

Enacted December 22, 2016

Revised October 3, 2017

Marine Eco-Label Japan Council Regulations for Complaints and Appeals Process

1. Objectives

These regulations define the procedures for handling complaints and appeals to ensure they are dealt with in a fair and timely manner in accordance with the Marine Eco-Label Japan Council Operational Management Regulations for the MEL Certification Scheme (OMR).

2. Scope

These regulations apply to the complaints and appeals process related to the Marine Eco-Label Japan Council (hereinafter “the MEL Council”) operational management for the MEL Certification Scheme, and to the development, review, or revision of standards. Complaints and appeals to Accreditation Bodies or Certification Bodies shall be processed according to the rules defined by each organization. The MEL Council shall give a proper response after receiving the report.

3. Types of Grievances

3.1 Appeals

In these regulations, an “appeal” refers to an objection to a decision made by the MEL Council from the stakeholders requesting re-examination.

3.2 Complaints

In these regulations, a "complaint" refers to a statement of dissatisfaction from the stakeholders with activities conducted by the MEL Council, which is other than an “appeal.”

4. Structure

Based on these regulations, the responder to the complaints and appeals shall be the MEL Council Executive Director (senior managing director). The related clerical work shall be conducted by the MEL Council Secretariat (hereinafter “Secretariat”). The contact point for the grievances shall be publicly available on the MEL website.

5. Process for Resolving Complaints or Appeals

The procedure for processing complaints or appeals related to setting of standards shall be as per the attached Appendix 1, while processing of other complaints or appeals shall be as per the attached Appendix 2.

6. Closure of Process

Complaints or appeals reported as processed by the procedure stipulated in Article 5 shall be closed as resolved. As for the grievances deemed impossible to be resolved by the procedure stated in Article 5, an external mediating organization may be entrusted with the processing of the grievance after the grievance process has ended.

7. Document Retention and Report of Process

The MEL Secretariat shall retain documents related to the processing of grievances for five or more years. The MEL senior managing director shall report on the state of a complaints or appeals process to the General Membership Meeting and Board of Directors.

8. Confidentiality

In processing complaints or appeals, MEL shall take the utmost care of personal information. The MEL Council shall make any and all efforts to protect personal information that has been obtained through the procedure.

9. Disclaimer

The MEL Council shall have no legal responsibilities for any aquatic products sold by entities certified by the MEL Certification Scheme.

Supplementary Provision

These regulations shall come into effect as of December 22, 2016.

Supplementary Provision

These regulations shall come into effect as of March 24, 2017.

Supplementary Provision

These regulations shall come into effect as of October 3, 2017.

Appendix 1 Procedure for processing complaints or appeals related to the development of standards

Step 1 (Receipt of Grievance)
<p>The appellant shall submit appended form 1, stating tangible details of the complaint or appeal, with any relevant documents attached, to the Contact Point for the grievance. Online submission shall be accepted; however, submission only by telephone shall not be accepted.</p> <p>The MEL Secretariat shall report the contents of the grievance to the senior managing director upon receipt of the form.</p>
Step 2 (Acknowledgment of Grievance)
<p>The Secretariat shall promptly notify the appellant using appended form 2. This does not apply to anonymously submitted grievances (including those with contact unknown).</p>
Step 3 (Consultation with Board of Directors)
<p>The senior managing director shall collect information and verify the grievances, then create a draft to be submitted to the Board of Directors for deliberation.</p>
Step 4 (Decision on Resolution Policy)
<p>The Board of Directors shall deliberate and decide the resolution policy, having voluntary questioning, if deemed necessary, with both the appellant and a member of the Standard Setting Committee (limited to a person who has no conflict of interest with the MEL Council).</p>
Step 5 (Implementation and Report of Process)
<p>The Secretariat shall promptly implement the process for complaints or appeals based on the resolution policy, and report to the appellant as well as to the related parties of the result/ action taken of the complaint or appeal using appended form 3.</p>

Appendix 2 Procedure for processing complaints or appeals other than standards

Step 1 (Receipt of Grievance)
<p>The appellant shall submit appended form 1, stating tangible details of the complaint or appeal, with any relevant documents attached, to the Contact Point for the grievance. Online submission shall be accepted; however, submission only by telephone shall not be accepted.</p> <p>The MEL Secretariat shall report the contents of the grievance to the senior managing director upon receipt of the form.</p>
Step 2 (Acknowledgment of Grievance)
<p>The Secretariat shall promptly notify the appellant using appended form 2. This does not apply to anonymously submitted grievances (including those with contact</p>

unknown).
Step 3 (Decision on Resolution Policy)
The senior managing director shall collect information and verify the grievance, then decide the resolution plan. The senior managing director may consult with the Board of Directors by creating and submitting a draft document for deliberation.
Step 4 (Implementation and Report of Process)
The Secretariat shall promptly implement the process for complaints or appeals based on the resolution policy, and report to the appellant as well as to the related parties of the result/ action taken of the complaint or appeal using appended form 3.

Appended form 1

Marine Eco-Label Japan Council
Form for Complaint or Appeal

Date received*			No.*	
Appellant details	Name		Organization	
	Phone/FAX		Email	
	Address			
Title**				
Details of complaint or appeal				
Name(s) of supplementary documents		Date		
		Signature		

A "*" indicates boxes for official use only.

Appended form 2

Reception number: .

Date: _____

Dear

Marine Eco-Label Japan Council

Marine Eco-Label Japan Council
Notification of the Receipt of Complaint or Appeal

This is a notification that we have received your Form for Complaint or Appeal on [month]
[date], [year].

Appended form 3

Reception number .

Date:_____.

Marine Eco-Label Japan Council
Report of Status of Complaint or Appeal

Date of receipt	Date		Reception number	
Appellant	Name		Organization	
Details of complaint or appeal				
Result/Action taken				
Date of completion	Date			