Revision of the Fairtrade Standard on Gold and Associated Metals

June 2026

The Fairtrade Standard on Gold and Associated Precious Metals has been launched initially in 2013 and had a minor revision in 2015. The following more thorough revision – expected in 2018 - has absorbed more time than expected due to internal and external factors (such as the pandemic and other emerging Standards work at Fairtrade International). That is why the finalization has taken longer and resulted in a rather fundamental update on various items based on the changed realities and market expectations as well as the experienced audit routine in the field.

Objectives of this Standard

The Fairtrade Standard for Gold aims to create opportunities for artisanal and small-scale miners and their communities, by promoting the formalization of the artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM) sector through establishing membership-based artisanal and small-scale mining organizations (ASMO).

The objectives are to improve working conditions for miners and to strengthen mining organizations and their capacity to lobby for a range of improvements and benefits.

Who is the Standard for?

a) Artisanal and Small Scale Mining Organizations (ASMOs)

1. ASMOs with direct rights → **organizations** in ownership of all necessary legal and formal permits and concessions
2. AMSOs with indirect rights → umbrella organizations containing **members** in ownership of all necessary legal and formal permits and concessions
3. ASM Operators → **small groups** (<10 persons) **or individuals with direct rights** to mine such as family or individual businesses

b) Traders

1. First buyers of gold (Minimum and Premium Payer) and any other buyers and sellers along the supply chain
2. Processors, such as refiners or smelters
3. Manufacturers of semi-finished and/or end products such as jewellers, goldsmiths, matchmakers or minters/casting houses.

Please acknowledge that additional to this Standard, also the Generic Fairtrade Trader Standard applies.

Implementation and transition period

The [revised Fairtrade Standard for Gold] will be put in force on 1st July 2026. All organizations will need to comply with all applicable requirements starting as of 1st July 2027, including requirement “Reprocessing of Fairtrade gold”...

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Structure of the new Fairtrade Gold Standard and main changes

1. Scope

The Standard is focussing on Artisanal and Small Scan Organizations (ASMO) and require a legal, i.e. tax paying entity in a formalized, democratic organization with legitimate mining concessions and legal rights to mine.

→ ASMOs: new is the clear definition of organizations with indirect rights and the ASMO Operators setup has been introduced within the scope of certification.

2. General requirements

Details on certification, clear definition of ASMO, their responsibilities, describing the relationship with local communities.

3. Trade

Here, traceability and segregation (including reprocessing) from mine to market is in the centre, especially with a stronger focus on the financial dimension. Apart from that it contains the definition of the requirements for the composition of the final market product in the different business models and the use of the Fairtrade Mark.

→ Traders: documentation around traceability and especially the clearer management of the business model related requirements (i.e. the Gold Sourcing Program GSP).

→ ASMOs: The scope of traceability involves adopting a system-based approach to enable the tracking and tracing of the mineral from their origin through the entire production process to the refining point. As well as physical and documentary traceability, the standard covers the traceability of transactions and financial flows.

4. Production

Definitions of management processes, due diligence requirements, the environmental management plan including new impact measurement elements and a thorough focus on how to manage chemicals and the phase out of mercury. A more detailed view on management plans for water, waste and mine closure. Then of course the requirements of the labour conditions including employment and occupational health and safety.

→ ASMOs: A more clearly defined structure has been adopted, considering the type of mining method, and ASMO's set-up. Decent work is promoted, which is reflected in improved working conditions, with a strong focus on occupational health and safety, both areas incorporate new requirements.

5. Business and Development

In this chapter the development of the mining organisation and community is in the focus with our concept of the Fairtrade premium, apart from the organizational structure addressing democratic processes and transparency.

→ ASMOs: Democratic principles in the administration of the premium are reinforced, and greater clarity is provided regarding the role of general assemblies. For ASMOs with indirect rights, and particularly for ASM Operators, the management of the premium and its impact on all groups within the production system are defined. Overall, the requirements contribute to strengthening the governance of mining organisations.

For more information and the full revised Standard please visit our website https://www.fairtrade.net/en/why-fairtrade/how-we-do-it/standards/who-we-have-standards-for/gold-standard-and-associated-precious-metals-standard.html