

1.0 PURPOSE

This procedure applies to producers, producer organizations or companies (hereinafter referred to as company) that have applied for USB Certification to the Rainforest Alliance (hereinafter referred to as RA) within the scope of Farm and Supply Chain Certifications in accordance with the *"RA 2020 Certification Rules"* and *"RA 2020 Auditing Rules"* it aims to define and document all transactions from the conclusion of the contract to the preparation of the contract.

2.0 SCOPE

This procedure covers all processes from the application for USB Certification to the preparation of the contract within the scope of Farm and Supply Chain Certifications according to the *"RA 2020 Certification Rules"* and *"RA 2020 Auditing Rules"*.

3.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

Following titles listed in Table 1 are responsible for the implementation of this procedure.

| Title | Abbreviation |
|--|-----------------------|
| Food and Agriculture Certification Manager | Certification Manager |
| Agriculture Schemes Manager | Schemes Manager |
| Programme Manager (Rainforest Alliance) | Program Manager |
| Operations Manager | - |
| Operations Responsible | - |
| Operations Assistant | - |
| Client Relations and Planning Responsible | CRP Responsible |
| Client Relations and Planning Assistant | CRP Assistant |
| Database Administrator | - |

Table 1: Responsibilities and their abbreviations used in this document.

The Program Manager (RA) also serves as the Database Administrator.

4.0 PROCEDURE

4.1 Receiving the Application

4.1.1 After the first contact (e-mail, telephone, etc.) with the company, the final version of the *"Certification Application Form (CAF)"* for the requested scope is sent to the company by the CRP Responsible or CRP Assistant. The form to be used according to the scopes is shown below;

- *"Certification Application Form (CAF)-Farm Groups"* for Farm Groups certification
- *"Certification Application Form (CAF)-Single and Multi- Farm"* for Single and Multi-Farm certification
- *"Certification Application Form (CAF)-Supply Chain"* for Supply Chain certification

4.1.2 Filling the *"Certification Application Form (CAF)"* from the company completely and signed. Mandatory documents, company legal documents, and previous certificate, if any, to be forwarded to the certification body specified in the "Application Form" tab. It is requested to send it to the CRP Assistant together with it. Companies applying for a supply chain audit will also receive the SCRA verification level email.

4.1.3 CRP Assistant saves the informations in the “*Certification Application Form (CAF)*” filled in by the company to the USB Quality Portal system.

4.1.4 CRP Assistant will contact the company at least 2 months before the planned and recorded in the “*Agricultural Audit Schedule*” audit date for recertification applications, and in case of a request to continue RA certification, an updated “*Certification Application Form (CAF)*” is sent according to the requested scope.

4.2 Review of the Application

4.2.1 The “*Certification Application Form (CAF)*” and its accompanying documents are reviewed by the Operation Responsible. The questions defined in the “CAF Review Questions” section of the “*Application Review Form*” are made by Operation Responsible. If the answer to any of the “CAF Review Questions” is “No”, this situation is notified to the company by the CRP Assistant to give information to the company. In order to submit a bid, the company is requested to complete the necessary information and a review is made with the newly submitted information.

4.2.2 During the review, the specific certification rules in the “*RA 2020 Certification Rules*” are also checked (clause 2.2 for farm audit applications, clause 3.2 for supply chain audit applications)

4.2.3 In addition, for the review for supply chains;

- It is evaluated according to the verification level table in the “*Planning Procedure*” Article 4.1 and “*RA 2020 Certification Rules - Table CR 9*” documents.
- If a company changes its verification level from A to B-E or from B-E to A within the 3-year cycle, it starts the certification year again.
- In some cases, companies may apply for a lower verification level under the conditions specified in the incentives section of the “*RA 2020 Certification Rules*” document.
- In years when no audit is required, the certification body updates the certificate with the new license validity dates on the certificate attachment and submits a license renewal request to RA.

4.2.4 Operations Responsible prepares the “*Application Review Form*” and gets it approved by the Operations Manager. In addition, the fields required to be filled in by USB Certification in the “Application Form” tab of the “*Certification Application Form (CAF)*” are also filled in and the suitability of the application and the documents required to be sent with the application are evaluated.

4.2.5 When the following conditions are detected during the review of the “*Application Review Form*”, the company is notified clearly and in writing by the CRP Assistant that the application will not be accepted, and no offer can be submitted:

- If it is not possible for USB Certification to audit and approve the company (auditor availability capacity, schedule not available, etc.)
- USB Certification does not have service authorization within the scope requested by the company
- If USB Certification does not have an auditor with sufficient qualifications within the company

4.2.6 During the application review, the need for the use of interpreters or technical experts for the audit is also identified and the Operations Manager is informed.

