



Modular Consultation Guide

RSC Standard 2026 Consultation

Introduction

This document presents a **modular consultation guide** for the RSC Standard¹ v0.1. The Standard is structured normatively around principles, themes and requirements. This guide complements that structure by organising the content into a set of interconnected modules, each focusing on a key aspect of rangeland systems.

The modules sit beneath the principles and bring together related themes and requirements to support a more accessible and targeted review. While the [RSC Standard v0.1 Normative Document](#) provides the full detail and exact wording of requirements, this format is designed to help reviewers engage more easily with the intent, logic and usability of the Standard.

You do not need to review the entire document. We encourage you to focus on the modules most relevant to your expertise and to choose the feedback method that suits you best (see [Submitting Your Feedback](#) at the end of this guide). Contributions may range from detailed technical input to targeted reflections – all are valuable and will help strengthen the clarity, relevance and applicability of the Standard.

This modular consultation forms part of the wider RSC Standard consultation process. Feedback will be combined with input from pastoralists, Indigenous Peoples, private sector and other stakeholders to inform the ongoing development and refinement of the Standard.

Module Overview

Each module includes a short overview, key themes and summaries of the requirements (minimum and improvement) to support review and feedback. These summaries are intended to capture the intent of the Standard, rather than its exact wording, and are provided to support reflection rather than detailed drafting comments.

Principle	Module
I. Effective Management	1. Governance, Coordination & Management 2. Rangeland Management Planning (RMP)
II. Land Governance & Tenure	3. Land Rights, Access & Participation 4. Policy Context, Conflict & External Pressures
III. Regenerative Management & Ecosystem Health	5. Grazing Systems 6. Ecosystem Health & Environmental Protection

¹ The RSC Standard was previously referred to as the Global Rangelands Standard (GRS) and has been renamed to avoid confusion with other uses of the acronym.

IV. Resilient Livelihoods	7. Livelihood Resilience & Risk
V. Rights, Equity & Inclusion	8. Participation, Inclusion & Cultural Systems 9. Labour Rights & Working Conditions
VI. Animal Welfare	10. Animal Welfare

PRINCIPLE 1: EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT

Module 1 – Internal system governance

⇒ *How the management system is organised and functions*

Scope

Covers the structures, roles, knowledge systems and processes that support coordinated management, effective information use, learning and continuous improvement.

Key themes

Summary of Requirements

Summaries reflect the intent of the requirements, not the exact normative wording Normative Ref

Administration & coordination

- ◆ **Minimum:** A clearly defined management structure is in place, including a designated responsible person, governance arrangements, agreed roles and responsibilities, defined management areas, and processes for communicating key changes. 1.1.1 – 1.1.8
- ◆ **Improvement:** Roles, tools and contingency arrangements are in place to support coordination, inclusion and continuity in changing conditions.

Record keeping & documentation

- ◆ **Minimum:** Context-appropriate records are maintained to support Standard implementation, track management activities and animal health, and demonstrate compliance and improvement over time. 1.2.1 – 1.2.4
- ◆ **Improvement:** Animal health indicators are tracked to support planning and welfare improvement.

Understanding & learning

- ◆ **Minimum:** Participants have regular, accessible opportunities to learn and share knowledge on Standard requirements, local practices and health and safety, with training appropriate to their roles. 1.3.1 – 1.3.6
- ◆ **Improvement:** Knowledge is shared through peer learning, with participatory approaches used to strengthen and improve learning.

Continual improvement

- ◆ **Minimum:** Progress is demonstrated over time through improvement actions and adaptive management, supported by a simple improvement plan and timely corrective action where issues arise. 1.4.1 – 1.4.4
- ◆ **Improvement:** Those responsible for management contribute to shared learning and knowledge exchange relevant to the context.

Review questions

- Does this reflect how management and decision-making *actually work* across different rangeland contexts (e.g. mobile, communal, informal governance)?
- Does the balance between flexibility and accountability feel appropriate?
- Any critical elements of effective management in pastoral systems that are not adequately captured?
- Are expectations around coordination, learning and record-keeping realistic?
- What feels missing or misaligned with real-world practice?

