

RAINFOREST ALLIANCE POLICY

FOR FARM AND SUPPLY CHAIN CERTIFICATION IN COCOA

Version 2.2





The Rainforest Alliance is creating a more sustainable world by using social and market forces to protect nature and improve the lives of farmers and forest communities.

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More information?

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Linked to:			
SA-S-SD-1-V1.1 Rainforest Alliance 2020 Sustainable Agriculture Standard, Farm Requirements and all other annexes, guidances and policies listed in this document SA-S-SD-2-V1.1 Rainforest Alliance 2020 Sustainable Agriculture Standard, Supply Chain Requirements and all other annexes, guidances and policies listed in this document SA-R-GA-1-V1.1 2020 Rainforest Alliance Certification and Auditing rules SA-R-GA-2- V1.1 2020 Rainforest Alliance Rules for Certification Bodies			
Replaces:			
Policy For Farm And Supply Chain Certification In Cocoa (V2.1)			
Applicable to:			
Farm and Supply Chain certified entities in the UTZ or Rainforest Alliance 2017 Farm and Supply Chain certified entities in the Rainforest Alliance 2020 Certification Program audited against the 2020 Sustainable Agriculture Standard (Farm Requirements and Supply Chain Requirements)			
Country/Region:			
Sections 1A, 2A and 3A of this policy apply in full to Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria and Cameroon. Sections 1B 2B and 3B apply specifically to Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana. Section 1C applies to Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire only.			
Crop:		Type of Certification:	
Cocoa		Farm and Supply Chain Certificate holders	

This policy document is binding. This means that it must be adhered to; therefore, this policy supersedes any related rules or requirements contained in the documents listed in the section "linked to" and/or "replaces" for those party or parties as indicated in the "applicable to" section.

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MAIN CHANGES FROM VERSION 2.0 AND 2.1

From 1 July 2021 onwards, all audits are conducted against the new 2020 Rainforest Alliance Standard for certification under the 2020 Rainforest Alliance Certification Program. Version 2.0 of the Cocoa Policy was published in May 2021 to align with the 2020 Standard. The current document, version 2.2, contains minor changes to versions 2.0 and 2.1.

All requirements in version 2.2 of the Cocoa Policy must be complied with in addition to the requirements and rules of the Rainforest Alliance 2020 Certification Program as set out in the “applicable to” section on the previous page. The Policy also contains requirements applicable to CHs that are still certified under the UTZ and Rainforest Alliance 2017 programs during the transition year.

The table below summarizes the main changes in this version of the policy from the previous version 2.0 published in May 2021 and version 2.1 published in September 2021.

Summary Table (changes from version 2.0 to version 2.1)		
Pg.	Clause	Change
PRODUCER CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS		
8	1.7.a.	New clause stipulating that groups in Côte d'Ivoire may only contract trainers approved by the Rainforest Alliance
SUPPLY CHAIN CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS		
9	2.2.a.	New clause clarifying that payment of Sustainability Differential by the first buyer is made no later than 6 months after reception of the product unless otherwise required by local regulations
AUDIT PROCESS RULES		
10	3.1.g.	New clause on obligation of CB to check conformity with UTZ/RA premium payment of previous year during transition audit
10	3.1.h.	New clause specifying that stakeholder consultation prior to the onsite audit is only required in specific cases related to risks of child labor or forced labor
11	3.2.g.	New clause specifying that groups may only reschedule their audit once.
11	3.3.f.	New clause requiring CBs to provide weekly updates in the Rainforest Alliance audit tracking file.
12	3.5.a.	New clause specifying that CBs must provide any evidence of inconsistency in deforestation risk with RA
CLAUSES REMOVED FROM VERSION 2.0 (NO LONGER APPLICABLE)		
	1.3.a.	Clause on the right of RA to remove producers and volumes from groups in case it is discovered they are member of more than one Rainforest Alliance certified group.
	2.2.a.	Clause on annual SD payment for Supply Chain Actors to groups in Ghana



Summary Table (changes from version 2.1 to version 2.2)		
Pg.	Clause	Change
SUPPLY CHAIN CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS		
9	2.3.a.	New clause clarifying that First Buyers must continue to pay premium on volumes from UTZ or Rainforest Alliance 2017 farms during the transition year.
9	2.3.b.	New clause clarifying that premium payment on UTZ and RA2017 volumes must be recorded in the traceability platforms.
9	2.3.c.	New clause specifying that first buyers must pay premium to groups no later than 6 months after shipment for the declared certified volumes.



