

ISEAL ALLIANCE ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED
31 DECEMBER 2024



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Trustees' report

The Board, whose members are the Directors and Trustees of the charity, is pleased to present its annual report together with the financial statements of ISEAL Alliance for the year ended 31 December 2024.

The report has been prepared in accordance with Part 8 of the Charities Act 2011 and constitutes a directors' report for the purpose of company legislation.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out on pages 27 to 30 of the attached financial statements and comply with the charitable company's Memorandum and Articles of Association, applicable laws and the requirements of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

Charitable objectives and strategic priorities

Our vision

We want to create a world where markets are a force for good where production and consumption, resource management and trade benefit people and planet.

Our mission

We're on a mission to accelerate positive change by improving the impacts of ambitious sustainability systems and their partners.

Our ambition

We aspire to be a driving force for global, collective efforts to tackle the most pressing sustainability issues – from the climate emergency and biodiversity crisis to human rights and persistent poverty.

Strategic plan 2021 - 2024

In 2021 we launched our new organisational strategy, aiming to increase our impact in tackling the biggest sustainability challenges of our time, from the climate emergency and biodiversity crisis to human rights and persistent poverty.

More needs to be done to create change at the scale and pace required – and with growing commitment from governments and businesses to tackle these challenges, there's a huge opportunity.

Our long-term objectives

We want credible systems, claims and communications to sit at the heart of market-based sustainability solutions.

We want sustainability systems and their partners to deliver scalable solutions to global sustainability challenges.

Five strategic priorities guide our work

Inspiring solutions to sustainability challenges:

ISEAL will inspire and challenge sustainability systems and their partners to make a profound positive impact on the world's most pressing sustainability challenges.

Strengthening accuracy, reliability and resilience:

ISEAL will boost confidence in sustainability systems by helping them become more accurate, reliable and resilient.

Broadening the applicability of ISEAL's credibility

tools: ISEAL will bring its experience on credibility to a broader range of sustainability systems.

Supporting effective use of credible sustainability

systems: ISEAL will help governments and businesses to achieve their sustainability goals by using credible sustainability systems.

Growing a dynamic learning community:

ISEAL will enhance the member experience and bring ambitious new sustainability systems into its learning community.

Public benefit

The Board of Directors confirms that it has complied with its duty in Section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission for England and Wales. The Board of Directors further confirms that the activities of ISEAL are carried out, in line with its charitable objects, for the public benefit as described in this report.

Introduction to ISEAL

ISEAL works to support and strengthen market-based tools to deliver measurable impacts at a global scale on critical sustainability issues, including climate, biodiversity, human rights, decent work and livelihoods.

Through our membership programme we focus on improving the effectiveness of sustainability systems (standards and similar tools) and catalysing collaboration among stakeholders to create the enabling conditions for increased uptake of more sustainable practices.

We define what credible practice looks like for these systems based on emerging global consensus. Our Code of Good Practice for Sustainability Systems supports them to improve how they operate and deliver greater impact. Our Credibility Principles help businesses and governments make informed choices about the systems they work with, pushing the schemes to further improve.

Our Community Members cover a wide range of sectors and are active in more than 100 countries, reaching millions of producers and operations. This extensive network of effective sustainability systems is an important part of ISEAL's unique approach.

Review of 2024

Inspiring solutions to sustainability challenges

ISEAL inspires and challenges sustainability systems and their partners to accelerate their impacts on a range of priority sustainability issues. Through our work to foster meaningful dialogue and curate insights, we drive uptake and alignment of good practices.

In 2024, we broadened our efforts, with a particular emphasis on equity, livelihoods, human rights and deforestation. Through collaboration with the Living Income Community of Practice, landscape and jurisdictional networks, and the development of technical solutions for smallholder inclusion, we aimed to create better conditions for market access

This year, the ISEAL Innovations Fund, which was established with cofounders the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs, SECO, was extended to support innovation until 2027 thanks to funding from SECO and UK International Development from the UK government. The Fund continued to accelerate innovation among Community Members and beyond.

Human rights and decent work

ISEAL's efforts in human rights and decent work over the last year have aimed to enhance awareness and support for living wages, remedying abuses of human rights and promoting gender equality through sustainability systems.

ISEAL continued to support the ongoing work of the Global Living Wage Coalition (GLWC) (www.globallivingwage.org) as the host of the GLWC Action Network, a platform dedicated to living wage action, advocacy and learning. GLWC's research partner, the Anker Research Institute, has measured more than 200 living wage values globally and is working to develop a global living wage database.

In 2024, ISEAL concluded a multi-year partnership with the CGIAR Gender Equality Initiative. One key output was a new toolkit to support sustainability

systems in their efforts to advance their thinking and action on gender equality. The toolkit is structured around three levels at which they can tackle gender equality: within their organisation, within standards and certifications, and through programmatic work. It also addresses data-related considerations needed to make progress on gender equality.

Evidensia (www.evidensia.eco), which makes sustainability impacts research easily accessible, continued to underpin much of our work around research and evidence. Evidensia now holds more than 1,500 resources and had over 19,000 new users this year. Through Evidensia we continued to consolidate and synthesise knowledge about the impact of market-based tools.

Research is crucial for enhancing effectiveness and aligning voluntary and mandatory measures, yet there has been little research to understand their impacts on decent work and wages in supply chains. This year, Evidensia published a systematic review authored by Dafni Skalidou and Carlos Oya, in partnership with ISEAL, IDH and Rainforest Alliance, that addressed this gap. The review provided recommendations for sustainability systems to advance decent work outcomes in the agriculture and apparel sectors, as well as highlighting critical areas for future research.

Equity and livelihoods

In 2024 we deepened our focus on equity and livelihoods with increased attention on addressing the inequities faced by small-scale producers, alongside our continued engagement on living income and strategies to close income gaps for producers.

In partnership with the Sustainable Food Lab and GIZ, we expanded the Living Income Community of Practice (LICOP) and its impact. Together, we increased the scope of our activities and accessibility to resources, reaching more than 3,000 subscribers across 120+ countries and welcoming more than 1,000 organisations into the community.

We developed guidance on living income indicators and metrics to ensure a more consistent approach and aligned narrative. We also hosted two workshops focused on engagement and adoption in Latin America, including an in-person workshop in Bogotá, Colombia, that fostered collaboration and knowledge-sharing. We have also been working with LICOP as a catalyst for embedding living income into regulatory and due diligence frameworks.

As part of our work to promote more equitable outcomes in value chains, we engaged with stakeholders in the seafood sector on advancing social responsibility, alongside environmental sustainability initiatives. We also published a series of resources to facilitate dialogue and initiate action on improving the livelihoods of small-scale producers.

In addition, we investigated scalable interventions that establish the conditions for small-scale producers to earn a living income and implement more sustainable production practices that reduce or avoid deforestation. This work will continue next year.

Climate, biodiversity and nature

In 2024, we launched the ISEAL Climate Cohort – a group of ISEAL Community Members who are doubling down on greenhouse gas emissions measurement and innovations to support their members and certified businesses with climate adaptation, target-setting and sustainability reporting.

The Innovations Fund is supporting much of this work. In parallel, ISEAL supports peer learning and exchange between members to encourage alignment and collaboration in these efforts.

We also deepened our engagement with major players in the climate ecosystem, including Greenhouse Gas Protocol, Science Based Targets initiative and the Value Change Initiative. ISEAL's consultation on new chain of custody guidance is of great interest to these actors and the companies they work with because traceability plays an important role in greenhouse gas accounting and reporting rules.

We included actors from the climate space in the working group that supports the new chain

of custody guidance development and received substantial consultation input from the climate community. This input will help broaden the applicability of our guidance. It also provides insight into other ways in which the climate community is looking to ISEAL for guidance, and other ways that ISEAL could support the climate ecosystem.