Module 2 – Rangeland Management Planning (RMP)

⇒ *How rangeland management is planned and adapted over time*

Scope

Focuses on the development and implementation of rangeland management plans, including monitoring, participation and adaptive decision-making at appropriate scales.

Key themes

Summary of Requirements

Summaries reflect the intent of the requirements, not the exact normative wording

Normative Ref

Collaborative rangeland management

- ◆ **Minimum:** Rangeland management is guided by a documented plan (RMP), aligned with landscape or jurisdictional plans where they exist, or developed for the management area where they do not.
- ◆ **Minimum:** The RMP reflects the local context and governance arrangements, and includes key elements such as seasonal use, livestock and water management, risk planning, identification of land users, and simple monitoring indicators with timelines.
- ◆ **Minimum:** The RMP is developed and implemented with appropriate participation, regularly reviewed, and informed by monitoring to support adaptive management and improvement over time. 1.5.1 – 1.5.10
- ◆ **Minimum:** Managers engage in shared, landscape or jurisdictional rangeland management processes, including co-creation, review and broader planning initiatives where relevant.
- * **Improvement:** There is engagement in shared, landscape or jurisdictional rangeland management processes, supported by shared learning, peer exchange and community-based approaches.
- * **Improvement:** The RMP is integrated with related aspects of the Standard, including climate adaptation, risk planning and restoration activities across relevant principles.

Review questions

- Does the idea of an RMP fit with how planning happens in pastoral systems?
- Is this approach workable in mobile, seasonal and multi-user landscapes?

- Does it support adaptive, responsive management in variable environments?
- What key elements of rangeland planning might be missing?

PRINCIPLE 2: LAND GOVERNANCE & TENURE

Module 3 – Land and Resource Rights & Access

⇒ *Who has rights to land and resources, and how access is determined*

Scope

Addresses the recognition of land and resource rights, equitable access, and the inclusion of relevant rightsholders in land use planning and decision-making.

Key themes

Summary of Requirements

Summaries reflect the intent of the requirements, not the exact normative wording

Normative Ref

Land & resource use rights

- ◆ **Minimum:** Example Access to and use of rangeland resources is legitimate and recognised, with basic records maintained to describe the nature and extent of these rights. 2.1.1 – 2.1.2

Land use planning

- ◆ **Minimum:** Relevant land users and rightsholders are informed and able to engage in decisions affecting rangeland use, with patterns of use identified and documented. 2.2.1 – 2.2.3
- * **Improvement:** Where access is shared, cooperative approaches support fair use, coordination and conflict prevention.

Conflict resolution & grievance

- ◆ **Minimum:** Accessible and culturally appropriate mechanisms are in place to address disputes over land and resource use. 2.3.1 – 2.3.2
- * **Improvement:** Where conflicts occur, outcomes and lessons are shared to support transparency, learning and prevention.

Equitable access & participation

- ◆ **Minimum:** Decision-making on land and resource use considers the perspectives of women, youth, workers and marginalised groups, where relevant. 2.4.1 – 2.4.2
 - * **Improvement:** Where access is shared or overlaps, clear and understood approaches for managing access are maintained and reviewed.
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Review questions

- Does this capture the diversity of land tenure and access systems in rangelands?
- Are expectations realistic in contexts with informal or overlapping rights?
- Does it reflect how access and decisions are negotiated in practice?
- Are there important risks or gaps we've not captured?

Module 4 – External governance context

⇒ *How external rules, risks and pressures are understood and managed*

Scope

Covers the broader governance context, including policy and regulatory frameworks, mechanisms for resolving disputes, and responses to external pressures affecting rangeland use.

Key themes

Summary of Requirements

Summaries reflect the intent of the requirements, not the exact normative wording

Normative Ref

Transparency & external pressures

- ◆ **Minimum:** External pressures affecting rangeland access, condition and use are identified and understood. 2.5.1 – 2.5.4
- * **Improvement:** Impacts of external pressures are recorded and, where feasible, raised and addressed through appropriate channels and stakeholder engagement.

