



## Dissents Procedures

*Small Producers' Symbol*

Version 2 2010-06-10

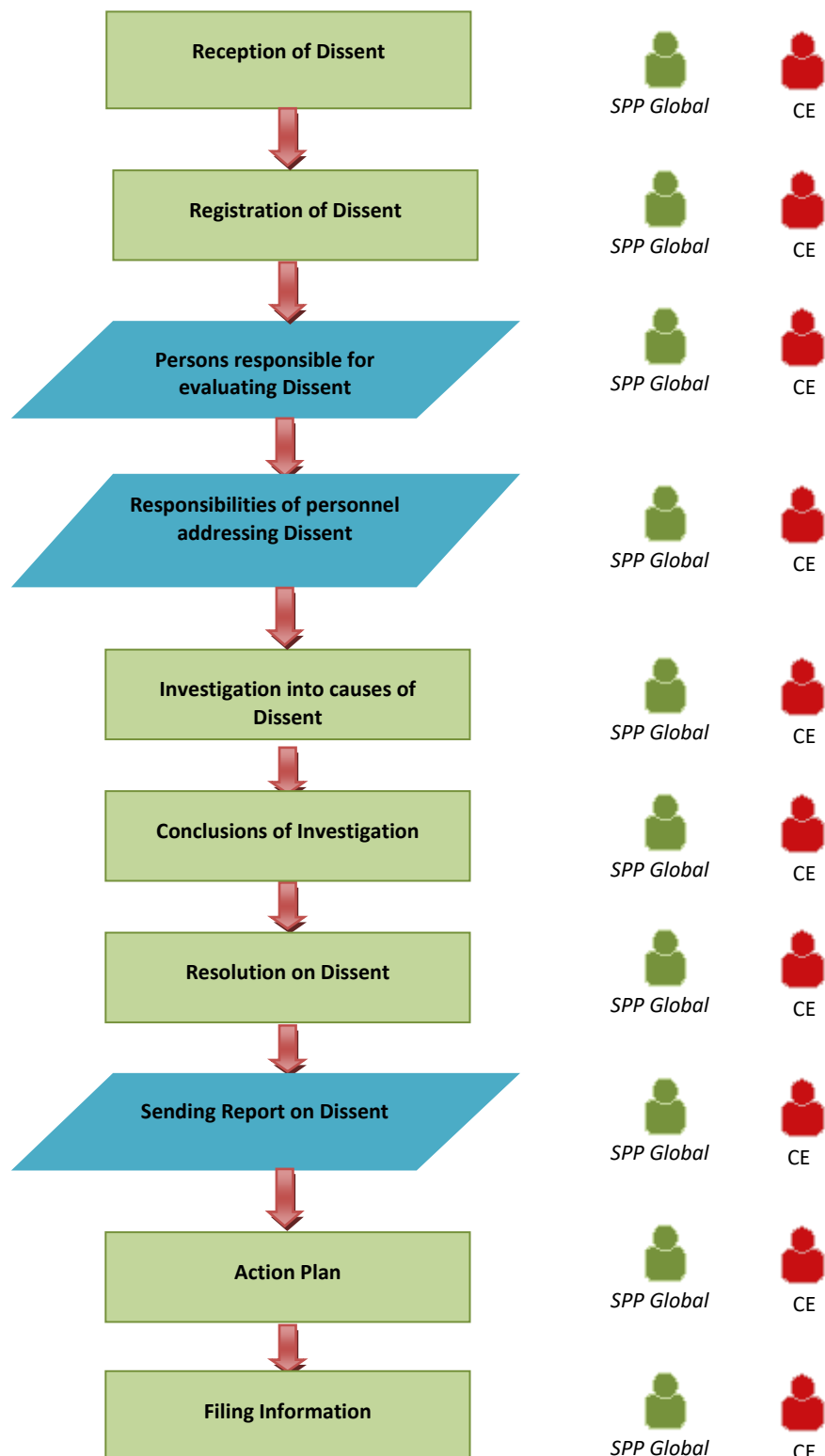
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## I. DIAGRAM OF PROCESS



## 1 INTRODUCTION

- a. This document establishes the procedures that must be followed by *SPP Global* to address cases of dissent that arise in the certification, registration and authorization processes and in the general functioning of the *Small Producers' Symbol*.

