

The Product Label Criteria Development and Revision Protocol

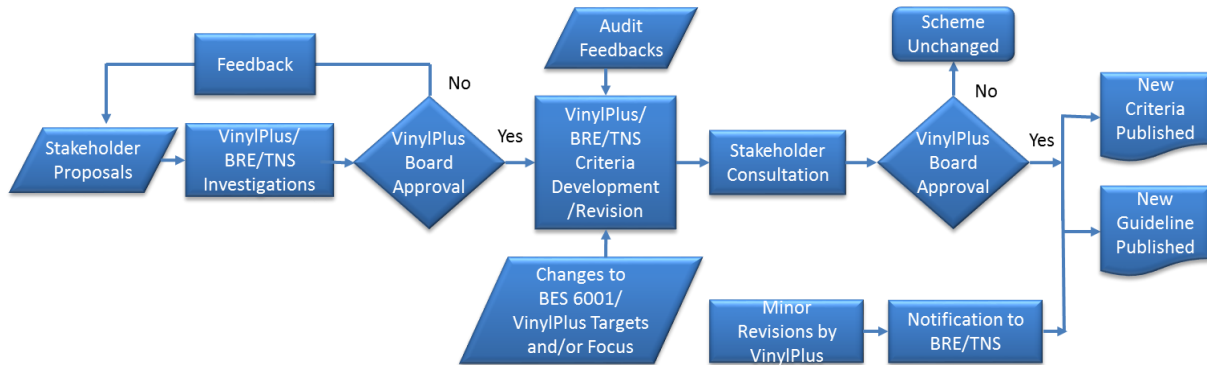
The idea behind the VinylPlus® Product Label is that it should always follow the latest science around responsible sourcing and sustainable development, integrate the latest regulatory framework, embody the achievements and targets of the VinylPlus programme and serve the VinylPlus partner community as a learning scheme to showcase and constantly improve the sustainability performance. VinylPlus is therefore determined to lift the performance level in each revision and ask label applicants to reach a higher credit point score.

During the course of its evolution, the VinylPlus Product Label should also strive to use transparent procedures open to all stakeholders. Any relevant stakeholder (government body, consumer organisation, social partners, manufacturer association, NGO) can make proposals to VinylPlus to develop new criteria, revise existing criteria or apply the Label to other application sectors.

The Product Label Criteria Scheme and Auditor Guidelines are therefore subject to regular updates and changes. Record of these changes is kept and they are notified on each of the documents used and published on the webpage, indicating the date of the review and the person responsible.

While the Product Label scheme is owned by VinylPlus, the two development partners TNS and BRE will remain involved in any scheme modification or revision. They will reconfirm that each revision step meets their expectations so that the Product Label will keep being fully supported.

The below flowchart outlines the different steps of the criteria development and revision protocol



There are 2 different levels of updating and revising the Criteria Scheme, the Auditor Guidelines and any additional material such as in the tool box, attached documentation, brochures, leaflets.

Minor editorial revisions include small wording adjustments, minor corrections and additional explanations needed to facilitate the better use and clearer understanding of the documents. These changes will be carried out and recorded by VinylPlus at any time and the 2 partners will be notified by copy.

Criteria developments and revisions include any change to Sections 2 and 3 of the Criteria Scheme around “Responsible Sourcing” (BRE key scheme input) as well as any other major changes to the content of the Criteria Scheme and the certification process.

A non-exhaustive list of development and revision triggers include

1/Proposals from stakeholders. With the support from BRE and TNS as necessary, the validity of the proposal is firstly investigated in terms of relevance to the background of the Product Label (responsible sourcing and sustainable development, challenges of the challenges of the VinylPlus programme). If valid, the proposal is submitted to the VinylPlus Board for approval.

2/Same recurrent feedback obtained in audits. Some requirements of the Criteria Scheme may appear irrelevant or unrealistic to complete during the audits. If recurrent observations are made, it will lead to a revision of the related criteria.

3/Changes to the BES 6001 scheme. The BRE's owned BES 6001 scheme is itself regularly updated. This scheme being an essential element of the VinylPlus Product Label scheme, these changes have to be accounted for in the Criteria Scheme.

4/Changes to the targets and/or focus of the VinylPlus programme. The VinylPlus programme is reviewed every decade; this evolution should be reflected in the Criteria Scheme.

For these changes, VinylPlus will use its best efforts to develop criteria development and revision proposals together with TNS and BRE. The proposals will then be discussed with other relevant stakeholders and submitted to the VinylPlus Board. If approved, the development/revision proposal will become effective and published in the Criteria Scheme. Guidelines will be provided to explain the background behind the new or revised criteria and how they need to be audited. If not approved, the Criteria Scheme will be kept unmodified.

A formal revision process will be organized at least every 5 years, or within 2 years of an update to the BES 6001 standard or a revision of the VinylPlus programme.

Any new audit from this moment on will use the new criteria scheme and supporting documentation. Label holders will be informed accordingly. Product label certificates remain however valid as granted based on the former scheme (2 years) until a new audit has to be applied for.

Stefan Eingärtner, VinylPlus®, August 2018