

# CENTRE FOR URBAN GREENERY AND ECOLOGY LAUNCHES CUGE STANDARDS FOR THE INDUSTRY

Text by Angelia Sia

Head, Standards & Information Management (Centre for Urban Greenery and Ecology, Research)

Technical Standards have been in existence for more than a hundred years. The American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME), one of the oldest professional standards body founded in 1880, specifies a Standard as a set of technical definitions and guidelines that functions as instructions for designers, manufacturers, operators, or users. This becomes a Code when it has been adopted by a governmental body and is enforceable by law, or when it has been incorporated into a business contract. Many standards organisations today give it a broader definition. Standards can refer to the specifications of a product, a system or its components, a precise method of testing, a standard practice, a procedure for performing operations or functions or a general guide which does not require a specific course of action.

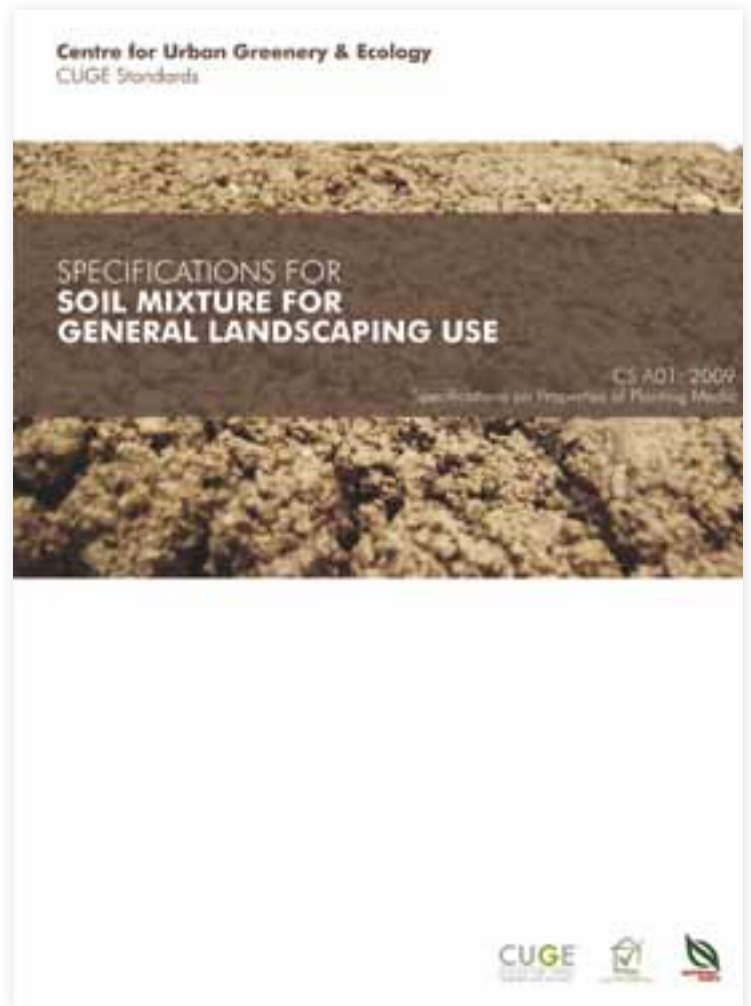
Standards are usually developed by Standards Developing Organisations. They range from International Standards Organisations, Regional Standards Organisations, National Standards Bodies and Sector Based Standards Developing Organisations. National Standards Bodies are generally one-per-country, as compared to several-per-country for Sector Based Standards Developing Organisations. Large economies like the United States and Japan feature several hundred Standards Developing Organisations.

In Singapore, our National Standards Body, SPRING, oversees Standards in eight key

sectors. They are building and construction, chemical, electrical and electronic, food manufacturing, general engineering and safety, information technology, management systems and medical technology.

To address the lack of explicit standards for the horticulture and landscape industry in Singapore, the Centre for Urban Greenery and Ecology (CUGE) initiated work, some months ago, on formalising specifications and practices in this sector. We envisage to encompass five key aspects: Properties of Planting Media, Landscape Construction & Management practices, Skyrise Greenery guidelines, Urban Ecology guidelines, and Landscape Design guidelines. The first to be launched were the "Specifications for Soils for General Landscaping Use" and "Specifications for Composts and Mulches". They are under the "CUGE Standards on Properties of Planting Media", which specifies the physical and chemical properties of growing media.

We hope to promote best practices and consistent operational procedures in the landscape and horticulture industry through the CUGE Standards that we roll out. This is part of CUGE's efforts towards being the regional repository of best practices in tropical urban greening and the lead training provider for the landscape industry workforce.



How CUGE develops the CUGE Standards

- 1 IDENTIFY THE NEED.
- 2 FORM THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE.  
Members are selected based on their technical expertise and experience. May involve external agencies and companies.
- 3 TECHNICAL COMMITTEE DEVELOPS THE CONTENT OF THE STANDARD.  
Industry players may be consulted at this stage.
- 4 REVIEW PANEL REVIEWS AND ENDORSES THE STANDARD.  
The CUGE Standard Review Panel comprises: Dr. Leong Chee Chiew (Dy. CEO, Professional Development & Services Cluster), Mr. P Teva Raj (Director, CUGE), Mr. Michael Teh (Council Member of Singapore landscape Industry Council, Chairman of Landscape Industry Association, Singapore), Mr. Henry Steed (Council Member of Singapore landscape Industry Council, President of Singapore Institute of Landscape Architects)
- 5 CUGE PUBLISHES THE STANDARD.

TOP The CUGE Standards on *Soil Mixture for General Landscaping Use CS A01:2009* and *Composts and Mulches CS A02:2009* can be purchased from the Singapore Botanic Gardens Library Shop.