Rainforest Alliance
Rules for Auditor Competence

April, 2018
Version 1

The Rainforest Alliance works to
conserve biodiversity and ensure
sustainable livelihoods by transforming
land-use practices, business practices,
and consumer behavior.

More information?

For more information about the Rainforest Alliance, visit www.rainforest-alliance.org or contact info@ra.org

Translation Disclaimer

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The Rainforest Alliance is a growing network of people who are inspired and committed to working together to achieve its mission of conserving biodiversity and ensuring sustainable livelihoods. Through creative, pragmatic collaboration, Rainforest Alliance aims to rebalance the planet by building strong forests and healthy communities around the world. For more information about Rainforest Alliance, visit our website: http://www.rainforest-alliance.org.

To expand the reach of the Rainforest Alliance sustainable agriculture certification program and to safeguard the system's integrity, quality, competitiveness, and credibility, the Rainforest Alliance works with independent certification bodies around the world. Authorized certification bodies certify farms, farmer groups and operators against the Rainforest Alliance Sustainable Agriculture and Chain of Custody standards.

The Rainforest Alliance is committed to ISEAL's Code of Ethics and supports the ten ISEAL Credibility Principles, which capture what is essential for a sustainability standards system to deliver positive impact. The Rainforest Alliance also applies the principles of ISEAL's codes of good practice: The Code of Good Practice for Setting Social and Environmental Standards (Standard-Setting Code); the Code of Good Practice for Assessing the Impacts of Social and Environmental Standards (Impacts Code); and the Code of Good Practice for Assuring Compliance with Social and Environmental Standards (the Assurance Code).

ASSURANCE SYSTEM

The Rainforest Alliance manages and is responsible for a global Assurance System for Certification Bodies (CBs). As Rainforest Alliance certification expands further globally, the goal is to foster a highly credible and rigorous system. The audit and certification services rendered under the Assurance System maintain and ensure the general sense of purpose as well as a commitment to high quality, integrity, and transparency which is also reflected in the commitment to continual improvement of systems, documentation and processes. Access to the system by smallholders is important to Rainforest Alliance, and smallholders should not be at a disadvantage or excluded from accessing certification services.

The assurance system is comprised of a compendium of documents that describe the rules of the system and describe the requirements for CBs to be authorized. These documents include, but are not limited to:

- Rules for the Authorization of Certification Bodies;
- Rules for Auditor Competence;
- Rules for Planning and Conducting Audits;
- Chain of Custody Audit Protocols (pending);
- Certification Database Guidance; and
- Spatial Data Requirements and Guidance.

This document describes the rules and requirements that govern the competency and performance of Rainforest Alliance registered auditors. It also establishes the responsibilities of auditors in order to carry out audits for Rainforest Alliance certification and the responsibilities of Certification Bodies (CBs) for those auditors that they employ for Rainforest Alliance certification services.

CBs that have questions about the content or the interpretation of these Rules should contact Rainforest Alliance for any clarification (sas@ra.org).

SCOPE AND IMPLEMENTATION

The rules and requirements in this part are binding for all CBs and active registered auditors. Any individual that desires to carry out auditing activities for Rainforest Alliance certification shall meet the relevant requirements described in this part and register on the Rainforest Alliance auditor database through an authorized CB. CBs that directly employ or contract persons to provide auditing services must comply with the relevant rules and requirements in this part.

Currently authorized auditors will keep their current status when this document becomes mandatory.

Publication date of this document: April 1, 2018
Effective date of this document: June 1, 2018

After the publication date and before the effective date, the CB's responsibilities and rights are to:

- Request clarifications or training from the Rainforest Alliance
- Communicate changes to staff and auditors and ensure proper training
- Inform operations of relevant changes
- Adjust internal processes in accordance to these rules
- Review updates in the Certification Database

All the audit processes from June 1st, 2018 onwards must comply with these rules. These rules do not apply to audits started prior to June 1. Compliance for verification, investigation and scope expansion audits is recommended as of April 1, 2018.

Rainforest Alliance will start carrying out evaluation and monitoring activities based on the Assurance System as of the effective date.