ABBREVIATIONS

2017 RA SAS	2017 Rainforest Alliance Sustainable Agriculture Standard
2020 RA SAS	2020 Rainforest Alliance Sustainable Agriculture Standard
CB	Certification Body
CH	Certificate Holder
GMR	Group Member Registry
RACP	Rainforest Alliance Certification Platform
SD	Sustainability Differential

INTRODUCTION

The Rainforest Alliance is a growing network of people who are inspired and committed to working together to achieve our mission of creating a better future for people and nature by making responsible business the new normal. Since January 2018, the UTZ Certification program is also part of Rainforest Alliance. From 1 July 2021 onwards, the transition towards the 2020 Rainforest Alliance Certification Program will start and audits against the current UTZ and 2017 RA SAS will no longer be possible.

This Policy was originally developed as part of the 2020 cocoa assurance interventions for West Africa to further strengthen the implementation, verification and credibility of our certification programs. As the UTZ and 2017 Rainforest Alliance certification programs are replaced by the 2020 Rainforest Alliance Certification Program from 1 July 2021, this Policy has been adapted to align with the new Program. All references to the UTZ or 2017 Rainforest Alliance certification programs and corresponding documents have been replaced by the equivalent terms of the 2020 Rainforest Alliance program. Certificate Holders currently certified under the UTZ and 2017 Rainforest Alliance certification programs will transition to the 2020 Program between 1 July 2021 and 30 June 2022. This Policy sets out additional rules that certificate holders must comply with when they pass their audit to transition to the 2020 Rainforest Alliance Certification Program during this timeframe.

The policy sets out specific implementation requirements for CHs at both farm and supply chain actor levels (Certification Requirements) and for reinforcing the assurance process (Assurance Process Rules).



APPLICABILITY OF REQUIREMENTS

Different sections of this policy apply to Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria and Cameroon as shown in the table below:

- Sections 1A, 2A and 3A of this policy apply in full to Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria and Cameroon.
- Sections 1B, 2B and 3B apply specifically to Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana.
- Section 1C applies to Côte d'Ivoire only.

SECTION	REQUIREMENT	COTE D'IVOIRE	GHANA	CAMEROON	NIGERIA	
1. FARM CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS	1A	1.1 Farms in protected areas	✓	✓	✓	✓
		1.2 Member monitoring	✓	✓	✓	✓
	1B	1.3 growth in group membership	✓	✓		
		1.4 GMR	✓	✓		
		1.5 Geolocation data	✓	✓		
		1.6 Yield estimation	✓	✓		
	1C	1.7 Training	✓			
2. SUPPLY CHAIN CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS	2A	2.1 Certification – eligibility rules	✓	✓	✓	✓
		2.2 SD payment	✓	✓	✓	✓
	2B	2.3 Premium payment on legacy UTZ and RA2017 volumes	✓	✓		
3. AUDIT PROCESS RULES	3A	3.1 CB rights and obligations to comply with the audit process	✓	✓	✓	✓
		3.2 CH obligations to comply with the audit process	✓	✓	✓	✓
	3B	3.3 Audit allocation	✓	✓		
		3.4 Certification cost transparency	✓	✓		
		3.5 CB rights and obligations to comply with the audit process	✓	✓		



1. FARM CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

A. APPLICABLE TO CÔTE D'IVOIRE, GHANA, NIGERIA AND CAMEROON

1.1. Farms in protected areas

- a. Groups with producers in Protected Areas will not be certified unless allowed by applicable law and where up-to-date geolocation layers are available and verifiable by RA.

1.2. Member Monitoring

- a. Farm CHs may not refuse a visit from the Rainforest Alliance Member Monitoring team when a visit is requested. Certificate Holders may reschedule the visit once with a valid reason by proposing an alternative timing for the visit.

B. APPLICABLE TO CÔTE D'IVOIRE AND GHANA

1.3. Growth in Group Membership

- a. For groups with less than 2 000 producers, the total number of certified producers in a group shall only grow by 30% over the whole certification year in comparison to the total number of certified producers in the previous certification year (certification audit and/or extension audit).
- b. Groups with more than 2 000 producers shall only grow by 10% over the whole certification year in comparison to the total number of certified producers in the previous certification year (certification audit and/or extension audit).

1.4. Group Member Registry (GMR)

- a. The National ID number of all group members in possession of such must be indicated in the new GMR template. CHs in Côte d'Ivoire must indicate the National ID number for at least 30% of group members. CHs in Ghana must indicate the National ID number for at least 20% of group members.

