




PUBLIC GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

NATURAL HABITATS GROUP

JUNE 2017

	Natural Habitats Group		
	PLAN:	<i>PUBLIC GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE</i>	
	Code:	Section: Communication	Date: 17/06/15

The *Public Grievance Procedure* establishes a direct communication channel, which ensures the proper management of grievances and complaints by contractors, communities, and any other stakeholders who are affected by our operations.

SCOPE:

The scope of this document applies to grievances related to field operations, production and management activities of the company.

DEFINITIONS:

- **Grievance:** an official statement of complaint.
- **Stakeholder:** an individual or a group who can affect or be affected by the organization's actions, objectives and policies. Affected stakeholders may include local communities and businesses, local or national associations and institutions, formal or informal community leaders and representatives and other interested parties.

WHO CAN FILE GRIEVANCES OR COMPLAINTS:

Grievances can be filed by any person or party that has relevance in the oil palm sector and/or is in the geographical area in which the company operates.

HOW TO RAISE A GRIEVANCE


- **In person:** by stopping by the company's offices. In Ecuador, Sierra Leone and the Netherlands, an employee responsible for recording grievances is Human Resources Manager or employee who fulfils his or her function.
- **Mailbox:** by posting a grievance in the grievance box located near the entrance of the administrative offices in Ecuador and Sierra Leone or by sending a letter to the group headquarters at the following address: Heemraadssingel 188, 3021 DM, Rotterdam, The Netherlands.
- **By email:** by filing complaints, grievances or requests for information using the internet. An email can be written to info@natural-habitats.com.

PROCEDURE

Acknowledgement

All grievances/complaints must be acknowledged as soon as they are received. The grievance acknowledgement form is filled out and sent to the complainant. If the grievance has been received verbally, the grievance officer or staff receiving the complaint will record it and

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acknowledge receipt.

Investigation Case

The Company will carry out an investigation into the grievance as soon as is reasonably possible. In some instances, the Company may need to contact the complainant for further information during the investigation process.

Presentation Findings & Action Plan

The findings of the investigation will be presented to the complainant, who will be consulted about whether a proposed action plan is viewed as adequate. If the action plan is viewed as inadequate, the complainant has an opportunity to propose alternatives. An agreement will be reached through dialogue.

Subsequent Actions

- An initial investigation resulting in a time bound action plan.
- Implementation of the time bound action plan to resolve the grievance. This can involve different types of interventions e.g. field verification.

Outcome

The outcome of the actions will be presented to the complainant and other stakeholders. The complainant will be invited to discuss whether the outcome is satisfactory. Upon a failure to reach a satisfactory outcome, other actions will be taken. These actions may include further dialogue and mediation or legal proceedings.

Case Closed and Monitoring


Once the outcome of the process is accepted by all stakeholders, the case will be closed and monitored if necessary.

Timelines:

- Within 10 business days to acknowledge receipt of a grievance.
- Within 20 business days of receipt of the grievance to conduct the investigation and provide a response to the complainant.

The response period may be reduced to 10 business days, if the person concerned requires it to be. This should be based on all relevant information necessary for the correct handling of the complaints.

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Natural Habitats will continuously assess the effectiveness of this grievance mechanism. Necessary changes in company practices and the workings of the grievance mechanism will be identified and implemented if needed.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Where a complainant wishes the grievance to remain confidential, Natural Habitats will ensure that any contact details are not disclosed without the individual's consent.

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