1.   CERTIFICATION BODIES' RESPONSIBILITIES

CBs shall assume the responsibilities described below with respect to the incorporation of individuals in Rainforest Alliance certification processes as auditors (CBs not meeting the minimum audit requirements shall be sanctioned based on the Sanction Rules for CBs as laid out in the Rules for the Authorization of Certification Bodies):

a) CBs shall maintain documented profiles of each of their auditors and their qualifications and skills. CBs shall register staff and contracted auditors in the Rainforest Alliance auditor database and maintain current their information, including contact information and copies of diplomas, certificates and other evidence of auditor training and fulfillment of competency requirements.

b) CBs shall evaluate auditor competency and performance on a continual basis in compliance with the requirements and conditions set forth in these rules. The CB shall upload the results of the auditors' performance evaluations and the corrective action plan in the Rainforest Alliance Auditors Database at the end of each calendar year.

c) CBs shall provide auditors the automatically generated annual report at the end of each calendar year to allow them to correct any information entered by the CB into the Rainforest Alliance auditor database.

d) CBs shall correct or update any inaccurate, erroneous or incomplete information indicated by its auditors in the Rainforest Alliance auditor database within fifteen business days of notification.

e) CBs shall provide a mechanism to allow auditors to correct any information CBs have entered into the Rainforest Alliance auditor database, and to provide additional information such as external training. CBs shall maintain copies of auditor competency evidence as described in the Rules for the Authorization of Certification Bodies - System Documentation Section 6.7.

f) CBs shall only use auditors registered in the Rainforest Alliance Auditor Database for the registered level of competency. Rainforest Alliance shall reject planned or implemented activities that list auditors not registered in the database, or registered auditors at a level for which they have not demonstrated and registered competence. CBs shall rectify any planned activity and re-do any

implemented activity with a competent auditor team and assume any costs involved.

g) CBs shall develop and implement an annual strategy and plan for auditor training to be able to fulfill the requirements of the Auditor Training Strategy and Plan. This shall include, at a minimum, the training activities necessary to maintain and improve auditor competency and performance for CBs' approved geographic scopes.

h) CBs shall document policies and procedures to sanction auditors in the case of violations of internal policies and procedures, or rules and requirements of the Rules for the Authorization of Certification Bodies, and to permit auditors to appeal any sanctions. These policies and procedures shall be communicated to current staff and contracted auditors, and to any potential staff and contracted auditors before they assume roles as auditors.

i) CBs shall implement the sanctions, improvements and corrective actions regarding auditors that are indicated by the Rainforest Alliance as the result of Rainforest Alliance quality assurance system evaluations.

j) CBs shall present documented terms of reference to all observers and specialists in audit processes. The terms of reference shall clearly outline the scope of observer and specialist involvement, their responsibilities and obligations, and expected results.

k) CBs shall be responsible for the compliance of CB Regulations and related requirements for activities delegated or assigned to auditors as part of normal certification processes.

2.   AUDITOR RESPONSIBILITIES

All CB staff and contracted auditors, lead auditors and instructors, hereafter referred to as auditors, shall assume the responsibilities described below with respect to their status as active Rainforest Alliance certification system auditors.

a) Auditors shall comply with the rules and requirements described in this document, those established by the CBs for which they carry out audit and other certification activities, as well as all requirements established in Rainforest Alliance Standards, Certification Rules and Rules for Planning and Conducting Audits.

b) Auditors shall comply with producing timely and accurate reports of the audits they conduct, in accordance with the criteria specified in the Rules for Planning and Conducting Audits.

c) Auditors shall give CBs accurate contact information and inform CBs of any changes in this information.

d) Auditors shall refuse assignments for audits and other certification activities for which they are not qualified or registered.

e) Auditors shall review the automatically generated annual report and inform the CB of any inaccurate, erroneous or incomplete information, and request that the relevant changes be made. Auditors shall inform the Rainforest Alliance if this information is not corrected within fifteen business days of notifying the respective CBs.

f) Auditors shall participate in CB internal performance, quality control evaluations and reviews, and training events carried out by the Rainforest Alliance.

g) Auditors shall take the necessary steps to meet the established competency and performance requirements in order to maintain their auditor status as indicated in this document. This can include seeking training and performance evaluation independently if auditors are not currently associated with any CB.

h) Auditors shall report to their associated CBs any potential or actual violation of codes of conduct or impartiality or conflict of interest agreements as described in the Rules for the Authorization of Certification Bodies.

i) Auditors shall comply with all confidentiality requirements established by CBs.

