SEG ISEAL Communications Policy

Versions Issued

Version No.	Date	Description of Amendment	Approved by:
1.0	1 June 2020	Creation of Policy	SEG Board
2.0	28 May 2025	Substantive amendment following changes to ISEAL Claims Guide and SEG becoming ISEAL Code Compliant	SEG Board

This document is the property of the Sustainable Eel Group. It is effective from the date above.

1. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance on external communications to the SEG Community to be compatible with ISEAL Community Membership requirements and ISEAL Community Member Claims Guidelines.

2. Applicability

2.1 This policy is to be applied from the date at the top and bottom of this document.

2.2 This policy shall apply to:

a) All forms of communication, i.e. printed documents, electronic, published on websites, Twitter, Facebook and other social media, letters, external emails.
b) All 'external communications', i.e. to any person or organisation outside of SEG employees and SEG Leadership Team
c) Members of the SEG Board, SEG standard certificate holders and SEG members (here after termed the 'SEG Community').

3. Wording Policy

3.1 To be compliant with the ISEAL Community Member Requirements and ISEAL Community Member Claims Guidelines, great care must be taken in wording used in our external communications with regards to:

a) Our ISEAL Community Membership, and what it means,
b) Claims about the effectiveness of the SEG programme – particularly about specific achievements of the SEG standard and the supporting system,
c) Other ISEAL Community Members.

3.2 What cannot be stated

3.2.1 Other ISEAL Community Members

a) Mention of other ISEAL Community Members shall be avoided.

b) If they must be mentioned then (1) agreement of the wording should be made with a representative of that organisation, and a record made of that correspondence, and (2) that agreement should be referenced with the ISEAL secretariat in order to aid approval of the communication.

3.2.2 Our ISEAL Community Membership

The SEG Community <u>cannot say</u>:

a) That SEG is 'member' of ISEAL.
b) That SEG's Community mMembership has any equivalence or comparability with any other ISEAL Community Members.

3.2.3 Claims about the SEG Standard System

Claims cannot be made about the effect or impact of the SEG standard (or associated and supporting systems) that cannot be supported with evidence.

3.3 What can be stated

3.3.1 Our ISEAL Community Membership

As of 21 May 2025, SEG was confirmed as 'ISEAL Code Compliant'. We can now say:

a) ***SEG is ISEAL Code Compliant.***
b) ***SEG is ISEAL Code Compliant. Our system has been independently evaluated against ISEAL's Codes of Good Practice - a globally-recognised framework for effective, credible sustainability systems. More information at isealalliance.org.***
c) ***SEG is ISEAL Code Compliant. Our system has been independently evaluated against ISEAL's Codes of Good Practice. More information at isealalliance.org.***

Furthermore, SEG is also an ISEAL Community member. We can also say:

d) ***As an ISEAL Community Member, SEG is working to continually improve its system by taking part in ISEAL's learning, collaboration, and innovation activities***. or:
e) ***As an ISEAL Community Member, SEG is working to continually improve its system***.

3.3.2 Claims about the SEG Standard System

Claims can only be made about the impact of the SEG standard and its supporting system that can be verified through evidence. Those impacts are defined and measured in our 301 Monitoring, Evaluation Learning (MEL) System and 302 MEL Plan.

3.3.2 Claims about being SEG Certified

Claims associated with being SEG Certified can only be made in accordance with the 205 SEG Standard Claims and Labelling Guide.

Headline claims that can be made are:

a) ***Certified, responsibly sourced European eel.***

b) ***Eel that is traceable from a responsible fishery which has been caught, handled and traded using the most responsible practices by organisations that have all met the SEG standard, which are working towards sustainability, forming a joined up responsible supply chain.***

c) ***Making a contribution to the protection and recovery of the European eel***.

3.3.4 Other ISEAL Community Members

Other ISEAL Community Members can only be referenced when (1) agreement of the wording has been made with a representative of that organisation and a record made of that agreement and (2) that reference approved with the ISEAL secretariat.

4. Procedure

The following procedure shall be applied to all communications:

4.1 SEG Communications

SEG personnel shall observe the following:

a) All SEG developed external communications are to be screened by the SEG System Manager, David Bunt <u>and</u> the SEG Head of Communications, Norbert Jeronimus.
b) No external communication is to be published without the approval of both of them.
c) They shall review the communication to ensure compliance with the wording policy above.
d) Where there is any doubt or ambiguity, SEG will consult with the ISEAL secretariat on the suitability of the wording of a communication. If there is still doubt, or there is no reply in the required time, the uncertain wording will not be included.
e) Where there are potential conflicts with another organisation, SEG will consult and seek guidance from the SEG secretariat on how to best manage that conflict and how to word any external communications.