We have long recognised that complex sustainability issues require holistic, collaborative solutions and that many sustainability issues can only be addressed at a landscape scale. In 2024, we worked with 20 leading landscape practitioner organisations to develop core criteria to identify mature landscape initiatives. The criteria present a roadmap for landscape initiatives to improve their effectiveness and a means for investors and companies to assess the maturity of the initiatives that they engage with.

We also continued our collaboration with a cluster of EU Horizon projects that are developing a benchmark for sustainability certification schemes and labels applicable to bio-based sectors. We support these consortia in following good practice in the benchmarking of sustainability systems and are exploring synergies with existing platforms that are aligned with the ISEAL Code, such as the ITC Standards Map.

Strengthening accuracy, reliability and resilience

We enable and support sustainability schemes to drive innovation and enhance the effectiveness of their systems, from maximising their impact on key sustainability challenges to positioning themselves to support companies in meeting their sustainability commitments and obligations. Our focus spans the key elements of a sustainability system, from the standard's development to sustainability claims.

In 2024, we helped members on technical challenges faced by companies using sustainability systems for due diligence. To explore solutions, we supported Innovations Fund projects on traceability and geospatial data. In addition, we drafted new chain of custody guidance, and supported stakeholders in aligning around new models that support corporate due diligence needs.

We began working with sustainability systems on the role they play in assuring legal production as specified by the EU's regulation on deforestation-free products (EUDR). Beyond the deforestation context, our work also encompasses the detection and verification of human rights risks that include labour rights, and free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) infringements. New Innovations Fund grants support this work, focusing on a range of aspects related to due diligence.

We continued to engage with sustainability systems around a range of assurance topics, including discussing obstacles to effective auditing through, for example, workshops on auditor competence, fraud and social auditing. In support of this, Innovations Fund grants were awarded for projects related to strengthening assurance, and detection and remediation of human rights and social risks.

Broadening the applicability of ISEAL's credibility tools

The ISEAL Code of Good Practice and ISEAL's Credibility Principles serve as a key reference for creating new sustainability systems and enhancing existing ones. Businesses and governments also use these tools to help shape policies and frameworks or choose the most effective systems with which to work.

ISEAL's Credibility Principles and the ISEAL Code are central to our work, and define the values of a credible sustainability system. Following an extensive consultation over the last few years to integrate ISEAL's previous Codes, the ISEAL Code of Good Practice for Sustainability Systems came into effect on 1 March 2024.

The scope of the ISEAL Code has been expanded and now applies to a wider range of sustainability systems. It also responds to the changing demands in the sustainability landscape, with an added focus on claims, gender, data and, recognising new legislation in the EU and elsewhere, due diligence. In addition, the ISEAL Code makes our Credibility Principles more tangible, operationalising what they mean in practice.

We have continued to highlight the importance of credible practices for sustainability systems and how they increase sustainability impact for the businesses

and governments that use them. Following the launch, we created a range of materials to help stakeholders understand what credibility means in the real world through thought leadership podcasts and blogs.

In 2024 we expanded our work on claims, developing a range of guidance materials covering good practices in management of claims and communication about the results of a sustainability system, in particular when making issues-based claims. Building on our living wage claims guidance, we started to work on living income claims. Claims management is increasing in importance as sustainability claims come under greater scrutiny from regulators and the public, so work is also under way to review our claims guidance.

We also carried out a consultation to update our benchmarking good practice guide. Voluntary sustainability systems are benchmarked for a range of purposes. However, benchmarking practices can vary in levels of transparency, robustness and alignment. The revised guide will be published in 2025.

Supporting effective use of credible sustainability systems

The ISEAL Code provides a global reference for businesses and governments to understand what sustainability good practice looks like and how they can recognise this within policies they set and programmes they run.

Responding to regulatory shifts is a priority for sustainability leaders, despite uncertainty in the policy landscape. Navigating this landscape was key in 2024 as we kept abreast of regulatory and policy developments affecting businesses and supply chains.

We provided technical input to policymakers, developing policy and implementation guidance for regulations affecting sustainability systems such as the EUDR, the Green Claims Directive and the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive.

We also highlighted the strong role that sustainability systems can play in supporting business compliance with new regulations and the importance of the smart-mix approach to achieving long-term sustainability impact.

We welcomed the more stringent regulations on claims, as an important step that governments are taking to protect consumers and curb greenwashing. However, through a public briefing note and open letter to EU policymakers, we raised concerns on some aspect of the EU Green Claims Directive.

We also held our first in-person global symposium in five years. The ISEAL Global Sustainability Symposium focused on corporate sustainability due diligence and what effective due diligence and reporting partnerships can look like.

Around 200 policymakers, businesses and experts gathered to discuss the challenges, solutions and role of sustainability systems in ensuring that new due diligence and reporting regulations spread benefits to people and the planet.

In recognition of our independent expertise and broad sectoral understanding, this year we were invited to attend and speak at 67 events across Europe, Asia, Africa, the US and Latin America. We presented on subjects from due diligence to trade, living income to human rights, and net zero to traceability solutions at high-profile industry events in sectors such as mining, textiles and carbon.

One of ISEAL's outreach and engagement goals is to build recognition of our credibility definitions and tools and advocate for the use of credible sustainability systems. Towards this, over the year, we worked with a broad range of organisations including the German Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, World Trade Organization, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, International Food Policy Research Institute, International Trade Centre (ITC), United Nations-affiliated bodies and many more.

We continued to provide technical expertise to support China's green trade goals through a partnership with the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade Commercial Sub-Council and support of the UK-China Cooperation on International Forest Investment and Trade.

Growing a dynamic learning community

Ambitious and transparent sustainability standards and similar systems that aspire to improve and evolve can become ISEAL Community Members. ISEAL members benefit from a range of collaborative forums, shared learning and continuous improvement opportunities.

ISEAL Community Members that aspire to improve further can undergo external evaluation to verify compliance with the ISEAL Code and earn ISEAL Code Compliant status.

Following the launch of the ISEAL Code we are supporting members in the transition to compliance. Existing ISEAL Code Compliant members have 18 months to adapt their systems to comply with the ISEAL Code. We ran webinars, developed a range of guidance materials and established a self-assessment process to prepare and support members during the transition period. ISEAL Community Members that are interested in becoming ISEAL Code Compliant have also been identified and can apply to participate in pilot evaluations against the ISEAL Code.

To support our members and share regulatory insights, we launched a successful policy newsletter, and hosted workshops and coordination calls to foster learning and build collective knowledge. We also enhanced member engagement through a range of subject-specific groups. Our five communities of practice ran 19 sessions, supporting members' learning and development across assurance, claims, data, monitoring and evaluation, and standard-setting.

We hosted an additional traceability learning group for members, exploring traceability accounting and information flow, and first-mile data collection. We continued to convene Community Members to discuss approaches and share solutions to key sustainability issues, including climate action, human rights remediation and the equitable inclusion of smallholders in sustainable value chains.

The in-person Members' Weeks have continued to be very well received. This year we held Members' Week in Cologne. We brought together 134 representatives from 35 members to discuss approaches to tackling issues including forced labour, gender inequality and climate change; the shifting global policy landscape; and emerging innovation and technology that support sustainability systems to drive improvements in supply chain traceability.

Following the Global Sustainability Symposium, we welcomed Community Members to a Community Day. Across the day we dived deeper into symposium topics and enjoyed in-depth discussions related to corporate due diligence, including traceability, risk assessments, remedying human rights harms and the legal requirements of the EUDR.

We also refreshed our training, delivering two courses this year covering the future of assurance for sustainability systems and understanding sustainability systems.

At the end of 2024 we had 49 Community Members and 19 Code Compliant members.

Looking forward

We have reached the end of our original strategy period and entered an extension phase of two years (2025-2026), which was agreed by the ISEAL Board. To guide us we will work to a range of agreed visions of success and milestones.

Driving impact on global issues

Looking ahead, we will champion innovative approaches that improve producer incomes and establish the conditions for small-scale producers to implement sustainable practices and contribute to conservation and sustainable land-use objectives. With the Living Income Community of Practice, we will continue to create engagement spaces to share learning and evidence of effective living income programmes and act as a knowledge hub for stakeholders driving change.