4.2.7 In Farm Group audits, the risk assessment section in the “*Certification Application Form (CAF)*” is filled in by the Operations Responsible as a basis for the following.

- Selection and/or editing of sample size/structure for different sample categories, including but not limited to:
 - Operations/farm and intermediaries, subcontractors, service providers/ labor providers to be visited/interviewed another actors

- Workers to be interviewed
- Workers to be interviewed
- Documents to be reviewed
- Operations/activities/locations to visit/location to observe
- Determination of the audit team structure
- Determination of the audit duration

4.2.8 The minimum requirements to be included in the risk assessment for farm group audit are detailed in the *"RA 2020 Auditing Rules"* document.

4.2.9 The Operations Responsible saves the *"Certification Application Form (CAF)"* document containing the risk assessment to the relevant company's folder in Sharepoint.

4.3 Offer and Agreement

4.3.1 4.3.1 If the result of the review is positive, a cost study is carried out by the CRP Responsible using the *"Pricing Table"* according to the *"Pricing Procedure"* and is checked and approved by the Operations Manager.

4.3.2 The proposal number is determined by the CRP Assistant using the *"RA Offer Tracking List"*. The offer number given should be T-RA-(Year)-000x.

4.3.3 In cases where the proposal needs to be revised, a new number is not given to the proposal, it is numbered by adding "-R (revision number)" next to the existing proposal number.

4.3.4 *"Audit and Certification Offer Form-Rainforest Alliance"* and *"Certification Agreement-Rainforest Alliance (RA)"* are prepared by the CRP Assistant and shared with the company after the Operations Manager approves the offer. The offer and contract should be prepared and shared with the company within max. 3 weeks after the first application is received, and within max. 2 days if all documents are completed.

4.3.5 It is stated in the agreement that the *"Audit and Certification Offer Form-Rainforest Alliance"* is an integral part of the *"Certificate Agreement- Rainforest Alliance (RA)"* document. Thus, if the offer is accepted, the company that needs to sign the agreement is notified for the first certification year. In the 2nd and 3rd years of the 3-year cycle, only the proposal is sent and approved.

4.3.6 All pages of the offer and agreement are sent to USB Certification by cargo, and the scanned versions are sent to USB Certification CRP Assistant via e-mail, with all pages wet signatures, and the last page with wet signatures and stamps. The company that will sign the agreement must be legally authorized to sign on behalf of the company.

4.3.7 After the approved *"Audit and Certification Offer Form-Rainforest Alliance"* and *"Certification Agreement – Rainforest Alliance (RA)"* documents are sent to USB Certification CRP Assistant, the contracted company is added to the *"RA Customer List"* and a customer number is given.

4.3.8 The *"Applicable Law List"* is sent via e-mail by the CRP Assistant to the company added to the *"RA Customer List"*. The *"Applicable Law List"* is also published on the website so that all companies can easily access the list.

4.3.9 The CRP Assistant saves the approved proposal and agreement and the review criteria of the *"Certification Application Form (CAF)"* in the "Application" file in the folder of the relevant company in Sharepoint.

4.3.10 The company is requested to enter the information that a contract has been made in the RACP system and the company information and scope are checked in the RACP system by the Database Administrator.

4.3.11 Company documents (self-assessment form, scope approval screen, traceability records, Group member list for farm audits, etc.) requested from the company and defined in the "*Certification Application Form (CAF)*" must be provided by the company 2 weeks before the audit date at the latest. CRP Assistant saves these documents in the "Pre-Audit" file in the company folder in Sharepoint.

4.3.12 In the event that RA reveals concrete evidence that the audit and certification processes were not performed properly during the license approval, the activities performed in line with the need for additional auditing are not billed to the company.

4.4 Incentivized Surveillance Audits

4.4.1 Incentivized surveillance audits may be applied to facilitate audit for companies that meet the requirements set out in the following articles.

4.4.2 "*Certification Application Form (CAF)*" must be submitted by the company at least 2 weeks before the audit date.

4.4.3 Incentives may be applied for audit periods for surveillance audits within the scope of the farm meeting the following requirements;

- No history of non-certification or revocation in the previous 3 years
- No non-conformity in any of the following areas during the certification cycle
 - Loss of physical traceability
 - Confirmed issues related to freedom of association
 - Confirmed cases of deforestation and encroachment in protected areas
 - Confirmed cases of application of banned pesticides

4.4.4 Group farms that meet these conditions are eligible to have a reduced sample size for small farms for the surveillance audit(s). Sampling details are provided in the document "*Sampling Guide*".

