



# **Sime Darby Plantation Berhad**

**Group Sustainability**

Policy on the Protection of Human Rights Defenders  
(HRDs)



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Policy on the Protection of Human Rights Defenders (HRDs)

2020

## Policy Instrument Control Table

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## GLOSSARY

The definitions of the key terms used in this Policy are as follows:

<b>TERMS</b>	<b>DESCRIPTIONS</b>
Complainants	Individuals who lodge a complaint that may include allegations of human rights violations through available channels and mechanisms.
Community Spokespersons	Individuals who have been chosen to represent and/or speak officially on behalf of the community.
Human Rights Defenders	Individuals, groups and associations who promote and protect universally recognised human rights and contribute to the effective elimination of all forms of violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms of individuals and peoples. This definition includes Environmental Human Rights Defenders.
Whistleblowers	Individuals who reveal a Wrongdoing in accordance with SDP's Whistleblowing Policy.



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## 1. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

- 1.1 At Sime Darby Plantation (SDP), we respect and safeguard human rights, as well as the notion of democracy and its institution. We believe in the peaceful resolution of disputes and seek to promote the dignity of all people in the course of carrying out our business activities.
- 1.2. We recognise that Human Rights Defenders have the role and responsibility of upholding human rights and the need for them to be able to lodge complaints that may arise from their business activities and relationships with SDP, in confidence. We also acknowledge that their decision to lodge a complaint may in some instances result in risks to their safety and/or security.
- 1.3 For the purpose and context of this policy, Human Rights Defenders, Whistleblowers, Complainants and Community Spokespersons are jointly referred to as "HRDs." Reference is to be made to the Glossary section of this Policy for details.
- 1.4 This Policy is our approach in according protection to HRDs with the main objective of ensuring our internal mechanisms prevent harm, protect, and respond to complaints made by HRDs.

However, this policy does not cover grievances such as complaints about employment matters, which should be channelled to the appropriate authority within SDP, such as Human Resources. Implementation of this policy, its process and channels shall be in accordance to the SDP Whistleblowing Policy.

## 2. SCOPE

- 2.1 This Policy shall apply to all stakeholders affected by our business activities and relationships including directors<sup>1</sup>, employees<sup>2</sup>, counterparties<sup>3</sup>, business partners<sup>4</sup>, workers in our operations and supply chains, and communities surrounding our operations.

## 3. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- 3.1 Confidentiality and Anonymity

The identity of individuals and information shared by HRDs, shall be kept confidential to the fullest possible extent, in a manner consistent with the need to

<sup>1</sup> Directors include all independent and non-independent Directors, executive and non-executive Directors of the Group and shall also include alternate or substitute Directors.

<sup>2</sup> An individual who has entered into a contract of employment with a Group Company. This includes Employees on secondment to Joint Ventures, Affiliates or Associates, temporary staff and interns. Excludes independent contractors and consultants who are engaged for the duration of a specific task or assignment.

<sup>3</sup> Joint Ventures (controlling interest), Consultants, agents, contractors and goods/service providers of the Group who have direct dealings with the Group.

<sup>4</sup> Any party with which the Group has a commercial relationship with but is not in a position to exercise a significant or controlling influence over, such as customers, Joint Ventures (non-controlling interest) and business alliances.



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conduct an investigation, unless the individual consents to disclosure, or if disclosure is otherwise required by law.

In the event that there is a need to waive anonymity for the purposes of carrying out investigations, the HRD shall be consulted and consent will be sought.

### 3.2 Equality and Non-Discrimination

The right to defend human rights shall be guaranteed without discrimination. Measures to protect HRDs shall be sufficient, reasonable and reflective of the HRDs needs, and relevant to the full range of their human rights as a result of their work.

### 3.3 Protection Against Threats and Retaliation

HRDs and individuals acting in good faith to exercise their fundamental human rights, in the course of their engagement with SDP shall be protected from violence, threats and all forms of retaliation. The same protection shall extend to employees of SDP who are linked to HRDs or their activities, from retaliation, disadvantage or discrimination at the workplace.

### 3.4 Mechanism

We are committed to providing a whistleblowing channel that is effective and accessible to everyone at every level. In response to issues reported, we will endeavour to ensure that investigations carried out are:

- Impartial and independent from those implicated in the events
- Transparent to secure accountability
- Commences swiftly and completed within a reasonable time; and
- Adequate and thorough to identify any systemic gaps that led to the alleged violation.

The SDP Whistleblowing Response Procedure (WRP) outlines the procedural aspects of SDP's Whistleblowing end to end mechanism; from initial disclosure, logging, and assignment of cases for investigation, investigation process (including timescales) and closure of the case.

Should investigations reveal that claims made by HRDs are knowingly false and/or misleading, SDP may take reasonable actions to claim costs or seek compensation. If allegations are proven to be malicious, reckless, or with the foreknowledge that the allegations are false, individuals responsible may be subject to appropriate action, up to and including legal action, where applicable.

Where public statements are made by HRDs and their affiliates linking any false or misleading claim against SDP, the HRDs may be required to publicly issue a statement of retraction or falsehood.

The Whistleblower protection will be revoked under the above circumstances.



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### 3.5 Training

All SDP employees shall be made aware and informed of this policy. Members of management and staff who are tasked to manage reported violations will be provided with relevant training to ensure that proper and effective action is taken.

### 3.6 Remedies

Where an alleged violation is found to hold true, SDP will seek to remedy it by taking reasonable measures including amending its policies, and implementing effective measures to alter its practices to prevent reprisals. If the complaint cannot be solved through this manner, HRDs can be provided legal remedies such as litigation<sup>5</sup> or alternate dispute resolution options including mediation and arbitration in situations where complaints cannot be resolved internally.

## **4. REFERENCE**

4.1 This approach is guided by the United Nations (UN) Guiding Principles of Business and Human Rights, UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, International Labour Organisation's Declaration and Fundamental Principles and Rights to Work, Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) Policy on the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, Whistleblowers, Complainants and Community Spokesperson, as well as national legislations<sup>6</sup> and alternative dispute resolution<sup>7</sup> processes applicable and agreed upon to violations reported.

4.2 This policy serves as operational guidance on SDP's commitments in the Human Rights Charter, is to be read with SDP's Whistleblowing Policy, and supplements established operational-level grievance mechanisms and whistle blowing channels for individuals and/or groups who may be adversely impacted by our business activities.

## **5. PROCESS OWNER**

GROUP SUSTAINABILITY

<sup>5</sup> Relevant national and/or state legislations, decrees, orders, regulations or policies to be applied, in accordance to the place in which the alleged violation took place.

<sup>6</sup> National and/or state legislations, decrees, orders, regulations or policies prevailing from time to time.

<sup>7</sup> Alternate methods of dispute resolution are to be agreed upon by all affected parties and carried out as per all relevant rules and procedures.