ISEAL's human rights work will focus on supporting Community Members to navigate emerging mandatory due diligence legislation and its implications for human rights protection. Regulations in focus will include the EU's Forced Labour Regulation and the EUDR (specifically its legality requirement). This work will strengthen members' capacity to verify and assure legal compliance in complex human rights areas like forced labour and FPIC.

We will continue to support ISEAL Community Members engaged in climate activities and share learning from the Innovations Fund climate-related projects. Focal areas will include driving incentives, engagement with climate actors on measurement, reporting and verification, and building greater understanding in the climate space about standards and certification.

We will continue to convene the Landscape Practitioner Network to align and collaborate as we move collectively towards scaling landscape and jurisdictional approaches to effectively tackle critical sustainability issues. We will focus on learning from the application of our joint position papers, refining work on landscape-scale measurement and claims, developing aligned value propositions and an issue-based lens on smallholder livelihoods and sustainable land use.

To capture our learning and research on livelihoods, human rights and climate, we will publish a new Innovations Fund report, building on the projects supported by the Fund. We will continue grant-making under the Innovations Fund, focusing on the broad themes of improving equity and livelihoods in sustainable value chains, landscape and jurisdictional approaches, and livelihood improvements and sustainable land use for smallholders.

Supporting innovation

We will support innovation and improvements in sustainability systems, by bolstering our members' data capabilities; working with members to operationalise geolocation data collection, management and use; and supporting our members to strengthen auditor competence within their assurance programmes.

We will use the newly updated guidance on chain of custody models and definitions to support members to strengthen controls on non-certified materials within their chain of custody systems, in response to emerging legislation such as the EUDR.

Delivering credibility expertise

We will revise our good practice guide on claims to reflect the new regulatory framework. It will cover good practices and requirements for claims, including landscape, outcome-based and certification claims.

We also look forward to publishing our revised benchmarking guidance, framing recommendations on key decisions at each stage in the development of a benchmark for sustainability systems.

Supporting effective use of credible sustainability systems

In 2025, we will bring lessons on the challenges of due diligence implementation to policymakers, including running a high-level policy event in Brussels. We will also focus on the implications for sustainability systems of the new regulatory landscape and help our members in navigating these changes.

Through our technical expertise we will set out how sustainability systems contribute to the implementation of due diligence policies for businesses and governments.

We will continue our analysis of the EU Green Claims Directive, coordinating discussions with members and providing insights to guide the direction of the Directive.

Through a workshop in Geneva, we will build trade officials' capacity and understanding of the role of credible sustainability systems in driving sustainable trade. We will also deliver business-focused events on the impacts of sustainability systems on key issues.

Our membership

We have three membership categories:

ISEAL Community Member

- Open to sustainability systems that demonstrate transparency and continuous improvement. All ISEAL members belong to this category.
- Committed to improving their systems, sharing experiences, building trust and demonstrating transparency.
- Not required to participate in ISEAL's compliance programme, but ongoing system improvement is periodically reviewed.
- The emphasis on improvement and the sharing of information is intended to build a community of trust and learning.

ISEAL Code Compliant

- ISEAL Code Compliant status recognises our Community Members that currently adhere to our Standard-Setting, Impacts and Assurance Codes of Good Practice and have committed to adhere to the ISEAL Code of Good Practice for Sustainability Systems (the ISEAL Code), demonstrating a rigorous approach to improvement.

ISEAL Accreditation Member

- Community Members that are accreditation bodies that demonstrate compliance with ISO/IEC 17011:2017 in accordance with the ISEAL Accreditation Member Compliance Procedure.

ISEAL Code Compliant and Accreditation Members are the legal members and guarantors of the Company.

Risk management

The Board of Directors undertakes a regular review of risks facing ISEAL. The risk register is reviewed annually by the board, with support from the Finance Committee. Risk management is an integral part of the senior leadership team's responsibilities.

This process has identified a wide range of risks, and mitigating actions have been taken to manage those risks. The Board of Directors has reviewed the risks and considers the strategies for mitigating the risks to be appropriate.

The key risks ISEAL has identified, together with measures we have in place to mitigate these risks, are shown in the next column.

Principal risks

Relevance

ISEAL and its members operate in a changing landscape connected to sustainable development and market-based approaches to sustainability. ISEAL and its members must keep pace with this change, adapting to maintain their relevance and to ensure they continue to deliver impact and value. To mitigate this, ISEAL proactively engages with policymakers who have a strong influence on the sustainability landscape, identifies opportunities for sustainability systems to increase impacts on sustainability issues, supports sustainability systems to adapt to the changing demands of business and government, and identifies and fills gaps around definitions of credible practices.

Income diversification and security

ISEAL relies heavily on a small number of institutional donors. The loss of a large donor without replacement would be a challenge. To address this, we are focusing on delivery of high-quality programmes and continuing to maintain strong relationships with existing donors, and targeting a range of donors that might individually represent 10-20% of ISEAL's income to build this element of our funding portfolio. The growing membership and unrestricted income from membership fees also mitigate the potential impact of this risk.

People – Being an employer of choice

People are ISEAL's main asset, and ISEAL wishes to be an employer of choice. Staff numbers have grown during 2024. The focus now has moved from recruiting the right people to retaining the organisation's skilled workforce and the knowledge they hold. We are doing this by maintaining a strong culture, investing in, and giving attention to learning, development and progression opportunities for our team.

Structure, governance and management

The organisation of the charity

ISEAL is a company limited by guarantee and a charity registered in England and Wales. It is governed by its articles of association as last amended on 2 November 2023.

Board member appointment and induction

The Board of Directors is comprised of a minimum of three directors, with the maximum number of directors determined by the board. A majority of the directors are elected by members at the Annual General Meeting, with the remaining directors appointed by the board. Board members serve three-year terms and may serve a maximum of three consecutive terms.

The board reviews the skillset of its members regularly and whenever a vacancy arises. Appointments and elections are overseen by the Nominations Committee. Vacancies for elected positions are advertised to members, and for appointed positions are advertised on our website and through our channels as well as through external platforms.

Once elected by the membership or appointed by the board, new board members are inducted by the executive director and other relevant staff members. The board conducts an annual review of its performance. This helps the board to identify and assess the areas of governance that perform well and where improvements may be needed.

Board of Directors purpose and meetings

The board meets at least three times a year and has overall responsibility for the strategic and fiscal management of the organisation. The main tasks of the board are to ensure:

- That the organisation is acting in pursuance of its charitable objectives.
- Public benefit, by providing strategic direction including approving and monitoring strategic plans.

- That ISEAL operates according to its articles of association, in compliance with the Charities Act, and in compliance with international legal frameworks where relevant.
- Responsible management of resources, by providing regular review and assessment of organisational risks, approving and monitoring annual workplans and budgets, and hiring, appraising and setting remuneration for the ISEAL executive director.
- Accountability, by appointing external board members and board committees, and overseeing committee operations; championing diversity, equity and inclusion; appointing the chair of the board; approving the annual audited financial statements; communicating progress to ISEAL members and other key stakeholders; and reporting annually on how the organisation has been managed for the public benefit.

Board sub-committees

The ISEAL Board of Directors has the following sub-committees:

- Executive Committee
- Finance Committee
- Nominations Committee

The following committees report to the board but also have independent decision-making powers:

- Membership Committee
- Technical Committee

The **Executive Committee** provides support to the executive director and facilitates organisational business between board meetings. It is composed of the board chair and up to two additional board members.

The **Finance Committee** consists of between three and eight individuals, including at least two finance directors or equivalents from ISEAL member organisations. The role of committee chair is held by a member of the board.

The committee meets a minimum of four times a year. The external auditors report to the committee at least once a year. Committee duties include the following:

- Considering strategic issues, including planning and risk.
- Reviewing drafts of financial policies, budgets and annual accounts.
- Reviewing the management accounts and statutory accounts.
- Monitoring and advising on internal financial controls.