Integration with national & regional frameworks

- ◆ **Minimum:** Relevant land-use regulations and arrangements are understood, and rangeland use does not knowingly conflict with them. 2.6.1 – 2.6.3
 - * **Improvement:** Where feasible, rangeland management aligns with relevant national or regional strategies and frameworks.
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Review questions

- Does this reflect the realities of external pressures on rangelands?
- Are expectations appropriate given limited control over these forces?
- Does it capture the types of challenges rangeland users actually face?
- What important pressures or dynamics might be missing?

PRINCIPLE 3: REGENERATIVE MANAGEMENT & ECOSYSTEM HEALTH

Module 5 – Grazing Systems & Landscape Function

⇒ *How grazing is planned and adapted*

Scope

Focuses on grazing strategies and mobility practices that support pasture recovery, maintain productivity and respond to changing environmental conditions.

Key themes

Summary of Requirements

Summaries reflect the intent of the requirements, not the exact normative wording

Normative Ref

Adaptive grazing practices

Minimum

◆ **WHO grazes WHERE and WHEN:**

Grazing use - including seasonal areas, access arrangements and patterns of use - is clearly understood, agreed where needed, and guided by local knowledge, with flexibility to respond to changing conditions.

◆ **WHAT practices are ecologically appropriate:**

Grazing practices are suited to the land, taking into account seasonal dynamics, pasture condition and the rangeland's capacity to support livestock and wildlife populations.

◆ **HOW the grazing system supports recovery:**

Mobility, rotation, resting and other context-appropriate strategies are used to allow pasture recovery and support long-term rangeland health.

3.1.1 – 3.1.8

◆ **HOW grazing is implemented in practice:**

Grazing plans are put into practice through coordination, communication and regular review.

◆ **HOW decisions respond to the land:**

Grazing decisions are adjusted based on observed rangeland condition, using both local knowledge and monitoring where available.

Improvement

- * The RMP is regularly updated based on monitoring, experience and reflection, with opportunities for shared learning and collaboration where relevant.
- * Contingency measures for climatic or environmental shocks are identified and implemented as needed.

Review questions

- Does this reflect how grazing is managed in variable rangeland systems?
- Is the level of guidance appropriate without being too prescriptive?
- Does it work across different ecological and production contexts?
- What key aspects of grazing systems are missing or unclear?

Module 6 – Ecosystem Health & Environmental Protection

⇒ *How ecosystem health is maintained and protected*

Scope

Addresses the condition and functioning of soil, water, vegetation and biodiversity, alongside measures to prevent degradation, pollution and other negative impacts.

Key themes

Summary of Requirements

Summaries reflect the intent of the requirements, not the exact normative wording

Normative Ref

Conservation of natural habitats & biodiversity

- ◆ **Minimum:** Key habitats, biodiversity values and wildlife considerations are identified and reflected in management planning.
- ◆ **Minimum:** Natural rangelands are not converted or fragmented, wildlife movement is maintained, and wildlife is not intentionally harmed except where necessary for safety and in line with law.
- ◆ **Minimum:** Livestock–wildlife interactions are managed to minimise conflict and disease risk, with preventive and non-lethal approaches favoured where feasible. 3.2.1 – 3.2.9
- * **Improvement:** Biodiversity is monitored through locally relevant observation, with information used to inform management and updates to the RMP.
- * **Improvement:** Management practices support habitat quality and connectivity, including preventing invasive species, restoring ecosystems, and protecting areas of ecological or cultural significance.

Soil, water & plant communities

- ◆ **Minimum:** Soil, vegetation and water condition are monitored over time using locally relevant observation and indicators.
- ◆ **Minimum:** Grazing, water access and land use are managed to maintain soil stability, vegetation health and water function, and to prevent degradation.
- ◆ **Minimum:** Where degradation occurs, restoration actions are undertaken and integrated into management planning, with practices adapted over time (including fire management where relevant). 3.3.1 – 3.3.11
- * **Improvement:** Management and restoration practices support vegetation recovery, forage diversity, soil cover, water function and avoidance of chronic grazing pressure.
- * **Improvement:** Monitoring and restoration are strengthened through learning and collaboration, contribute to broader landscape objectives where relevant, and demonstrate stable or improving land condition over time, with corrective action taken where needed.