3. GENERIC AUDITOR SKILLS, COMPETENCE AND KNOWLEDGE

The quality and utility of audits and the information derived from them, and client satisfaction with the results, depends on the competence and skills of auditors and other staff involved in certification processes. It is important that auditors not only have the technical skills and knowledge described in this document, but also the "soft" skills—organizational capacity, tenacity, analysis and synthesis, intellectual curiosity, decision making, and verbal and written communications skills—to be able to extract, deduce, and analyze information from audit processes and express conclusions in audit reports. At the same time, auditors need interpersonal skills to interact with farm and group owners, managers and workers to help them be willing and open participants in audit and certification processes.

a) CBs shall identify and document the necessary generic and interpersonal skills, competence and knowledge that auditors require to be able to carry out the different roles required for audits and other certification processes. CBs shall take into account those behavioral traits and knowledge and experience described in sections 7.2.2 through 7.2.4 of ISO 17065 in addition to the requirements specified in this document.

b) CBs shall evaluate each of their auditors with respect to these skills as part of their auditor evaluation processes, and take into account these skills, competencies and knowledge when assigning auditors to specific certification processes.

4. AUDITOR TECHNICAL AND PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS

4.1. Auditor Pre-Requisites

New auditor candidates shall meet the following pre-requisites before being registered in the Rainforest Alliance auditor database:

a) Completion of a basic auditing training course based on ISO 19011 principles and concepts. The course must be from an accredited training institution or from an authorized Rainforest Alliance auditor/instructor; and

b) For farm and producer group auditors,
    i. have at a minimum a four-year college degree in agriculture, natural resources, environmental sciences, social science, rural development, or similar, and have a minimum 40 hours of witnessing audit processes.
    ii. In addition to the requirements in letter a, having a post-high school degree (minimum two years) in animal husbandry (for cattle scope) and have a minimum of two years of practical experience and 40 hours of witnessing audit processes.

c) For Chain of Custody (CoC) auditors,
    i. have a four-year college degree or two years of professional experience in fields whose primary focus is any combination of industrial processes, quality control, food safety or hygiene, traceability and CoC[1].

d) For a cattle specialist,
    i. have a degree in veterinary medicine or sciences, animal husbandry, livestock production, or in agriculture sciences with an emphasis in livestock; and
    ii. Two years of professional experience in animal health or in livestock production systems during the last four years. This experience must be applicable to the types of production systems to be audited, for example, free-range, pasture, and feedlots, in combination with dairy or beef production as necessary.

4.2. Types of members of the audit team

a) **Auditor**: Auditors can participate as part of an audit team and can be contributing authors of audit reports. Auditors shall not lead the audit process by themselves, that is, as the sole member of an audit team. Auditors shall be under the direction of the lead auditor during the audit process.

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[1] Examples include industrial, manufacturing, chemical or some branches of systems engineering; food sciences; and food technology.

b) **Lead auditor**: Lead auditors can lead or carry out any of the audits described in the Rainforest Alliance "Certification Rules" for the scope in which they are qualified. Lead auditors shall be responsible for the writing of the audit report and be the principal authors. Lead auditors are also responsible for the recommendation to the group or person that makes the certification decision. Lead auditors shall be responsible for the audit team, for the decisions regarding the audit and audit scope taken during the audit process, and represent CBs during the audit. Lead auditors can review auditor performance, participate in quality management activities on behalf of CBs, and make certification decisions for audits and operations for which they have no demonstrated impartiality issues as described in the Rules for Planning and Conducting Audits.

c) **CoC Auditor.** These include auditors for all POs that fall within CoC scope. CoC auditors are responsible for the writing of the audit report and are the lead auditors for CoC participating operators. CoC auditors are also responsible for the recommendation of the certification decision and may be part of the Certification Decision Committee.