These functions and activities do not absolve the full Board of Directors of its legal responsibilities.

The **Nominations Committee** consists of two or three board members. Its key responsibility is to manage the appointment and election of board members.

The **Membership Committee** ensures that decisions on ISEAL community membership and decisions on ISEAL member Code compliance are taken consistently, competently and impartially. The committee is composed of five to seven individuals. The committee members are drawn from the staff of ISEAL Community Members. Members of the committee are appointed by decision of the board.

The **Technical Committee** is responsible primarily for technical oversight of the ISEAL Codes of Good Practice and other credibility tools. The committee brings together representatives from both ISEAL members and external stakeholders who have a strong overall understanding of sustainability standards. It is composed of up to nine individuals, of which one-third are staff at a member organisation. Two-thirds are external experts drawn from non-member sustainability initiatives or other stakeholder groups (e.g., businesses, producers, governments, NGOs), or they are independent experts. The Technical Committee has responsibility for approving the content of new and revised Codes. Decisions of the committee are then formally approved by the board of directors, who make their decision based solely on the quality of the Code development or revision process followed.

Management

Day-to-day operation of the organisation is delegated to the executive director and the senior leadership team. The Executive Committee is responsible for assessing the pay and performance of the executive director. All staff remuneration is reviewed annually and regularly benchmarked against externally prepared reports.

Fundraising

ISEAL employs one professional staff member who is tasked with negotiating with institutional donors for contracts and grants for ISEAL to deliver its charitable work. From 2023, in line with the Statement of Recommended Practice, these costs have been reflected under the heading support costs, rather than fundraising costs.

ISEAL does not raise money from the general public. ISEAL does not employ outside fundraising consultants or similar commercial services, nor did ISEAL receive any complaints around fundraising, or the staff engaged in fundraising, in 2024. ISEAL undertook no fundraising requiring disclosure under S162A of the Charities Act in 2024. The majority of ISEAL's charitable income continues to come from institutional sources (foundations/trusts and government bodies) that are not domiciled in the United Kingdom. While ISEAL does not fundraise from individuals, the organisation is in full compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) rules in respect of personal data.

Financial review

Income and funding sources

Total income increased by £1.9m from £4.2m in 2023 to £6.1m in 2024. The increase was primarily the result of increased grant income during the year. A new grant from the UK government for work on smallholder inclusion resulted in £1.3m of income in the year, accounting for over half of the increase.

Unrestricted income also increased from £1.2m to £1.5m, with income from members increasing from £1.1m to £1.3m and a smaller increase in income from other services. ISEAL maintains a healthy balance between restricted and unrestricted income. When income for the Innovations Fund grants is excluded, 31% of ISEAL's income was unrestricted compared to 33% in the prior year.

Expenditure

Expenditure increased from £3.8m to £5.9m, matching the increase in income. Of this £2.1m increase, £0.97m can be attributed to the increase in grant payments from the ISEAL Innovations Fund, which reached £1.4m in the year, having been £0.5m in 2023. In addition to this, staff costs have increased over the year, with average FTE employees for the year increasing from 37 to 50 and salary costs increasing from £2.3m to £3.1m.

Financial position and looking ahead

ISEAL finished the year in a strong position. The increase in income saw a further £302k added to unrestricted reserves, after setting aside £81k for designated purposes. Free reserves at 31 December 2024 are £1.12m, which is equivalent to 3.8 months of salary and overhead costs.

Looking ahead to 2025, ISEAL expects further growth. The people hired during 2024 will be employed over a full year in 2025. Our programme "Tackling Deforestation through Smallholder Livelihood Improvements and Sustainable Land Use" funded by UK International Development from the UK government is expected to increase activity to around £2.9m of income and expenditure. Continued funding from the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) for the programme "Transparency and Innovation of

Sustainability Standards (TISS), Phase 2" will represent £2.6m of income and expenditure in 2025. Both these funders contribute to the Innovations Fund, which is expected to make grants of £2.3m in 2025.

Investment policy

ISEAL has no investments. Current assets are invested in cash deposits.

Reserves policy

The Board of Directors examines ISEAL's requirements for reserves in light of the main risks to the organisation and is satisfied that the current reserves are sufficient to meet ISEAL's funding requirements over the next 12 months. The board regularly reviews the level of reserves as part of its oversight. The board's review in 2024 recognised the significant growth that is underway, with potential risks associated with that. They have set a target reserve so that ISEAL will aim to hold reserves within the range of 3-4 months of ongoing staff and overhead expenditure.

Total funds at the end of 2024 amounted to £1.3m. After deducting balances that have been designated, restricted funds and the charity's small investment in fixed assets, there remains £1.12m of free reserves. This is equivalent to 3.8 months of salary and overhead costs and is close to the top of the board's reserve target.

Going concern

The board has reviewed ISEAL's latest income and expenditure and cash flow forecasts, paying particular attention to the risks to income, reserves and liquidity levels. The board has concluded that there are sufficient reserves held to create a reasonable expectation that ISEAL has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future and that it is therefore appropriate to prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis.

Statement of the Board of Directors' responsibilities

The Board of Directors is responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and UK accounting standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the board to prepare financial statements for each financial year that give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, for that period.

In preparing these financial statements, the board is required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently.
- Observe the methods and principles of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable to the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).
- Make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent.
- State whether applicable UK accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements.
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in operation.

The board is responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. It is also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Statement as to disclosure to our auditors

Each member of the Board of Directors confirms that:

- So far as each board director is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditor is unaware; and
- Each board director has taken all the steps that he/she ought to have taken as a director in order to make himself/herself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charitable company's auditor is aware of that information.
- This confirmation is given and should be interpreted in accordance with the provisions of s418 of the Companies Act 2006.
- The trustees' report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

Approved by the Board of Directors on and signed on its behalf by:


Monika Weber-Fahr (Jun 5, 2025 17:13 GMT+2)

Signed

Monika Weber-Fahr
Trustee/Director, Board Chair

Reference and administrative details

ISEAL Alliance registered details

Registered charity name

ISEAL Alliance

Charity registration number

1199607

Company registration number

04625800

Principal office

The Green House,
244-254 Cambridge Heath Road,
London E2 9DA

Registered office

The Green House,
244-254 Cambridge Heath Road,
London E2 9DA

The ISEAL Board of Directors

The board directors who served the company during the period and since the balance sheet date were:

K Bose | Independent

A Cox | Rainforest Alliance

J D'Cruz | Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil

M Grant | Responsible Jewellery Council

M Kim | Gold Standard

A H Lim | Independent

A McClay | Better Cotton

D Morley | Bonsucro

C Ninnès | Aquaculture Stewardship Council
Chair (resigned 17 June 2024)

L Ramon Sanchez | Forest Stewardship Council
(appointed 6 June 2024)

N Schuler | Independent

M Weber-Fahr | Independent
Chair (appointed 17 June 2024)

Senior leadership team

T Espley

Company Secretary

Dr K Komives

Director, Programmes

K Kreider

Executive Director

P Mallet

Director, Credibility and Innovations

V Rangan

Director, Policy and Engagement
(appointed March 2024)

Advisors

Auditors

Buzzacott LLP,
130 Wood Street,
London, EC2V 6DL

Bankers

Barclays Bank Plc,
89 Charterhouse Street,
London, EC1M 6PE

Independent auditor's report on the financial statements

Independent auditor's report to the members of ISEAL Alliance

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of ISEAL Alliance (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 December 2024 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet, the statement of cash flows, the principal accounting policies and the notes to the financial statements. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 December 2024 and of its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, including the trustees' report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the trustees' report, which is also the directors' report for the purposes of company law, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the trustees' report, which is also the directors' report for the purposes of company law has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' report. We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the trustees' report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out on page 18, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they

give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below.

Our approach to identifying and assessing the risk of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, was as follows:

- The engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks applicable to the charitable company and the sector in which it operates.