4.2 SEG Community Communications

Members of the SEG Community shall observe the following:

a) Any reference to SEG's ISEAL Community Membership shall comply with section 3. Wording Policy, above.
b) If in doubt, it must first be approved by <u>either</u> the SEG standard owner, David Bunt <u>or</u> the SEG Head of Communications, Norbert Jeronimus.
c) No member shall refer to other members of ISEAL unless it is in relation to their own relationship with that organisation.

5. Guidance to SEG Community Members

5.1 This policy will be translated and published in French, Dutch, German and Spanish.

5.2 It will be distributed to members of the SEG Community by email and published on our website in the SEG Standard System.

5.3 For any queries or further guidance, please contact the SEG standard owner, David Bunt, or the SEG Head of Communications, Norbert Jeronimus.

6. Claims

6.1 A claim is defined as (1) a message used to set apart and promote a product, business or service with reference to one or more of the three pillars of sustainability, i.e. social, economic and/or environmental or (2) the impact of a sustainability programme.

6.2 Any claims shall be made in keeping with the ISEAL Claims Credibility Good Practice Guide, the ISEAL Community Member Claims Guidelines, and the 205 SEG Standard Claims and Labelling Guide.

6.3 SEG Community members shall read and understand each before making claims in their external communications

6.4 The main objective of the ISEAL Claims Credibility Good Practice Guide is to improve the credibility of claims about sustainability standards systems, to lead to greater uptake and trust in those claims. It is neatly conveyed in Figure 3 of the Guide:

Figure 3
Overview of the Good Practice Guide
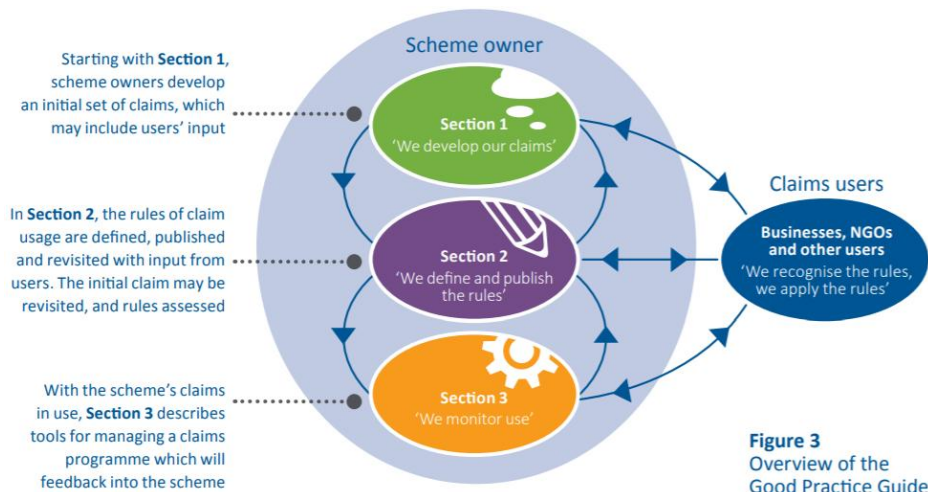
6.5 SEG is substantially revising the 205 SEG Claims and Labelling Guide, to be compatible with the ISEAL Claims Credibility Good Practice Guide and also the developing EU Green Claims Directive.

6.6 SEG shall review, with our CAB, the content of the SEG Standard Certificate to reflect suitable claims, and the content of covering letters to certificate holders to make it clearer about what claims can be made.

6.7 SEG shall write to all SEG certificate holders to provide updated clarity on claims they can make within 31 days of the publication of this Policy.

7. Implementation

7.1 SEG shall write to the SEG Community about this policy within 7 days of publication of SEG being ISEAL Code Compliant.

7.2 SEG shall remind the SEG Community of all SEG standard system documents annually, or sooner as individual updates are published.

7.3 Breaches of this Communications Policy

Breaches of this policy are to be considered as very serious. They have the risk of damaging the reputations of SEG, ISEAL and other ISEAL Community Members. They will be managed according to our Disciplinary Procedure [currently under review].

8. Review

8.1 This policy shall be reviewed by 31 May 2027, or sooner according to feedback and experience.