Pollution prevention & waste management

- ◆ **Minimum:** Activities and waste are managed to prevent contamination of soil, water, vegetation, livestock and wildlife, including safe disposal of animal, chemical and human waste.
- ◆ **Minimum:** Inputs such as fertilisers, pesticides and veterinary products are used only when necessary and in ways that minimise risks to human health and the environment. 3.4.1 – 3.4.6
- * **Improvement:** Where contamination or waste accumulation occurs, reasonable remediation actions are taken, with collaboration where feasible to improve waste management practices.

Review questions

- Does this capture the key components of rangeland ecosystem health?
- Are expectations realistic given climate variability and uncertainty?

- Is the balance right between monitoring and practical management?
- Are there important gaps or overlaps?

PRINCIPLE 4: RESILIENT LIVELIHOODS

Module 7 - Livelihood Resilience & Risk

⇒ *How people prepare for and respond to change*

Scope

Covers how pastoralists identify, manage and adapt to risks, including through diversification and strategies that strengthen long-term livelihood resilience.

Key themes

Summary of Requirements

Summaries reflect the intent of the requirements, not the exact normative wording

Normative Ref

Risk awareness & planning

- ◆ **Minimum:** Example Livelihood and income sources, along with key risks, are identified, with approaches in place to manage or respond to those risks in ways suited to the local context.
- * **Improvement:** Risk awareness and response approaches are regularly reviewed and improved using experience, seasonal learning and a combination of local knowledge and external information. 4.1.1 – 4.1.6
- * **Improvement:** Collaboration supports shared understanding and coordinated responses, with attention to those most vulnerable to shocks.

Responsible diversification

- ◆ **Minimum:** Diversification activities are carefully considered and, where undertaken, are appropriate to the local context and do not undermine rangeland condition, mobility or community wellbeing. 4.2.1 – 4.2.5
- * **Improvement:** Diversification activities support livelihood resilience and income stability without increasing pressure on rangeland resources.
- * **Improvement:** Opportunities are inclusive, and their effectiveness is reviewed over time to inform future decisions.

Review questions

- Does this reflect how pastoralists understand and manage risk?
- Are the expectations realistic in uncertain and resource-constrained contexts?
- Does it capture the role of social, cultural and livelihood strategies?
- What important dimensions of resilience might be missing?

PRINCIPLE 5: RIGHTS, EQUITY & INCLUSION

Module 8 – Participation, inclusion and cultural systems

⇒ *How diverse voices, knowledge and cultural systems are recognised and included*

Scope

Covers how people are recognised, included and able to participate in rangeland management, including respect for cultural identity, customary institutions and knowledge systems, and equitable access to decision-making and leadership.

Key themes

Summary of Requirements

Summaries reflect the intent of the requirements, not the exact normative wording

Normative Ref

Empowered Indigenous Peoples & Local Communities

- ◆ **Minimum:** Customary institutions, knowledge systems and culturally significant values are recognised and reflected in management, with cultural identity, mobility traditions and traditional knowledge respected and supported. 5.1.1 – 5.1.4
- * **Improvement:** Intergenerational knowledge transfer is supported, and Indigenous Peoples and local communities are able to participate in broader discussions affecting land use, mobility and cultural heritage.

Inclusive participation, gender equity & non-discrimination

- ◆ **Minimum:** Decision-making is inclusive of women, youth and marginalised groups, and discrimination, harassment and violence are not tolerated. 5.2.1 – 5.2.4
- * **Improvement:** Barriers to participation and leadership for under-represented groups are actively reduced, with opportunities strengthened over time in ways appropriate to the local context.

Review questions

- Does this reflect how participation and decision-making happen in practice?
- Is the approach to inclusion appropriate across different cultural contexts?
- Does it adequately recognise pastoral identity and knowledge systems?
- What feels missing or misaligned?

Module 9 – Labour Rights & Working Conditions

⇒ *How people are treated, protected and safeguarded in their daily work and livelihoods*

Scope

Covers how people are treated, protected and kept safe across roles and livelihoods, including working conditions, health and safety, fair treatment, and protections for workers, children and young people, in line with applicable labour standards.