We determined that the following laws and regulations were most significant: Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Companies Act 2006, and the Charities Act 2011; and

- We gained an understanding of how the charitable company is complying with those legal and regulatory frameworks by making enquiries of management.

We assessed the susceptibility of the charitable company's financial statements to material misstatement, including obtaining an understanding of how fraud might occur by:

- Making enquiries of management as to where they considered there was susceptibility to fraud, their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud; and
- Considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations.

To address the risk of fraud through management bias and override of controls, we:

- Performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships;
- Reviewed journal entries to identify unusual transactions;
- Performed substantive testing of expenditure including the authorisation thereof;
- Assessed whether judgements and assumptions made in determining the accounting estimates set out in the accounting policies were indicative of potential bias; and
- Investigated the rationale behind significant or unusual transactions.

In response to the risk of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we designed procedures which included, but were not limited to:

- Agreeing financial statements disclosures to underlying supporting documentation;

- Reading the minutes of meetings of trustees; and
- Enquiring as to any actual and potential litigation and claims.

There are inherent limitations in our audit procedures described above. The more removed that laws and regulations are from financial transactions, the less likely it is that we would become aware of non-compliance. Auditing standards also limit the audit procedures required to identify non-compliance with laws and regulations to enquiry of the trustees and other management and the inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any.

Material misstatements that arise due to fraud can be harder to detect than those that arise from error as they may involve deliberate concealment or collusion.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Signed

Catherine Biscoe
Senior Statutory Auditor

For and on behalf of
Buzzacott Audit LLP, Statutory Auditor,
130 Wood Street, London, EC2V 6DL

Date 6 June 2025

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED
31 DECEMBER 2024

Statement of financial activities

(including income and expenditure account)

for the year ended 31 December 2024

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £'000	Restricted Funds £'000	Total Funds 2024 £'000	Total Funds 2023 £'000
Income					
Income from charitable activities	2	1,424	4,650	6,074	4,143
Interest income		32	43	75	38
Total Income		1,456	4,693	6,149	4,181
Expenditure					
Expenditure on charitable activities	3	1,073	4,849	5,922	3,820
Total Expenditure		1,073	4,849	5,922	3,820
Net movement in funds and net income (expenditure)		383	(156)	227	361
Funds at 31 December 2023		915	156	1,071	710
Funds at 31 December 2024		1,298	-	1,298	1,071

	Unrestricted Funds £'000	Restricted Funds £'000	Total Funds 2023 £'000
Income			
Income from charitable activities	1,204	2,939	4,143
Interest income	38	-	38
Total Income	1,242	2,939	4,181
Expenditure			
Expenditure on charitable activities	1,037	2,783	3,820
Total Expenditure	1,037	2,783	3,820
Net movement in funds and net income (expenditure)	205	156	361
Funds at 31 December 2022	710	-	710
Funds at 31 December 2023	915	156	1,071

There were no recognised gains or losses other than those included in the Statement of Financial Activities. All Income and Expenditure derive from continuing activities.

Balance sheet

as at 31 December 2024

	Note	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Fixed Assets			
Tangible assets	10	33	33
Current Assets			
Debtors	11	254	251
Cash at bank and in hand		5,140	5,672
		5,394	5,923
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	12	(4,129)	(4,885)
Net current assets		1,265	1,038
Total assets less total liabilities		1,298	1,071
Funds			
Unrestricted funds - General Funds		1,157	855
Unrestricted funds - Designated Funds	14	141	60
Restricted funds	13	-	156
Total Funds		1,298	1,071

The financial statements on pages 23 to 46 were approved and authorised for issue by the Board of Directors on June 5, 2025 and signed on their behalf by:

Monika Weber-Fahr
Monika Weber-Fahr (Jun 5, 2025 17:13 GMT+2)

Signed

Monika Weber-Fahr
Trustee/Director, Board Chair

Company Registration Number 04625800

Statement of cash flows

for the year ended 31 December 2024

Statement of cash flows

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Cash flows from operating activities:		
Net cash (used in) provided by operating activities	(579)	2,124
Cash flows from investing activities:		
Interest income	75	38
Purchase of fixtures and equipment	(28)	(21)
Net cash provided by investing activities	47	17
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period		
Cash flows	(571)	2,148
Foreign exchange movements	39	(7)
	(532)	2,141
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period	5,672	3,531
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period	5,140	5,672

Reconciliation of net income to net cash flow from operating activities

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Net income for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)	227	361
Adjustments for:		
Amortisation and depreciation charges	28	27
Loss on the sale of fixed assets	-	1
Interest Income	(75)	(38)
(Increase) in debtors	(3)	(47)
(Decrease) / increase in creditors	(756)	1,820
Net cash (used in) provided by operating activities	(579)	2,124

Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Cash in hand	5,140	5,672
Total cash and cash equivalents	5,140	5,672

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

1. Principal accounting policies

Statutory information

ISEAL Alliance is a company limited by guarantee and is incorporated in the United Kingdom. The registered office address is The Green House, 244-254 Cambridge Heath Road, London, E2 9DA. ISEAL was incorporated on 30 December 2002 (registered number 04625800) and was registered as a charity on 8 July 2022 (charity number 1199607). ISEAL is governed under its Articles of Association (amended 2 November 2023).

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (Charities SORP FRS 102), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011. The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

The financial statements have been prepared on the historical cost basis and are presented in Pounds Sterling rounded to the nearest thousand pounds. The functional currency of the charity is Pounds Sterling because that is the currency of the primary economic environment in which it operates. Comparative information is displayed for the year ended 31 December 2023.

Going concern

The Directors have assessed whether the use of the going concern assumption is appropriate in preparing these financial statements. The Directors have made this assessment in respect of a period of one year from the date of approval of these financial statements.

The Directors consider that there are no material uncertainties about ISEAL's ability to continue as a going concern. The Directors approve annual budgets and periodic forecasts to ensure that there is sufficient working capital to meet the charity's obligations over the subsequent 12 months. ISEAL meets its ordinary working

capital requirements through existing cash balances. The Directors are of the opinion that, despite current inherent uncertainties, there is no significant threat that ISEAL will not be a going concern or be unable to meet its current commitments for a period of at least twelve months from the date of signature of these financial statements.

Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgement

Preparation of the financial statements requires the Directors and management to make significant judgements and estimates. The items in the financial statements where these judgements and estimates have been made include:

- Estimating the liability for multiyear project grant commitments, including how much income to defer or accrue and how much income to recognise from the project grant to cover support costs
- Estimating the useful economic life of tangible fixed assets

Income

Income represents annual subscriptions received from members, grant income from foundations and government agencies and income from other projects and events.

Annual membership subscriptions' income is recognised over the year to which it relates. The membership year is the same as the accounting year.

Income from grants is included within income when it is receivable, except as follows:

- When donors specify that grants given to ISEAL must be used in future accounting periods, the income is deferred until those periods.
- When donors impose conditions, which must be fulfilled before ISEAL becomes entitled to use such income, and those conditions have not been met, the income is deferred and not included in income until the pre-conditions for use have been met.

In the absence of specific milestones or other conditions to determine entitlement, income is recognised to the extent that resources have been committed to the specific project, as this is considered to be a reliable estimate of the right to receive payment for the work performed. In this case, cash received in excess of expenditure is included as a creditor (deferred income) and expenditure in excess of cash included as a debtor (accrued income).

Expenditure

Resources expended are included in the Statement of Financial Activities on an accrual basis, inclusive of VAT that cannot be recovered. Since 1st August 2021, ISEAL has been registered for VAT. Input tax is partially recovered on a business: non-business basis.

Expenditure on charitable activities comprises expenses incurred on the defined charitable priority of the charity and include staff costs attributable to the charitable activities.

Support costs represent indirect charitable expenditure. In order to carry out the primary purposes of the charity it is necessary to provide support in the form of financial, human resource, office and IT infrastructure, as well as governance and leadership functions.