d) **Instructor:** Instructors shall meet all of the technical requirements described in these rules, and have the same functions and responsibilities of lead auditors. In addition, Instructors can develop and lead auditor training, within the framework of CBs' auditor training strategies and plans, for CBs to which they form part of the staff or as a consulting service to other CBs. Instructors shall only impart training for their qualified scopes.

e) **Specialists**. These are professionals with the academic and professional qualifications and expertise that enable them to support certification processes in very specific subject areas[2]. In general, specialists have a consulting role in supporting the audit team. Specialists can carry out the functions of auditors—carrying out interviews, document reviews, and field observations—and can provide technical opinions to the audit team about compliance. Specialists shall not be involved in compliance or certification decision processes unless they also meet the other requirements and qualifications of auditors or lead auditors.

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2 Examples include specialists in occupational health and safety, labor issues, water treatment, biodiversity, high conservation value ecosystems, cattle production, and similar topics.

4.3. Technical Competence Auditor Requirements

Farm and Group Scope

1. Auditors:
- a) All auditors for authorized CBs shall meet the following technical and performance requirements in addition to the previously described pre-requisites before being considered as active auditors:
  - i. Have successfully completed 2017 Rainforest Alliance Standard auditing baseline training based on approved Rainforest Alliance training modules;
  - ii. Have been evaluated and approved by CBs as having successfully completed the pre-requisites, baseline training and five audits days or 2 different audit processes of different operations, as witnesses;
- b) Within six months as approved auditors, achieve at least 70% in a Rainforest Alliance and Certification Body auditor performance review based on a report authored by the auditor;
- c) Within six months as approved auditors, have been evaluated and approved as active auditors through CBs' internal auditor performance evaluation systems.

2. Lead Auditor:
All lead auditors for authorized CBs shall meet the requirements for active *auditors* and the following technical and performance requirements before being considered as active lead auditors:
- a) Have one year of Rainforest Alliance certification auditing experience and successfully completed the required minimum annual training offered by CB;
- b) Complete a minimum of 10 days of field work as auditors in at least two audit processes of different operations during the past year;
- c) To be able to lead group audits, have participated as auditors in at least two group audits during the past year;
- d) Have contributed as authors in at least three audit reports during the past year;
- e) Achieve a score of at least 80% on the latest Rainforest Alliance and CB performance review within the last year based on reports authored by the auditors;
- f) Within a year as approved lead auditor, have been evaluated and approved as active auditors through CBs' internal auditor performance evaluation systems.

3. Instructors
To become and maintain their active status, all instructors shall meet with:
- a) All of the requirements for active lead auditors and achieve a score of at least 90% in the latest Rainforest Alliance and CB performance reviews within the past 12 months based on reports that they authored;
- b) Have 2 years of experience as an auditor in the Rainforest Alliance Sustainable Agriculture Standard;
- c) To train auditors for either the cattle or chain of custody scopes, Instructors must be qualified lead auditors for those scopes;
- d) Have complied with the continuous improvement training plan while being a lead auditor, as established by the CB;
- e) Have participated in all the training events by the Rainforest Alliance or its partners, while being a lead auditor;

f)	Participate in any online, instructor-specific, training courses that Rainforest Alliance may develop, including participation in technical fora for the analysis and additional studies of the Standard, etc.

Cattle Scope	
a)	All lead auditors for cattle scope audits shall meet all of the requirements described in this document for lead auditors;
b)	Lead auditors without cattle scope audit experience must have a cattle scope specialist as part of the audit team;
c)	Lead auditors that conduct cattle scope audits without a cattle scope specialist as part of the audit team shall have participated as auditors in at least one cattle scope audit within the past 12 months. Lead auditors shall only lead audit teams for those types of livestock production systems in which they have had past auditing experience, such as in dairy production or free range or pastured livestock systems;
d)	Instructors shall meet all of the requirements described in this document for Instructors as well as the requirements for lead auditors for cattle scope audits. Qualified cattle scope Instructors can train personnel in cattle scope audit techniques;
e)	Qualified farm and group auditors do not need any previous experience in cattle scope if they form part of an audit team that includes a qualified lead auditor with cattle scope experience, or of a qualified lead auditor and a cattle scope specialist.