Key themes

Summary of Requirements

Summaries reflect the intent of the requirements, not the exact normative wording

Normative Ref

Fair work and labour rights

- ◆ **Minimum:** Forced labour and coercive practices are prohibited.
- ◆ **Minimum:** Labour arrangements are fair and transparent, including clear terms, timely and equitable compensation, and equal treatment for all.
- ◆ **Minimum:** People contributing labour are treated with dignity and respect, with safe ways to raise concerns and consideration for the wellbeing of vulnerable individuals.
- ✳ **Improvement:** Awareness of labour rights is strengthened through learning and dialogue, and efforts are made to prevent overwork and support rest during demanding periods.

Additional requirements for enterprises that rely structurally on hired labour (permanent or recurring seasonal workers):

- ◆ **Minimum:** Employment terms are clear and transparent, including contracts, compensation, and accessible payment records.
- ◆ **Minimum:** Working conditions are fair, including reasonable hours, rest, voluntary and compensated overtime, and support for vulnerable workers.
- ◆ **Minimum:** Worker rights are upheld, including fair recruitment practices and the right to organise and engage collectively.
- ✳ **Improvement:** Workers are supported through orientation and, where appropriate, representation in dialogue on workplace issues.
- ✳ **Improvement:** Living conditions and facilities are progressively improved.
- ✳ **Improvement:** Monitoring of working conditions strengthens over time in line with scale and capacity.

5.3.1 – 5.3.18

Safe working & living conditions

- ◆ **Minimum:** Common risks related to animals, terrain and weather are understood, with basic precautions in place to prevent harm.
- ◆ **Minimum:** Safe practices are used in herding and animal handling to protect both people and livestock.
- ◆ **Minimum:** Basic wellbeing and care are supported, including access to water and rest, support for vulnerable individuals, and access to first aid and hygiene practices.
- ✳ **Improvement:** Tools, equipment, practices and living conditions are improved over time to reduce risk and support wellbeing.
- ✳ **Improvement:** Opportunities for safe participation and skill development are provided, particularly for women, youth and new herders.

Additional requirements for enterprises that rely structurally on hired labour (permanent or recurring seasonal workers):

- ◆ **Minimum:** Basic safety systems are in place, including first aid supplies, emergency awareness and preparedness for remote conditions.
- ◆ **Minimum:** Workers are trained and equipped to carry out tasks safely, including use of appropriate equipment and protective gear.
- ◆ **Minimum:** Accommodation and facilities support health and wellbeing, including safe shelter, sanitation, water and hygiene.
- ✳ **Improvement:** Safety and emergency preparedness systems are strengthened over time, appropriate to remoteness and risk.
- ✳ **Improvement:** Living conditions, sanitation and hygiene are progressively improved to support wellbeing.

5.4.1 – 5.4.19

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- * **Improvement:** Health and safety practices are continuously improved through learning, including zoonotic disease awareness, training and use of experience and feedback.
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Child rights & pastoral learning

- ◆ **Minimum:** Children are protected from harm, hazardous work and the worst forms of child labour.
 - ◆ **Minimum:** Where children take part in pastoral activities, this is safe, age-appropriate and does not compromise their education, rest or development. 5.5.1 – 5.5.7
 - * **Improvement:** Children are supported to learn pastoral skills and cultural knowledge through safe, supervised and age-appropriate participation.
 - * **Improvement:** Their wellbeing and development are supported, including access to education, rest, play and social interaction.
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Review questions

- Does this approach work across both family-based and hired labour systems?
- Are expectations realistic in remote and mobile contexts?
- Does it balance fairness with practicality?
- What key risks or gaps should be better addressed?

PRINCIPLE 6: ANIMAL WELFARE

Module 10 – Animal Welfare

⇒ *How animals are cared for and supported to thrive*

Scope

Covers the health, handling and overall welfare of livestock and working animals, including practices that support their wellbeing under varying conditions.

Seeking your input

The requirements for this section of the Standard have not yet been developed. We are using this consultation to seek input on what should be included, how animal welfare should be understood and framed in pastoral systems.

The themes below are intended as an initial guide to the areas the Standard may cover, drawing on the Five Domains of animal welfare. They are illustrative rather than final, and we welcome input on their relevance, completeness and applicability across different contexts.