Where the donor agrees, then support costs are allocated to charitable activities in two steps. First an allocation is made, based on the staff days working on a project. Then a 15% mark-up is applied to the total of the related costs - excluding Innovations Fund Subgrant payments. The allocation of support costs is managed, so that costs are fully allocated, but no surplus or deficit results. Where a donor requires that ISEAL deviates from this method, then the donor rules are applied for the management of those funds

Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by ISEAL; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

Operating leases

Rental charges are charged on a straight-line basis over the term of the lease.

Monetary assets

Monetary assets and liabilities in foreign currencies are translated into pounds sterling at the rates of exchange ruling at the balance sheet date. Transactions in foreign currencies are translated into pounds sterling at the rate of exchange ruling at the date of transaction. Exchange differences are taken into account in arriving at the surplus or deficit for the period.

Financial Instruments

ISEAL only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value.

Tangible Fixed Assets

Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £1,000. Assets are reviewed for impairment if circumstances indicate their carrying value may exceed their net realisable value and value in use.

Depreciation is calculated to write down the cost less estimated residual value of all property, plant and equipment, other than freehold land, over their expected useful lives, using the straight-line method. The rates applicable are:

Fixtures and fittings	25% straight line
Equipment	33% straight line
Leasehold improvements	Over the period of the lease

Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a maturity of less than 3 months.

Creditors

Short term trade creditors are measured at the transaction price. Other financial liabilities are measured initially at fair value, net of transaction costs, and are measured subsequently at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Grants payable

Grants payable are made to third parties in furtherance of the ISEAL Innovations Fund projects. Grants are accounted for when the recipient has a reasonable expectation that they will receive a grant and the ISEAL Innovations Fund has agreed to pay the grant without condition.

Taxation

As a registered charity, there is no liability for income or corporation tax on income derived from charitable activities.

Pensions

ISEAL makes payments to defined contribution pension schemes on behalf of employees who wish to join. The assets of these schemes are held separately from those of ISEAL in independently administered funds. The pension cost charge represents contributions payable to the funds during the year. ISEAL has no liability under the schemes other than the payment of those contributions.

Fund accounting

Restricted funds comprise monies raised for, or their use restricted to, a specific purpose, or contributions subject to donor-imposed conditions. Details of the specific restricted funds held by the charitable company are detailed in note 13.

Unrestricted funds represent those monies which are freely available for application towards achieving any charitable purpose that falls within the charitable company's charitable objects.

Designated funds comprise monies set aside by the directors out of unrestricted funds for specific future purposes or project.

2. Income from charitable activities

	2024	2023
	£'000	£'000
Restricted income		
Grants from government entities to fund projects	3,588	1,882
Grants from other charitable institutions to fund projects	1,062	1,057
Restricted income from charitable activities	4,650	2,939
Unrestricted income		
Members' contributions	1,273	1,117
Compliance and Services Fees	151	87
Total unrestricted income	1,424	1,204
Total income from charitable activities	6,074	4,143

Restricted grant income from donors was as follows:

	2024	2023
	£'000	£'000
Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs SECO	2,122	1,559
CGIAR International Food Policy Research Institute	146	152
CGIAR Bioversity International	17	27
UK International Development from the UK government	1,277	-
UNDP-led Good Growth Partnership, under the GEF-funded Food Systems, Land Use and Restoration (FOLUR) Impact Program	69	76
GIZ	19	112
Fairtrade USA and Ethical Tea Partnership	-	16
UKRI - Horizon Europe Guarantee	101	106
IDH - the Sustainable Trade Initiative	4	114
IDH - the Sustainable Trade Initiative & Rainforest Alliance	3	60
ISEAL Members	33	33
[Dutch] Ministry of Foreign Affairs	-	29
The David and Lucile Packard Foundation	43	308
Walmart Foundation	661	341
Walton Family Foundation	155	6
	4,650	2,939

3. Expenditure on charitable activities analysed by strategic priority

	Grant payments made £'000	Activities undertaken directly £'000	Support costs £'000	2024 £'000
Inspiring solutions to sustainability challenges	762	1,098	501	2,361
Strengthening accuracy, reliability and resilience	716	489	224	1,429
Broadening the applicability of ISEAL's credibility tools	-	174	77	251
Supporting effective use of credible sustainability systems	-	788	314	1,102
Growing a dynamic learning community	-	467	248	715
Organisational Resilience	-	51	13	64
	1,478	3,067	1,377	5,922

	Grant payments made £'000	Activities undertaken directly £'000	Support costs £'000	2023 £'000
Inspiring solutions to sustainability challenges	231	695	328	1,254
Strengthening accuracy, reliability and resilience	231	348	176	755
Broadening the applicability of ISEAL's credibility tools	-	231	110	341
Supporting effective use of credible sustainability systems	-	466	176	642
Growing a dynamic learning community	-	513	291	804
Organisational Resilience	-	15	9	24
	462	2,268	1,090	3,820

Support costs have been allocated to strategic priority by a combination of the staff time spent directly on the related activities, and the total direct costs of those activities.

4. Grant making / ISEAL Innovation Fund

The ISEAL Innovations Fund encourages institutional grantees to explore new, ambitious ways to boost the impact and value of sustainability systems, driving experimentation and innovation. Grants made by the Fund generate valuable insights on a range of themes central to making sustainability systems more efficient, effective and inclusive. Themes include leveraging data and technology, risk-based approaches to assurance, addressing producer needs, and delivering impact at landscape level. Results from Fund projects are shared, including through live workshops.

Key outputs from the Fund's past portfolio of projects can be found here:

isealliance.org/innovations-fund/explore-projects

	2024	2023
	£'000	£'000
The total grants recognised during the year amounted to	1,478	461
Grant commitments outstanding at the end of the year amounted to	1,972	508

All grant commitments are expected to be settled within 4 years (2023 - 3 years), using restricted funds received or contracted to be received from ISEAL's donors.

Grants made during the year were as follows:

Grantee	Grant project	2024 £'000
CNG-Climate Neutral	Strengthening knowledge on insetting practices	9
Copper Mark	Artisanal and small-scale copper mining in Peru	9
Marin Trust	Comprehensive evaluation of environmental impacts and compliance barriers in the MarinTrust programme: a focus on Improver Programme factories	4
Goodweave	Detecting forced labour in supply chains: effective assessment methodologies	36
Better Cotton	Promoting robust GHG accounting, reporting, claims and incentives: approaches for agricultural commodity supply chains	17
Assurance Services International	Smart assurance: From global monitoring to local action - Validating compliance through combining satellite-based monitoring and AI-driven insight generation with response mechanisms	36
Union of Ethical Biotrade	DoSomething: Enhancing access to remedy for human rights violations in the botanicals sector	9
Sustainable Agricultural Network	Expansion of Blueprint sustainability assessment to build a common territorial agenda	33
Aquaculture Stewardship Council	ESG compliance and financing within the seafood sector	46
GoodWeave	Enable and strengthen remediation solutions to child labour	49
Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil	Addressing constraints to continued smallholder participation in EUDR supply chains (traceability and compliance)	48
Union of Ethical Biotrade	Adapting data platforms to feed company due diligence reporting needs and company-owned platforms	42

4. Grant making / ISEAL Innovation Fund (continued)

Grants made during the year were as follows (continued):