4.4.5 Individual farms that meet the conditions may only receive the third audit of a certification cycle (second surveillance audit) as a remote surveillance audit if the following requirements are met;

- There should be no change in the scope of the company
- The company must have access to a stable internet connection and remote conferencing software to conduct the opening and closing meeting, as well as interviews with staff, employees and stakeholders and screen sharing of confidential records
- The company should not have high risk identified in the USB Certification risk assessment or any Rainforest Alliance risk map
- The company should have no data quality non-conformities of its geolocation data during the current certification cycle

4.4.6 Incentives may be applied for audit periods for surveillance audits within the supply chain that meet the following requirements;

- No history of non-certification or revocation in the previous 3 years
- Has received the first certification audit and there is no non-conformity in any of the following areas
 - Significant issues related to loss of physical traceability
 - Confirmed issues related to freedom of association

4.4.7 In case of certificate transfer exceptions during the certification cycle approved by the RA for all audits, the past audit reports should be sent to the new certification body and evaluated to confirm that the certificate holder meets the conditions mentioned above.

4.4.8 The Rainforest Alliance and USB Certification reserve the right to refuse an incentivized audit request for a remote or reduced sample audit.

4.5 Handling of Changes

4.5.1 The company notifies the USB Certification of any changes that will affect the location or any part of the process. Examples of changes;

- Legal, commercial and structural status and change of ownership
- Change of company name
- Change of senior management
- Changes in production method
- Changes in crop and harvest amount (product change, new crop addition, current crop reduction, etc.)
- Changes in the farm areas
- Changes to the contact address
- Changes in production sites and/or farm locations
- Changes in the number of farmer
- Changes in the traceability level
- Changes in the risk level
- Significant changes in the quality management system, etc.

4.5.2 If the company includes a new product and/or manufacturer and/or production area within the scope of certification, it applies for scope extension. Details on scope extension are provided in the *“Time Extension and Scope Extension Rules Guide”*. The *“Certification Application Form (CAF)”* for the relevant scope is sent to the company by the CRP Assistant and the change request is received. Based on the information in the form, the necessary time/price changes are reflected to the company with the decision of the Program Manager and Operations Manager.

4.5.3 Application for extension is reviewed by the Program Manager. Scope extension application is accepted if the conditions of *“RA 2020 Certification Rules”* and *“Time Extension and Scope Extension Rules Guide”*.

- When the application is accepted, the Database Administrator will notify the Rainforest Alliance through the RACP Traceability System before the current certificate and license expire. This notice; includes the reason for the expansion, the date of the planned inspection, the extension certificate, the audit report template (if additional auditing was performed for the scope extension), and the updated group farmer list (if group coverage is in progress).
- When the application is refused, the company and the Rainforest Alliance (RA) are notified of the reason for the refuse.

4.5.4 If an additional audit is decided for the application for scope extension, the audit should be done within the validity period of the certification agreement.

4.5.5 Exceptions

4.5.5.1 Written exception request may be made to RA by the Database Administrator for the following situations;

- Conformity with a criterion
- Certificate or audit date extension
- Volume change
- Force majeure: Extraordinary event or circumstance that is beyond the company control, and that prevents it from complying with these rules and RA rules.

4.5.5.2 Exception requests must be submitted at least 3 weeks prior to the planned implementation date to cbcert@ra.org or another location directed by the RA.

4.5.5.3 Correspondence regarding the exceptions received are uploaded to the company folder in Sharepoint by the Database Administrator.

4.6 Contract Cancellation

4.6.1 The contract may be canceled immediately (without the need for additional time) by USB Certification upon the breach of the contract on the merits, by giving written notice to the company, in the event that the following situations occur, without considering any notification process.

- If the company violates the terms of the contract and/or the regulations,
- The company's misuse of certificates obtained by USB Certification,
- The company damages USB Certification's name, reputation or trade in any way,
- The company transfers or assigns its rights and obligations under the contract in a way that is not permitted under the contract,
- The company has filed for bankruptcy or entered into the liquidation process (for financial or other reasons), or is under judicial management, or is in a bankruptcy or business recovery process,
- Failure of the company to pay any amount owed to USB Certification after the deadline has passed,
- Suspend or cancel all or part of its works or threaten to suspend or cease,
- Suspending or canceling the authorization of USB Certification,
- USB Certification terminates its activities or goes bankrupt,
- And regardless of the above clauses, if any reason arises that justifies USB Certification's unilateral termination of this agreement.

4.6.2 If the contract is terminated for any reason;

- The company sends its certificate to USB Certification by registered post within one week of the termination of the contract.
- After the contract is terminated, the company returns the Master Certificate to USB Certification.
- All contractual rights of the company, including all rights to the inspected and/or certified site and/or products, are terminated immediately.
- USB Certification is not obliged to pay back the amounts paid by the company.
- The company will no longer be able to use the logo and certificates of the USB Certification and/or the standard for which it has a certificate, it will revoke this statement and/or certificates, and will inform USB Certification about this. Otherwise, it will be compensated by any company that USB Certification will incur.

