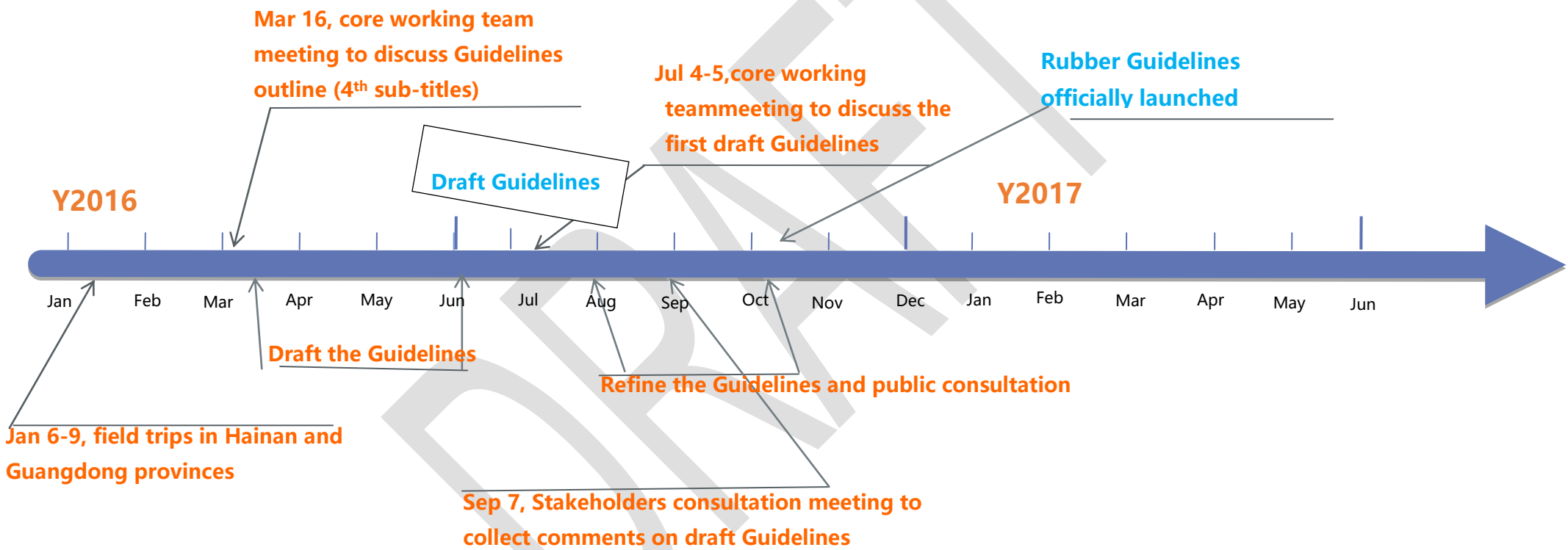
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Appendix 1: Process of Guidelines Development

Stage 1 : synthesizing the baseline of rubber industry



Stage 2: Development of Rubber Guidelines



Appendix 2: Organizations, core working team and advisors to develop this

Guideline

Appendix 3: Terms and definition (TBC)

Due diligence
Risk
Stakeholders
Management process
Leverage
Indigenous peoples
High Conservation Value Areas
High Carbon Stock Areas
Agroclimatology
Agroforestry
Biodiversity
Sustainable Agriculture Standards
Forest Stewardship Council Criteria (FSC Certification)
Soil suitability evaluation
Land suitability evaluation
Soil physical property
Soil chemical property
Soil porosity
Environmental impact assessment
Land use plan
Land clearing and preparation plan
Planting plan
Environmental protection plan
Buffer zone
Clearing forested land
Burning after felling
Light burn
Host plant of pests and diseases
Terrace with gully and dikes
Contour terrace or bench terrace
Contour ledge
Earth bund
Whole clearing
Strip clearing
Holing clearing
Contour clearing
Downslope clearing
Downslope planting
Straight row planting
Horizontal or contour planting
Planting material

Planting material
 Clone
 Latex/timber clone
 Slashing control
 Green Manuring
 Mulching
 Cover crops
 Land clearing
 Prevailing wind direction
 Polybag plants
 Polybag buddings
 Polybag mini-seedling buddings
 Polybag green buddings
 Field planting
 Immature period
 Mulching around tree base
 Opening girth
 Old rubber plantation
 Replanting
 Technically specified natural rubber
 Granular rubber or block rubber
 Latex concentrate
 Smoked sheet rubber
 Crepe rubber
 Anaerobic and aerobic ponding system for treatment of rubber factory effluent
 Serum
 Latex serum powder
 Integrated pest management
 Minimum salary standard
 Forced labour
 Child labour