Illustrative themes

Nutrition & Water

- Access to sufficient, safe, and appropriate nutrition across seasons
 - Reliable access to clean water, including during mobility or drought
 - Nutritional management aligned with species, production stage, and environmental conditions
 - Supplementary feeding where natural resources are insufficient
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Health & disease management

- Prevention, identification and treatment of illness and injury
 - Parasite and disease management (including zoonotic risks)
 - Access to veterinary support or locally appropriate animal health knowledge
 - Monitoring of health, mortality and recovery
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Physical Environment

- Shelter or protection from extreme weather (heat, cold, wind, snow)
 - Safe terrain and infrastructure (yards, fencing, handling facilities)
 - Management of environmental hazards (e.g. toxic plants, ice, flooding)
 - Conditions for working animals that minimise physical strain and injury
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Behaviour & mental state

- Ability to express natural behaviours (grazing, movement, social interaction)
 - Use of mobility and space to support animal needs
 - Avoidance of practices that cause chronic fear or distress
 - Promotion of positive states where feasible (e.g. comfort, social stability)
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Handling & Human–Animal Interactions

- Low-stress handling and herding practices
 - Management practices that minimise fear, distress and injury
 - Slaughter or end-of-life practices (onsite)
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Other working animals (non-livestock)

- Fitness for work and workload management
 - Appropriate equipment and harnessing
 - Rest, recovery and care during and after work
 - Recognition of the role of working animals in pastoral systems
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Risk & Emergency Response

- Preparedness for drought, severe weather, disease outbreaks or disasters
 - Emergency actions to protect animal welfare (e.g. movement, destocking, feeding, treatment)
 - Decision-making thresholds to prevent prolonged suffering
 - Coordination with wider risk response systems where relevant
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Animal Care Skills & Continuous Improvement

- Knowledge and skills in animal husbandry, handling, and welfare assessment
 - Ability to recognise signs of stress, pain, or poor condition
 - Learning through experience, peer exchange, and training
 - Use of monitoring and observation to improve animal care practices over time
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Review questions

- Do these themes reflect the most important aspects of animal welfare in pastoral systems?
- Are they applicable across different species, environments and production systems?
- What are the most critical welfare issues that should be prioritised?
- What's missing?

Overall Standard Structure

In addition to module-specific feedback, we welcome input on the overall structure and design of the Standard. A clear and well-designed architecture is critical to ensuring the Standard is understandable, usable in practice, and able to support consistent interpretation across diverse rangeland contexts.

The RSC Standard is structured around a set of principles and themes intended to reflect the key dimensions of sustainable rangeland stewardship (environmental, animal welfare, social and governance), while remaining grounded in pastoral systems. We have aimed to balance clarity with flexibility, and to organise requirements in a way that supports both practical implementation and future assurance systems.

Note: The modules in this guide are designed to support consultation and do not reflect the formal structure of the Standard.

Review questions

- Does the overall architecture (principles, themes and requirements) provide a clear and logical structure?
- Does the framing of the principles and themes reflect the key dimensions of sustainable rangeland systems?
- Does the Standard feel coherent and well-balanced across environmental, animal, social and governance areas?
- Are there any significant gaps, overlaps or inconsistencies across the structure?
- Are there aspects of the structure that could be simplified or improved?

Submitting Your Feedback

We welcome feedback in a range of formats. You do not need to review the entire standard - targeted input on specific modules or themes is highly valuable.

The review questions in this guide are intended to support reflection. You may respond to these directly or use one of the options below.

Feedback submission method

Standard General Feedback Form	A structured online form to share overall views on the direction, structure and key themes of the Standard. This includes reflections on what works well, what is missing, and any major concerns. This is the preferred method for submission.
Written feedback	Provide brief responses to the review questions in this guide. Bullet points are welcome, and you may focus on selected sections.
Annotated documents	Submit comments directly on the Standard or consultation materials using track changes or comments in Word or PDF.
Workshops or discussions	Feedback may also be gathered through workshops or discussions. A short summary of key insights can be submitted in place of individual responses.

Submission Details

[Standard Online Feedback Form](#)

Email: consultation@rangelandstewardship.org

If submitting on behalf of a group or organisation, please indicate this in your response.