- In the event that USB Certification terminates its activities, goes bankrupt, and is deprived of its authority, the company has the right to conclude a contract with another certification body.

4.6.3 In case of cancellation of the contract, the "*RA Customer List*" is updated by the CRP Assistant. The list is sent to the IT department at the beginning of each month for publication on the website.

4.6.4 The company whose contract termination decision has been made due to the above-mentioned situations is notified via e-mail by the Operations Manager of the "contract termination/decision not to work".

4.7 Transition Between Certification Bodies (Transfer)

4.7.1 The transfer process is defined as follows;

- Company with a valid RA contract certificate to another certification body after a 3-year cycle to want to transfer.
- Revoke the authorization or scope of the certification body with which the company is certified.

4.7.2 Certificate holders may only change one certification body within their certification cycle. Certificate holders will only be transferred every 3 years.

4.7.3 An official transfer request is received from the company representative who wants to apply for a transfer.

4.7.4 The following information is requested from the previous certification body by the Operations Manager for the company for which the transfer request is received. This information is provided within 1 week.

- Information on the pending financial obligation of the certificate holder
- Latest audit Report and Checklist
- Evidence for pending non-compliances and closing open non-compliances sent by the customer

4.7.5 The Operations Responsible fills out the "*Transfer Approval Form*" for the company applying for transfer and checks whether it meets the following conditions.

- Scope of the company, countries, supply chain/farm, product categories, CAF, previous certification
- Current certificate and validity of the scope described
- Reason for the transfer
- Compliance of the certification scope with the USB Certification scope
- Confirmation that any complaint has been resolved
- Review of audit history
- The current phase of the audit cycle

4.7.6 Transfer applications of the company with the following characteristics are not accepted:

- Certification denial and/or certification canceled in the past certification cycle year
- Those whose certification has been suspended or
- Subject to an ongoing follow-up or investigative audit
- Those with outstanding financial obligations with the previous certification body

4.7.7 Operations Manager contacts the previous certification body to notify the previous certification body of the company of the transfer request and requests the following documents

- Audit reports and checklists for the previous year in the cycle
- CAF for the previous year
- Group Member Registration List

4.7.8 The transfer process shall be continued if the previous certification body has not received a notice of rejection of the transfer within 10 days in relation to the items in Article 4.7.6.

4.7.9 The application process is initiated for the company whose transfer has been accepted (Article 4.1).

4.7.10 The responsibility for the existing certificate (including extensions) of the company whose transfer is approved is the responsibility of the previous certification body until the expiry date. USB Certification must inform the previous certification body if the new certificate of the company becomes valid before the expiry date of the previous certificate. The previous certification body shortens the validity of the issued certificate and/or extension after the certificate from USB Certification starts.

4.7.11 Transfers from USB Certification

4.7.11.1 USB Certification Operation Manager sends the information requested by the new certification body within 10 days in case of a transfer request notified to it. At this stage, if there are any pending fees to be paid before the transfer takes place, the company is notified that the transfer can take place after the payment of this.

4.7.11.2 If one of the conditions specified in Article 4.7.6 applies, the Operation Manager notifies the company, the certification body requesting the transfer and the RA via cbcert@ra.org about the transfer rejection.

4.7.11.3 USB Certification Operation Manager must obtain written consent from the customer requesting the transfer to provide these documents to the new company.

5.0 RELATED DOCUMENTS AND RECORDS

| Document Number | Title or Description |
|----------------------|---|
| SA-R-GA-4 | RA 2020 Certification Rules |
| SA-R-GA-5 | RA 2020 Auditing Rules |
| SA-F-GA-4 | Certification Application Form (CAF)- Farm Group |
| SA-F-GA-5 | Certification Application Form (CAF)- Supply Chain |
| SA-F-GA-3 | Certification Application Form (CAF)- Single and Multi-Farm |
| UOF-AGR-RA-EN-4020 | Application Review Form |
| UOP-AGR-RA-EN-4010 | Pricing Procedure |
| UOF-AGR-RA-EN-4350 | RA Offer Tracking List |
| UOF-AGR-RA-EN-4040 | Audit and Certification Offer Form - Rainforest Alliance |
| UOF-AGR-RA-EN-4050 | Certification Agreement - Rainforest Alliance (RA) |
| UOF-AGR-RA-EN-4190 | RA Client List |
| UOF-AGR-RA-EN-4360 | Transfer Approval Form |
| UOF-AGR-EN-4280 | Agriculture Audit Schedule |
| UOF-AGR-RA-F-EN-4380 | Applicable Law List |

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|--------------------|--|
| UOF-AGR-RA-EN-4030 | Pricing Table |
| UOP-AGR-RA-EN-4150 | Time Extension and Scope Extension Rules Guide |
| UOP-AGR-RA-TR-4100 | Sampling Guide |