		2024 £'000
Grantee	Grant project	
Sustainable Rice Platform	Low- Carbone Module	45
Round Table on Responsible Soy	Regenerative Incentives System	43
Bonsucro	Development of tools and practices to drive climate action	45
The Copper Mark	Sectoral decarbonisation approach for copper	41
Roundtable on Sustainable Biomaterials	Book-and-claim registry eco-system development	50
Responsible Jewellery Council	GHG baseline assessment and gap analysis	19
Aluminium Stewardship Initiative	IPLC and Bauxite Mine Rehabilitation Project	35
Initiative for Responsible Mining Assurance	FPIC and Audit Accountability: improving assessment processes to reflect Indigenous Peoples' rights in transitions minerals supply chains	54
Aquaculture Stewardship Council	More Power to the People: Changing power dynamics in certification systems through community-based environmental monitoring	53
Monterey Bay Aquarium	Worker Engagement in Seafood: identification, assessment and recommendations for improvements to worker engagement mechanisms in fishing, aquaculture and seafood processing	65
4C Services	Fostering Social Auditing: Enhancing Issue Detection and Risk Identification through Responsive and Context-Specific Approaches	53
Responsible Steel	Exploring the role of standards in driving a responsible transition in steel and mining	36
Better Cotton Initiative	Improving wage transparency in cotton: Farm-level wage sampling tool	25
Better Cotton Initiative	Geospatial Information Technology for Outcome Verification (GIT4OV) paving the way to improve smallholder livelihoods	66
Union of Ethical Bio Trade	Botanicals premiums for local livelihoods	70
Fairtrade International	Sustainable Traceability for Empowered Producers (STEP): Harmonizing traceability standards to enhance producer resilience and transparency in global supply chains	52
Roundtable on Sustainable Biomaterials	Impact incentive market signal research	70
Sustainable Fibre Alliance	Information flows to empower pastoral households: small-scale cashmere production in Mongolia	53
Aluminium Stewardship Council	CARE: Collective Action for Recycling and Empowerment	60
Better Cotton Initiative	ReACT – Resilience through Collective Action, Sustainable Healthcare Access for Cotton Smallholder Farmers	59
Fairtrade International	Piloting Data Ownership with Cocoa Cooperatives in Ghana	75
Forest Stewardship Council	Creating partnerships for research and test impact verification framework in Indigenous and traditional communities	25
Other grants		
Sustainable Food lab	Collectively Building Pathways to Living Income through Common Tools and Global Exchange	46
Total grants made		1,478

Included in the above list are grants made in swiss francs, with a value of CHF 1024 k (2023 - CHF 509 k)

4. Grant making / ISEAL Innovation Fund (continued)

Grants made by the Fund during 2023 were as follows:

		2023 £'000
Grantee	Grant project	
Climate Neutral	Strengthening knowledge on insetting practices	9
Copper Mark	Artisanal and small-scale copper mining in Peru	9
Marin Trust	Comprehensive evaluation of environmental impacts and compliance barriers in the MarinTrust programme: a focus on Improver Programme factories	4
Goodweave	Detecting forced labour in supply chains: effective assessment methodologies	36
Better Cotton	Promoting robust GHG accounting, reporting, claims and incentives: approaches for agricultural commodity supply chains	53
Assurance Services International	Smart assurance: From global monitoring to local action - Validating compliance through combining satellite-based monitoring and AI-driven insight generation with response mechanisms and UAV-supported ground truth	36
Union of Ethical BiTrade	DoSomething: Enhancing access to remedy for human rights violations in the botanicals sector	27
Sustainable Agricultural Network	Expansion of Blueprint sustainability assessment to build a common territorial agenda	32
Global Infrastructure Basel	Due diligence multilevel reporting	48
Rainforest Alliance	Embedding worker-led approaches to human rights due diligence into agricultural sustainability systems	48
Fairtrade International	Facilitating rightsholder dialogue in human rights and environmental due diligence	64
Forest Stewardship Council	Development of traceability systems equipped for the transfer of climate related data across complex supply chains	48
Sustainable Biomass Programme	Joining efforts in a Risk Information Alliance	47
Total grants made		461

5. Support costs

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Finance & professional	407	380
Human resources	198	171
Occupancy	139	119
IT and systems	144	106
Communications	271	110
Programme development	103	96
Governance	115	108
	1,377	1,090

6. Governance costs

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Staff costs	93	104
Other costs	22	4
	115	108

7. Net income / expenditure

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
ISEAL's net income / expenditure is stated after crediting or charging:		
Fees payable to the auditors for statutory audit	24	22
Fees payable to the auditors for grant audits	10	6
Fees payable to the auditors for other services	2	-
Operating lease charges - land and building	44	43
Net gains / losses on foreign currency translations	39	(7)
Loss on fixed asset disposal	-	1
Depreciation	28	27

8. Employees

Staff costs during the year were as follows:

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Wages and salaries	2,693	1,937
Social security costs	277	215
Pension	118	99
Other remuneration	1	-
	3,089	2,251

The number of staff employed by ISEAL during the year was as follows:

	2024	2023
Full Time Equivalent during the year	50	37
Headcount during the year	56	39

The number of employees whose emoluments amounted to over £60,000 in the year was as follows:

	2024	2023
£60,000 - £69,999	2	5
£70,000 - £79,999	4	2
£80,000 - £89,999	-	-
£90,000 - £99,999	1	1
£100,000 - £109,999	1	1
£110,000 - £119,999	1	-
£150,000 - £159,999	1	1

Key management personnel are defined as the Directors and the senior leadership team.
The Directors receive no remuneration.

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Salary, pension and other benefits received by five senior leadership team members	610	539

9. Directors' expenses

	2024	2023
	£	£
ISEAL met travel expenses incurred by five directors (2023: three) in the charity's business totalling	2,942	555

ISEAL has paid for the management liability insurance for the Directors and its key employees with regard to their actions on behalf of ISEAL.

	2024	2023
	£	£
The insurance policy provided cover of £2m at a cost of	4,993	5,064

10. Tangible fixed assets

	Leasehold improvements	Fixtures and fittings	Equipment	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Cost				
At 1 January 2024	9	53	114	176
Additions	-	-	28	28
Disposals / write offs	(4)	-	(1)	(5)
At 31 December 2024	5	53	141	199
Depreciation				
At 1 January 2024	8	53	82	143
Charge for the year	1	-	27	28
Disposals / write offs	(4)	-	(1)	(5)
At 31 December 2024	5	53	108	166
Net book value				
At 31 December 2024	-	-	33	33
At 31 December 2023	1	-	32	33

11. Debtors

	2024	2023
	£'000	£'000
Trade debtors	31	20
Other debtors	8	8
Accrued income	193	208
Prepayments	22	15
	254	251

Accrued income includes the following amount from restricted grant donors

2024	2023
£'000	£'000
193	138

12. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2024	2023
	£'000	£'000
Trade creditors	85	72
Tax and social security creditor	57	106
Deferred income		
Advance payments from donors	3,544	4,205
Other deferred income	7	45
Grant instalments payable	245	256
Accruals	191	201
	4,129	4,885

Deferred income includes £3,544,000 (2023:£4,205,000) in relation to amounts received for restricted projects in excess of the level of performance delivered.

Movements in deferred income were as follows:

	2024	2023
	£'000	£'000
Deferred income brought forward	4,250	2,869
Amount released to income in the year	(4,250)	(2,869)
Amount deferred in the year	3,551	4,250
Balance at year end	3,551	4,250

13. Movement on restricted funds

Funder (see note 2 for full details)	Project note	Balance 1 January 2024 £'000	Income £'000	Expenditure £'000	Balance 31 December 2024 £'000
Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs, SECO	1	-	2,141	(2,141)	-
UK International Development from the UK government	2	-	1,278	(1,278)	-
Walmart Foundation	3	-	532	(532)	-
The Walton Family Foundation	4	-	159	(159)	-
The David and Lucile Packard Foundation	5	156	-	(156)	-
Walmart Foundation	6	-	148	(148)	-
CGIAR International Food Policy Research Institute	7	-	146	(146)	-
UNDP-led Good Growth Partnership, under the GEF-funded Food Systems, Land Use and Restoration (FOLUR) Impact Program	8	-	69	(69)	-
UKRI - Horizon Europe Guarantee	9	-	54	(54)	-
UKRI - Horizon Europe Guarantee	10	-	47	(47)	-
The David and Lucile Packard Foundation	11	-	43	(43)	-
ISEAL members	12	-	33	(33)	-
CGIAR Bioversity International	13	-	17	(17)	-
GIZ	14	-	19	(19)	-
IDH - The Sustainable Trade Initiative & Rainforest Alliance	15	-	3	(3)	-
IDH - The Sustainable Trade Initiative	16	-	4	(4)	-
		156	4,693	(4,849)	-