Appendix 4: Laws, regulations, international conventions and standards for reference

Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO),
<http://www.rspo.org/about><http://www.rspo.org/certification/how-rspo-certification-works>
<http://www.rspo.org/resources/key-documents/certification/rspo-principles-and-criteria>
 Forestry Stewardship Council Certification System (FSC) <https://ic.fsc.org/en>;
<https://www.us.fsc.org>; <https://us.fsc.org/certification.194.htm>
 Sustainable Agriculture
 Standards [http://www.san.ag/biblioteca/docs/SAN-S-1-4 Sustainable Agriculture Standard.pdf](http://www.san.ag/biblioteca/docs/SAN-S-1-4_Sustainable_Agriculture_Standard.pdf)
 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT GUIDELINES – FAO INVESTMENT CENTRE
https://www.responsibleagroinvestment.org/sites/responsibleagroinvestment.org/files/FAO_Environment%20Impact%20Guidelines.pdf
 CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY (UNITED NATIONS, 1992)
<https://www.cbd.int/doc/legal/cbd-en.pdf>
 INTERNATIONAL CODE OF CONDUCT ON THE DISTRIBUTION AND USE OF PESTICIDES – FAO,

ROME 2003 <http://www.fao.org/docrep/005/y4544e/y4544e00.htm>
PALM OIL INNOVATION GROUP (POIG) –POIG TRIAL AUDIT INDICATORS
<http://poig.org/poig-trial-audit-indicators/>
FREE AND FAIR LABOUR IN PALM OIL PRODUCTION: PRINCIPLES AND IMPLEMENTATION
GUIDANCE
https://www.humanityunited.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/PalmOilPrinciples_031215.pdf
NY/T 221-2006: Technical Specifications for Rubber Cultivation
Rules for Implementation of Technical Specifications for Rubber Cultivation in Yunnan Province,
2003
DB xx/xxx-2014. Technical Specifications for Establishment of Environmental-friendly Ecological
Rubber Plantation.
He Kang, Huang Zongdao (1987) Rubber Cultivation in the Northern Margin of Tropical Area,
Guangdong Science and Technology Press, Guangzhou.
Robert Heath Lock. Rubber and Rubber Planting. Bibliolife, Charleston, US.
C.C. Webster and W.J. Baulkwill (1989) Rubber. Longman Scientific & Technical. England.
A.T. Edgar (1958) Manual of Rubber Planting.
David Dent and Anthony Young (1981) Soil Survey and Land Evaluation. E & FN Spon, UK
M.R. Sethuraj and N.M. Mathew (1992) Natural Rubber: Biology, Cultivation and Technology.
Elsevier, Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

Related international conventions (TBC)

1. Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, the United Nations, 2011
2. Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Supply Chains of Minerals from Conflict-Affected and High-Risk Areas (2nd Edition), OECD, 2014
3. Guidelines for Social Responsibility in Outbound Mining Investments, CCCMC, 2015
4. Convention on Biological Diversity, United Nations, 1992, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
5. United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, 1992, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
6. United Nations Kyoto Protocol, 1997, Kyoto, Japan
7. Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitats, 1971
8. Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaty, 1971
9. United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, 1992, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
10. The Universal Declaration Of Human Rights
11. Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention
12. Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems
13. ILO Convention: Weekly Rest (industry) Convention (No. 14)
14. ILO Convention: Minimum Wage-Fixing Convention (No. 26)
15. ILO Convention: Minimum Age (Industry) Convention (No. 59, revised)
16. ILO Convention: Equal Remuneration Convention (No. 100)
17. ILO Convention: Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention (No. 111)
18. ILO Convention: Employment Policy Convention (No. 122)
19. ILO Convention: Minimum Age for Employment (No. 138)
20. ILO Convention: Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards) Convention (No. 144)
21. ILO Convention: Occupational Safety and Health Convention (No. 155)
22. ILO Convention: Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention (No. 182)
23. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
24. Convention on the Rights of the Child
25. Labor Law of the People's Republic of China
26. Labor Contract Law of the People's Republic of China

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27. Trade Union Law of the People's Republic of China
 28. Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Rights and Interests of Women
 29. Law of the People's Republic of China on Protection of Minors
 30. Production Safety Law of the People's Republic of China
 31. Law of the People's Republic of China on the Prevention and Treatment of Occupational Diseases
 32. Provisions on Prohibiting Use of Child Labor
 33. Special Protection of Juvenile Employees
 34. Special Rules on the Labor Protection of Female Employees
 35. Minimum Wage Regulation
 36. Provisions on Reporting and Investigation of Production Safety Accident
 37. OHSAS18001: 2007 Regulations on Occupational Health and Safety Management System

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