Chain of Custody Scope	
a)	Participate in the CoC training modules;
b)	Achieve a score of at least 80% on the latest Rainforest Alliance and CB performance review within the last year based on reports authored by the auditors;
c)	CoC auditor shall participate in three CoC audits, including at least one desk and one on-site audit;
d)	Meet the requirements listed in this document for CoC auditor.

4.4 Active Permanence within the System

In order to maintain their active status, the following table contains the minimum requirements for each auditor type:

Type of auditors	Requirements
1. Auditor	a) Complete the required minimum annual training offered by CBs; b) Undergo and maintain satisfactory performance and competency evaluations by CBs; c) Maintain at least a 70% score in the latest Rainforest Alliance performance reviews based on reports authored by the auditors; and d) Conduct a minimum of 5 days of auditing (minimum 40 hours) during the past 12 months (prorated for new auditors) based on verified information in the Certification Database and the auditor database.
2. Lead auditor	a) Complete the required minimum annual training offered by CBs; b) Undergo and maintain satisfactory performance and competency evaluations by CBs; c) Maintain at least an 80% score in the latest Rainforest Alliance performance reviews based on reports authored by the auditors; and d) Complete a minimum of 10 days of auditing during the past 12 months (prorated for new lead auditors) as a lead auditor based on verified information in the Certification Database and Rainforest Alliance auditor database.
CoC auditor	a) Shall only audit as part of an audit team that includes an auditor qualified for CoC scope; b) Maintain at least an 80% score in the latest Rainforest Alliance performance reviews based on reports authored by the auditors; c) Have participated in at least two CoC audits in the last 12 months; d) Successful completion of CoC auditor training based on Rainforest Alliance CoC training modules.
3. Instructor	a) Participate in the different training or workshops provided to instructors; b) Maintain at least a 90% score in the latest Rainforest Alliance performance reviews based on reports authored by the auditors; c) Participate as an evaluating auditor in at least 3 audit days for farm and groups and 2 for CoC audits during the last 12 months;

| | d) Participate as a reviewer of reports in at least 10 audit reports for farm and groups and 3 CoC audit reports during the last 12 months; or combined with an internal quality audit review of the approved reviewers' quality review, decision making and other quality monitoring areas of the audit and certification process; and |
| | e) Participate in training events provided by Rainforest Alliance. |

5. REQUIREMENTS FOR ENSURING AUDITOR PERFORMANCE QUALITY

5.1. General Terms and Conditions

In order to ensure a high-quality performance on the part of the auditor teams, the Rainforest Alliance is authorized to establish mandatory training processes (see CB Training Section 5 in the Rules for the Authorization of Certification Bodies) for auditors in accordance with the needs identified by the Rainforest Alliance Quality System or through the risk analysis.

a) Establish training processes for training new auditors.
b) Offer training services that help CBs comply with the training and performance requirements of their technical teams. These services respond to the needs of each organization and generate a cost for the service.
c) Assess the effectiveness of the CB's technical training plan by evaluating the performance of its audit team and through additional assessment activities, where necessary. If the results need to be improved, the Rainforest Alliance may request adjustments to the training plan or corrective actions, which are binding in nature.
d) Establish parameters for the monitoring and evaluation of the Quality and Performance System (QPS) for auditors registered in the QPS.
e) Conduct evaluations of a sample of auditors during inspection visits to the CBs, and also through performance assessments with the Rainforest Alliance Quality System.
f) Share the results of the performance evaluations with each CB to ensure appropriate monitoring and compliance by the auditor.
g) Notify the CB when low performance or high-risk situations involving an auditor are identified.
h) Ask the CB to immediately implement sanctions against the auditor, according to the system of sanctions established in the Authorization Rules for CBs.

5.2. Responsibilities of the Certification Body

The CB is responsible for:
a) Providing the Rainforest Alliance with any necessary information during the auditor performance evaluation.

b) Updating the results of the annual performance evaluations in the Certification Database, reporting any risk situations identified, serious infractions committed by auditors, complaints and any sanction against the auditor.

c) Updating all information about the auditors in the Certification Database to enable Rainforest Alliance to verify, during the evaluations, compliance regarding the auditor's general data and status, updating of records, training or examinations related to the certification program and compliance audit records associated with the auditor's registration. If the CB fails to update the information, the sanctions plan will be implemented as indicated in the Rules for the Authorization of Certification Bodies.

d) Incorporate, within the evaluations carried out by the CB with its auditors, the elements and indicators of the performance evaluation conducted by the Rainforest Alliance, in order to obtain results consistent with the parameters and indicators evaluated by Rainforest Alliance and the CB.

e) Evaluate the technical skills acquired by the auditors and support the auditor training process, implementing a work plan that will serve as a guide to auditors for compliance with Rainforest Alliance guidelines.