13. Movement on restricted funds (continued)

Funder (see note 2 for full details)	Project note	Balance 1 January 2023 £'000	Income £'000	Expenditure £'000	Balance 31 December 2023 £'000
Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs SECO	1	-	1,559	(1,559)	-
Walmart Foundation	3	-	324	(324)	-
CGIAR International Food Policy Research Institute	7	-	152	(152)	-
The David and Lucile Packard Foundation	17	-	115	(115)	-
IDH - the Sustainable Trade Initiative	18	-	114	(114)	-
GIZ	19	-	112	(112)	-
UKRI - Horizon Europe Guarantee	9	-	91	(91)	-
UNDP-led Good Growth Partnership, under the GEF-funded Food Systems, Land Use and Restoration (FOLUR) Impact Program	8	-	76	(76)	-
IDH - the Sustainable Trade Initiative & Rainforest Alliance	15	-	60	(60)	-
The David and Lucile Packard Foundation	11	-	35	(35)	-
ISEAL Members	12	-	33	(33)	-
[Dutch] Ministry of Foreign Affairs	20	-	29	(29)	-
CGIAR Bioversity International	13	-	27	(27)	-
Walmart Foundation	6	-	17	(17)	-
Fairtrade USA and Ethical Tea Partnership	21	-	16	(16)	-
UKRI - Horizon Europe Guarantee	10	-	15	(15)	-
Walton Family Foundation	4	-	6	(6)	-
The David and Lucile Packard Foundation	5	-	158	(2)	156
		-	2,939	(2,783)	156

13. Movement on restricted funds (continued)

The restricted funds relate to donors who have funded specific projects as follows:

Notes (project names):

1. Transparency and Innovation of Sustainability Standards, Phase II
2. Tackling Deforestation through smallholder livelihood improvements and sustainable land use
3. Strengthening Certification Systems to deliver on Deforestation and Conversion Free Goals
4. Improving Equity and Livelihoods in Sustainable Value Chains through Producer Empowerment
5. Improving Understanding and Scaling Action on Equity and Livelihoods
6. Strengthening supplier engagement in landscape and jurisdictional initiatives
7. Rethinking food markets and value chains for inclusion and sustainability
8. Good Growth Partnership under the GEF Funded Food Systems, Land Use and Restoration (FOLUR) Impact Program
9. Sustainability Transition Assessment Rules for Bio-Based Systems (STAR4BBS)
10. Concise Consumer communication through robust labels for bio-based systems (3-CO)
11. General support to the uptake of sustainability systems and ISEAL's credibility tools
12. Engagement in China, pesticide management, living wage
13. Harnessing gender and social equality for resilience in agrifood
14. Scaling the Living Income concept, through collaboration and action, to deliver a decent standard of living
15. Effectiveness of supply chain sustainability approaches to deliver decent work goals: a systematic review
16. Framework Guidance on making and understanding credible living income claims
17. Supporting Chinese commitments towards deforestation-free commodity supply chains
18. Supporting effective measurement, verification and improvement of living wage gaps - phase 2
19. Scaling the Living Income concept, through collaboration and action, to deliver a decent standard of living
20. Advancing thinking and action on access to remedy through sustainability standards and systems
21. Background study for developing a living wage benchmark for tea-growing regions of Assam and West Bengal, India

14. Designated reserve

Designated funds have been established as follows:

	Fund note	1 January 2024 £'000	Transfers Into the fund during the year £'000	Expenditure £'000	31 December 2024 £'000
ISEAL's Codes and credibility assets	1	60	-	(3)	57
Support Cost Management Fund	2	-	84	-	84
		60	84	(3)	141

Movements on designated funds in 2023 were as follows:

	Fund note	1 January 2023 £'000	Transfers Into the fund during the year £'000	Expenditure £'000	31 December 2023 £'000
ISEAL's Codes and credibility assets	1	60	-	-	60
		60	-	-	60

The purpose and planned use of each fund is as follows:

1. To pay for work revising the ISEAL Code, and related guidance materials which support the Code's application, which occurs on a multi-year cycle of approximately 10 years.
2. Where a donor recognises the allocation of support costs on a different basis to ISEAL's usual basis, and it is expected that support costs will be under recovered in future years, then funds are designated in order to manage this timing difference. The funds will be drawn down to cover the support costs that will not be recognised by the donor, in the future years of the projects. The funds currently designated are expected to be drawn upon within the next 4 years.

15. Analysis of net assets between funds

	2024 General Unrestricted Funds £'000	2024 Designated Unrestricted Funds £'000	2024 Restricted Funds £'000	2024 Total Funds £'000
Fund balances at 31 December 2024 as represented by:				
Tangible fixed assets	33	-	-	33
Current assets	1,710	141	3,543	5,394
Current liabilities	(586)	-	(3,543)	(4,129)
Total net assets	1,157	141	-	1,298

	2023 General Unrestricted Funds £'000	2023 Designated Unrestricted Funds £'000	2023 Restricted Funds £'000	2023 Total Funds £'000
Fund balances at 31 December 2023 as represented by:				
Tangible fixed assets	33	-	-	33
Current assets	1,502	60	4,361	5,923
Current liabilities	(680)	-	(4,205)	(4,885)
Total net assets	855	60	156	1,071

16. SECO Fund statement

Transparency and innovation of sustainability standards Phase 2

	Deferred income 1 January 2024	Receipts	Interest income	Expenditure	Exchange differences	Deferred income 31 December 2024
	£'000	£'000		£'000	£'000	£'000
Transparency and Innovation of Sustainability Standards, Phase 2						
Innovations Programme	1,083	1,444	19	(1,238)	-	1,308
Innovations Fund	1,510	697	-	(903)	(82)	1,222
	CHF '000	CHF '000	CHF '000	CHF '000	CHF '000	CHF '000
Transparency and Innovation of Sustainability Standards, Phase 2						
Innovations Programme	1,175	1,600	21	(1,389)	-	1,407
Innovations Fund	1,691	800	-	(1,024)	-	1,467

	Deferred income 1 January 2023	Receipts	Interest income	Expenditure	Exchange differences	Deferred income 31 December 2023
	£'000	£'000		£'000	£'000	£'000
Transparency and Innovation of Sustainability Standards, Phase 2						
Innovations Programme	1,162	964	-	(1,043)	-	1,083
Innovations Fund	1,061	877	-	(511)	84	1,511
	CHF '000	CHF '000	CHF '000	CHF '000	CHF '000	CHF '000
Transparency and Innovation of Sustainability Standards, Phase 2						
Innovations Programme	1,320	1,100	-	(1,245)	-	1,175
Innovations Fund	1,200	1,000	-	(509)	-	1,691

17. Related party transactions

The ISEAL Innovations Fund has awarded grants equivalent to £1,431,853 (2023: £461,363) primarily to ISEAL members. Outstanding commitments in respect these grants at 31 December 2024 amounted to £1,837,605 (2023 : £507,903) Further details of the grants awarded can be found in note 4 above, and on the charity's website at <https://isealliance.org/innovations-fund/explore-projects>

Directors' expenses were paid as described in note 9.

There were no other related party transactions to disclose for 2024 (2023: none).

ISEAL is ultimately controlled by its members. No one member has more than 5% of the voting rights at a general meeting, so there is no single controlling party.

Some board members hold senior executive positions within member organisations, as indicated within the trustees report. All transactions between ISEAL and its members are at the same arms-length terms.

18. Operating lease commitments

ISEAL has a lease for office space, which runs through to March 2026, although it may be terminated with four months' notice. If not so terminated, future rental payments will be:

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Due within one year	40	39
Due within two to five years	10	49

19. Company limited by guarantee

Every guarantor member of ISEAL undertakes to contribute to the assets of ISEAL in the event of ISEAL being wound up while they are a guarantor member, such amounts as may be required not exceeding £10.

20. Post balance sheet events and going concern

The Directors have determined that there are no related post balance sheet events affecting the figures or disclosures in these financial statements.



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