## 2 AREA OF APPLICATION

- a. These procedures apply to all complaints, appeals, objections, and disputes submitted in person, by telephone, e-mail or in written form, in relation to *SPP Global* or other Certification Entities or other participants in the *Small Producers' Symbol* system.
- b. Complaints and appeals are addressed by the Certification Entity in question.
- c. Complaints regarding Certification Entities may only be addressed by *SPP Global*
- d. Objections and disputes, as defined below, may only be addressed by *SPP Global*.

## 3 REFERENCES

The application of these procedures is indicated in the *Small Producers' Symbol* documents currently in effect, including the following:

1. *Small Producers' Symbol* Handbook
2. General Standard of the *Small Producers' Symbol*
3. Code of Conduct
4. Certification Procedures for Small Producers' Organizations
5. Registration Procedures for Buyers, Collective Trading Companies owned by Small Producers' Organizations, Intermediaries and Maquila Companies.
6. Terms of Reference for Standards Committee

## 4 DEFINITIONS

- 4.1 *Dissents Committee*:** A committee appointed by *SPP Global's* Board of Directors and responsible for evaluating, examining, and resolving dissents.
- 4.2 *Buyer (BUY)*:** A company that buys products certified with the *Small Producers' Symbol* to place them on the final consumer market under its own name or trademark, and that complies with the respective criteria in the applicable Standards of the Small Producer's Symbol.
- 4.3 *Collective Trading Companies owned by Small Producers' Organizations (C-SPO)*:** Companies that are majority-owned by two or more Small Producers' Organizations certified with the *Small Producers' Symbol*, and that trade products certified with the *Small Producers' Symbol* to place them on the market
- 4.4 *SPP GLOBAL* :** Small Producers' Symbol, a Civil Association (*Símbolo de Pequeños Productores, Asociación Civil*).
- 4.5 *Dissenter*:** Person or entity submitting a dissent.
- 4.6 *Dissent*:** Disagreement with regard to the functioning or actions of a party or stakeholder involved in the *Small Producers' Symbol* system, and submitted in person, by telephone, e-mail, or in written form.



- 4.7 Intermediaries (INT):** Trading companies that buy and sell *Small Producers' Symbol* products, and do not place these products on the final consumer market under their own name or trademark.
- 4.8 Maquila Companies:** Service providers that intervene in the trading or processing of products, but do not buy or sell these products.
- 4.9 Certification Entity (CE):** *SPP Global* or other certification entity authorized by *SPP Global* to operate the certification or registration program for the *Small Producers' Symbol*.
- 4.10 Small Producers' Organization (SPO):** A Small Producers' Organization that meets the criteria for Small Producers' Organizations in the General Standard of the *Small Producers' Symbol*. When a trading company is part of the structure of a single Small Producers' Organization that is certified with the *Small Producers' Symbol*, it is considered to be part of the Small Producers' Organization.
- 4.11 Participants:** Certified Small Producers' Organizations and Buyers, Collective Trading Companies owned by Small Producers' Organizations, Intermediaries and Maquila Companies registered with the *Small Producers' Symbol*.

## 5 TYPES OF DISSENTS

- 5.1 Complaint:** A petition submitted by an applicant to correct mistakes committed or to improve the operations and opportunities for services provided by Certification Entities.
- 5.2 Appeal:** A petition substantiated by an applicant to revoke the results of a certification or registration report.
- 5.3 Objection:** A petition substantiated and submitted by any party in order to prevent Certification or Registration.
- 5.4 Dispute:** A petition substantiated by a certified Small Producers' Organization or a registered Buyer, Collective Trading Company owned by a Small Producers' Organization, Intermediary or Maquila Company, requesting that *SPP Global* act or intervene to resolve differences that have arisen between participants in the *Small Producers' Symbol* system.