6.   MONITORING & EVALUATION OF AUDITORS

The Rainforest Alliance has implemented an Evaluation and Monitoring System for auditors registered in the Database, see section 4 CB Oversight of the Rules for the Authorization of Certification Bodies.

7.   SANCTIONS

The CB is responsible for establishing and implementing a system of sanctions with the auditors. Rainforest Alliance requires the CB to include the following sanctions as part of their program.
The auditor has the right to appeal any decision regarding his/her status made by the CB or Rainforest Alliance.

Action	Causes	Sanctions
1. Warning	Weaknesses or deficiencies identified in the Rainforest Alliance performance evaluations that involve a non-conformity, or an evidenced complaint about the auditor from a third party.	The CB should notify the auditor of this warning in writing, indicating which aspects must be improved or whether further training is required for improvement.

Action	Causes	Sanctions
2. Suspension	An auditor may be suspended in any of the following situations: i. Results indicating low performance in the annual evaluation conducted by Rainforest Alliance, which prevents the auditor from achieving a medium or high level of performance. ii. Any non-conformity identified during witness evaluations, review of reports or supervision assessments conducted by Rainforest Alliance. iii. The auditor didn't address the corrective action requirements resulting from the witness audit.	• For causes i and ii: suspension for six months during which time the weakness/deficiency must be corrected. The corrective actions established by Rainforest Alliance will be implemented in order to comply with these Requirements and/or the performance assessment. These actions include specific training and/or field work, according to the requirements of each case. • In addition, the status of lead auditor or trainer is suspended, and the individual's status lowered to that of support auditor until he/she achieves and demonstrates the desired performance in order to obtain the status of leader or instructor once again. • The auditor is suspended from inclusion in the team of auditors for a geographical expansion. • For cause iii: Suspension for three months. During this time the CB investigates the case in order to establish the severity of the deficiency and take the necessary corrective measures. These corrective measures may include agreements of a legal nature (sworn statement, letters of understanding, public notifications, etc.) and specific training when necessary.
3. De-registration	The auditor's name may be removed from the register under the following circumstances: i. Serious or repeated deficiencies or non-conformities directly related to the auditor's performance and/or conduct. ii. Inactivity of the auditor, where he/she has not conducted audits in the last two (2) years, and has not participated in training related to Rainforest Alliance Standards and Policies.	• De-registration of the auditor results in disqualification from conducting audits for all Rainforest Alliance-approved certification bodies during a period established by the Rainforest Alliance.

8.   Auditor status reactivation:

In order to reactivate the auditor's condition, the following requirements must be met:
   a) Conduct at least two audits, accompanying an audit team. Auditors reinstate their previous category after field practice.
   b) The required training that would have taken place during the period of inactivity.
   c) The additional requirements for the reactivation of the condition established by the CB, based on the specific needs of each case; for example, activities related to standards updates and field work.
   d) Rainforest Alliance may request other requirements in case it determines the existence of risk or as a result of third party complaints.

The Certification Body shall record all the information in the Certificate database that enables the requirements established in Section 4.1 of these rules.

Rainforest Alliance could request monitoring reports in case of any risk detected or due to third party complaints.

