

Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Technical Committee

The Technical Committee (TC) is a technical body with a key role in the development and revision of the seafood standards. Operating in total independence from Friend of the Sea, the Technical Committee collaborates by sending comments and voting on the content of the seafood standards. An open and democratic exchange of opinions, within an appropriate timeframe for feedback, aims at reaching the widest consensus.

1. Content responsibilities of seafood standards

Seafood standards developed and revised are:

- 1.1 Defined, reviewed and revised by the Technical and Scientific Department.
- 1.2 Assessed, verified and approved by the Technical Committee.
- 1.3 Validated by Accredia.
- 1.4 Ratified by the Board of Directors.

2. Decision-making thresholds

In summary, the content of the seafood standard(s) developed or revised by the Technical and Scientific Department is decided as follows*:

- 2.1 At the beginning of a public consultation period, Technical Committee members, Advisory Board members and relevant stakeholders are invited to submit their comments on the standard. Likewise, announcements are made so that all stakeholders can participate by sending their comments.
- 2.2 Based on the comments received, the Technical and Scientific Department can apply changes to the standard. In the case of changes, inputs integrated into the standard shall be clearly identified. In any case, the Technical and Scientific Department is in charge to review the compliance of the changes suggested during the revision process.
- 2.3 Technical Committee members are invited to vote on the standard. Their votes determine the approval of the standard.



2.4 Accredia validates the final version of the approved standard.

2.5 The Board of Directors ratifies the decision of the Technical Committee and Accredia.

*** Detailed information is available in the Standard Development and Maintenance Procedures for Seafood Standards.**

3. Confidentiality

All comments and votes from the Technical Committee members are made publicly available on the Friend of the Sea website, in an anonymous way.

4. Composition

Friend of the Sea strives for a diverse and democratic composition, as well as geographically representative. The Technical Committee shall have from 14 to 21 members. All of them are voluntary, appointed in a personal capacity, serve a 3-year term and can be renamed. In order to ensure a representative balance of interests, the Technical and Scientific Department manages the selection process to include representatives from all continents and 2–3 members of each area of activity:

- Seafood Industry (Fisheries, Aquaculture, Fishmeal and Fish oil industry);
- Distribution, Retail;
- Government;
- Certification Bodies;
- NGOs;
- Educational;
- Media.

5. How to become a member

5.1 Stakeholders interested in becoming members of the TC can apply by sending an updated CV to the following email info@friendofthesea.org.

5.2 The Technical and Scientific Department can approach stakeholders asking for updated CVs for consideration.

5.3 All CVs received, spontaneously or upon request, are analysed during the subsequent selection process.

5.4 Every three years, the Technical and Scientific Department conducts a selection process in which the Advisory Board analyses all the CVs received and elects, by vote, the TC members of the subsequent term.

5.5 The Scientific and Technical Department shall inform all those who have had their CVs analysed about the result of the selection process in writing and make publicly available the names of the elected members at their discretion.

6. Criteria for approval

6.1 TC members must have at least one year of experience in their respective fields of activity.

6.2 The Advisory Board elects the TC members based on a range of experiences and skills, respecting the criteria of geographical representation and balanced participation.

7. Participation

7.1 At the beginning of a standard revision process, the Technical and Scientific Department notifies the TC members, inviting them to send their comments using a specific file elaborated for the respective revision process.

7.2 Outside of a revision process period, TC members can also send comments regarding the Standards using the “Stakeholder Input Form”. In this case, the input will be considered during the subsequent revision process.

7.3 In order to keep an updated database and respect the balanced participation criteria, TC members shall report circumstantial changes to info@friendofthesea.org. In this case, the Technical and Scientific Department shall assess whether members remain in compliance with the approval criteria and notify them, in writing, within 20 working days from receipt. If necessary, new members can be elected by the Advisory Board to replace non-conforming members.