## 6 PROCEDURES

- 6.1 Reception of dissent:** A client may submit a dissent verbally, in written form or via email.
- 6.2 Registration of dissent:** The Certification Entity registers the dissent and identifies it as a complaint, appeal, objection or dispute.
- 6.3 Persons responsible for evaluating dissent**
- In relation to dissents, including those corresponding to recognized certifiers, the Director's Office of the Certification Entity is responsible for receiving dissents and the complementary information submitted by dissenters.
  - SPP Global* has a special Dissents Committee for the evaluation and resolution of dissents. All other Certification Entities should have an equivalent body. *SPP Global* L's Dissents Committee or the equivalent in other Certification Entities may appoint an Inspector or Inspection Committee to investigate each case.

- c. Persons involved in the actions and events that led to the submission of a dissent are not allowed to intervene in the corresponding review, examination or resolution processes.

#### **6.4 Responsibilities of personnel addressing dissent**

The persons responsible for the investigation and examination of dissents must fulfill the following tasks:

- a. Declare any possible conflicts of interest;
- b. act in accordance with professional ethics;
- c. respect the confidentiality of the information that arises during the process of addressing dissents;
- d. identify relevant findings in the analyzed documentation and information and verify their correctness;
- e. make note of observations, and analyze sufficient, relevant evidence to allow for reaching conclusions in relation to the dissent;
- f. keep and safeguard all analyzed documents and information;
- g. act objectively;
- h. provide all involved parties with the opportunity to be heard and to participate actively in the review process;
- i. act with impartiality and free from any external influences that might affect objectivity.

#### **6.5 Investigation of causes of dissent**

The Inspector or Inspection Committee will investigate and analyze the causes of dissents, through the most appropriate channels and in accordance with available resources. All information and documentation related to dissents must be available at all times.

#### **6.6 Conclusions of investigation**

The Dissents Committee will analyze the results of each review and will reach conclusions by consensus, which may be one of the following:

- a. Legitimacy of the dissent
- b. Rejection of the dissent

#### **6.7 Resolution on Dissent**

The results of the investigation and examination by the Dissents Committee are to be summarized in a document, which is the responsibility of the Executive Director of *SPP Global*, and which should minimally contain the following points of information:

- a. Date on which document was issued.
- b. Name of dissenter.
- c. General Information on the person or entity identified in the complaint.
- d. Mechanisms used to investigate the dissent.
- e. Conclusions of investigation.

- f. Report.
- g. Signatures of those participating.

## **6.8 Sending Resolution on Dissent**

*SPP Global's* Director is responsible for sending the Report on Dissent to all involved parties within a period of 5 days or less after the Report on Dissent has been prepared by the Dissents Committee or the equivalent body of a Certification Entity.

## **6.9 Action Plan**

Based on the Report on Dissent, the Director's Office at *SPP Global* will ask those involved to develop an Action Plan, in order to eliminate current and potential causes of problems. In the case of disputes, *SPP Global* L may appoint a mediating entity and/or define a mediation process.

The time periods for presenting and carrying out the Action Plan are specified in the resolution prepared by the Dissents Committee, and are defined in proportion to the required actions.

## **6.10 Filing Information**

The Certification Entity must file all information related to each dissent in a single file  
Small Producers' Organizations

# **7 CHANGES MADE TO PREVIOUS VERSION OF DOCUMENT**

## **Previous version of document**

*Dissents Procedures*

Version 2.0

2010-12-13

#	Change	Reason	Type of Change	Date effective
1	In entire document	The structure of these Procedures has been unified.	Editing	2011-08-25
2	I: 1, 2, 3 and 4	There is now more clarity with regard to language, validity and application of the document, and compliance with ISO 19011 and ISO/IEC Guide 65.	Editing	2011-08-25
3	The wording has been restructured in 1.	To clarify the objective.	Editing	2011-08-25
4	3.5	The reference has been updated.	Editing	2011-08-25



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5	4.3, 4.7 and 4.8	Definitions of Collective Trading Companies owned by Small Producers' Organizations, Intermediaries and Maquila Companies have been added.	Content	2011-08-25
6	4.2 and 4.10	Definitions of Buyers and Small Producers' Organizations have been modified.	Editing	2011-08-25
7	5.3	The definition of Objection has been modified.	Editing	2011-08-25
8	6.3 a	"Complaints" has been replaced with "Dissents."	Editing	2011-08-25
9	6.6	Point c has been eliminated.	Editing	2011-08-25