9.   TECHNICAL COMPETENCY TRAINING FOR AUDITORS

In the Rainforest Alliance system, auditor training is a shared responsibility between the Rainforest Alliance and the CB. The role of each one is as follows:

	Rainforest Alliance	Certification Bodies
Development of technical competence in the Rainforest Alliance system	1. Establishes the requirements for developing the technical capacity of auditors in the Rainforest Alliance system; 2. Evaluates training needs and risk scenarios for Rainforest Alliance trainers and auditors, in order to develop optimized tools; 3. Develops the technical tools that form the basis of capacity-building and makes these available to the Rainforest Alliance trainers and auditors. Manages the Training Toolbox; 4. Coordinates online and on-site activities with CBs to support capacity building;	1. Design an annual training plan for the audit teams and for training new auditors (when required); 2. Implement the training plan to optimize the skills of their audit team; 3. Provide auditors training on high risk areas, identified by Rainforest Alliance or the CB, such as: sexual harassment, freedom of association, child labor, and discrimination; 4. Use the Rainforest Alliance tools as a basis for training; 5. Assess the skills and performance of the audit team; 6. Register the training as an event in the Rainforest Alliance Certificate Database; 7. Participate in activities organized by Rainforest Alliance and contribute information with news and challenges

	Rainforest Alliance	Certification Bodies
	5. Develops tools for the ongoing training and global-level calibration of auditors; 6. Offers auditor training and continuous training services with fees consistent with the service provided.	relating to the technical team, to ensure the efficiency of joint work.

The process for developing the technical capabilities of the auditing teams in the Rainforest Alliance system is organized into two lines of work:
1. Training of new auditors
2. Ongoing training of the audit teams

10. TRAINING FOR NEW AUDITORS

a) The purpose of training new auditors is to enable them to develop the necessary technical competence to understand the functioning of Rainforest Alliance Standards and the Rainforest Alliance system. With this knowledge and skills, the new auditors are capable of conducting quality audits for the Rainforest Alliance system.
b) The training process consists of two stages:

10.1. Stage 1: Technical Training

a) Certification Bodies organize the training of new auditors compliant with the following rules:
1. Participants in this training process comply with all the requirements established for auditors of the Rainforest Alliance System.
2. The CB organizes a work plan that combines self-learning, on-site and online activities, according to its needs. This work plan is registered in the RA Certification Database.
3. The Rainforest Alliance provides access to the Training Toolbox https://www.rainforest-alliance.org/business/sas/libraries/training-toolbox/ and the Salesforce Library for all participants in the training process.
4. Training is based on the tools and resources developed by the Rainforest Alliance, which are available at the Training Toolbox and the Salesforce Library. The materials may be adapted to different audiences and their training needs, based on the geographic context or specific crops. The adaptation of these materials should not affect the proposed learning objectives or technical contents.

5. The CB is responsible for ensuring that all technical content of the Rainforest Alliance tools form part of the training activities, and are understood and used by the participants in their work. The CB assesses the technical skills acquired by the participants.
6. The basic training process for new auditors has been included in Section 5 Certification Body Training in the Rules for the Authorization of Certification Bodies.

10.2. Stage 2: Field Work

a) The development of technical competence includes field activities and experience in audit situations (which may be simulated or real). Each CB determines the most appropriate methodology for its audit team, according to the needs identified.
b) Participants should form part of audit teams engaged in real audits in order to complete the practice hours required to achieve the status of auditor, as established in this document.
c) The CB assesses the technical skills acquired by the participants.

11. ONGOING TRAINING OF THE AUDIT TEAM

a) The purpose of ongoing training is to improve and update the performance of the audit teams. Each CB organizes its own continuous training process for auditors, complying with the following guidelines:
1. Identify any weaknesses and aspects to be improved in the organization's audit team and other technical personnel, based on the results of the CB's annual performance evaluation, potential issues arising from the risk analysis and feedback from the Rainforest Alliance Quality System.
2. Establish an annual ongoing training plan, which should be registered in the Rainforest Alliance certification database during the first 60 days of each year, with the following information:
   a. Areas for improvement identified and corrective actions implemented to address these issues (for example, field practices, simulated or shadow audits, self-learning with coaching, on-site or online activities, etc.);
   b. The technical content of each activity. The content must be related to the areas identified for improvement and should be useful for improving performance in that area;
   c. The trainer or organization in charge (in the case of external contracts);
   d. Number of hours;
   e. Names of the participants;

b) Changes in the performance of the participants are assessed through the CB's internal evaluation system.

c) The Rainforest Alliance may request, at any time, evidence of auditor training and assessments, and ensure compliance using the different types of evaluations indicated in this document.