1.5. Geolocation data

- a. For year 1 of certification (1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023), geolocation data is available for 100% of all farm units, of which at least 30% is in the form of polygons. This is an acceleration of requirement 1.2.14 L1 in the RA 2020 Sustainable Agricultural Standard.
- b. In year 4 (start of second certification cycle), Polygons are available for 100% of the farm units. This is an acceleration of requirement 1.2.15 L2 in the RA 2020 Sustainable Agricultural Standard

1.6. Yield estimation

- a. For new groups, the total certified area of the main crop is determined through the use of a GPS tool for at least 50% of producers
- b. For groups that were certified under the UTZ or 2017 Rainforest Alliance Certification programs for the October 2020 harvest the total certified area is determined through the use of a GPS tool for at least 90% of producers



C. APPLICABLE TO CÔTE D'IVOIRE ONLY

1.7. Training

- a. From January 2022, (prospective) Certificate Holders in Côte d'Ivoire shall only contract the training services of professionals approved by the Rainforest Alliance.



2. SUPPLY CHAIN CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

A. APPLICABLE TO CÔTE D'IVOIRE, GHANA, NIGERIA AND CAMEROON

2.1. Certification – Eligibility rules

- a. During the transition year from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022, all Supply Chain CHs taking legal ownership of certified cocoa or derivative products in Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria and Cameroon shall have their transition audit on-site.
- b. If a Supply Chain CH receives a non-certification decision, the CH shall wait 6 months after the decision is taken before reapplying for certification.

2.2. Sustainability Differential Payment

- a. Payment of SD by the first buyer to the group is made no later than 6 months after reception of the beans by the first buyer, unless otherwise required by local regulations.

B. APPLICABLE TO CÔTE D'IVOIRE AND GHANA

2.3. Premium payment for legacy UTZ and RA 2017 volumes

- a. A premium is paid as cash / bank transfer by the first buyer to the certified groups (both UTZ and Rainforest Alliance 2017 certified group) for all product claimed as UTZ or Rainforest Alliance 2017 certified. This amount is paid per metric ton, over and above and distinct from the price of the certified product, other premiums including quality premiums and other obligatory payments such as Living Income Differential.
- b. Premium payments and amounts, with evidence of payment are reported in the applicable Traceability Platform (MultiTrace or Marketplace).
- c. Premium is paid to groups no later than 6 months after reception of the beans by the first buyer, unless otherwise required by local regulations. Premium is recorded in the applicable traceability platform (MultiTrace or Marketplace).



3. AUDIT PROCESS RULES

A. APPLICABLE TO CÔTE D'IVOIRE, GHANA, NIGERIA AND CAMEROON

3.1. CB rights and obligations to comply with the audit process

- a. CBs use the traceability tool provided by the Rainforest Alliance to assess traceability of the CH;
- b. At the latest ten days after the closing meeting of the audit, the following documents are sent to the Rainforest Alliance at wacocoa@ra.org:
 - the completed audit checklist,
 - the NC report
- c. CBs must keep accurate, complete, up-to-date and legible records and evidence related to the 2020 Rainforest Alliance Certification Program and Cocoa Policy, including at least:
 - Auditor performance appraisals;
 - Audit reports, supporting evidence and summaries, audit plan, and certification decisions;
 - Completed traceability tool
 - Evidence of all written communication and documented meetings between the CB and the CH on the certification process;
 - Evidence of payment of out of pocket expenses to the auditor ahead of the audit;
 - Complaints or appeals related to audit or certification processes, including notes of internal procedures for reviewing such complaints or appeals.
- d. The pre-audit sample list must be documented. This list may contain more producers than the minimum required sample number to give options to the auditors should the producers not be available during the audit.
- e. The CB must send the final audit report to the CH at the latest ten days after the last audit day.
- f. CBs must pay out of pocket expenses needed for conducting the audit to their auditors prior to the audit taking place.
- g. During the transition audit, CBs must check conformity with premium payment for both UTZ and RA legacy volumes of the previous certification year, as per **Rule F75** of the Transition Rules. CBs must report any issue related to premium payment as a nonconformity against requirement 3.2.1 of the 2020 Rainforest Alliance Sustainable Agriculture Standard.
- h. CBs are only required to conduct stakeholder consultation prior to the onsite audit, in the following cases:
 - If the previous audit report raised an NC on child and/or forced labor.
 - If there are any complaints related to child and/or forced labor.
 - Upon RA request if there is evidence of reputational risks associated with child and/or forced labor linked to this CH.



3.2. CH obligations to comply with the audit process

- a. At least 75% of the total number of audited producers, must come from the auditor's pre-sampled list.
- b. A minimum of 75% of audited producers are able to show some form of official ID to prove their identity during the audit. If a National ID number is indicated for the audited producer in the GMR, the producer must be able to show the corresponding ID. If no National ID number is indicated, the producer can show another form of identification (health Insurance card, birth certificate, etc.).
- c. CHs can deny a surprise audit only once per audit year and only with a concrete justification.
- d. Appeals to the CB on non-certification decisions must be submitted to the CB by the CH at the latest two weeks after the non-certification decision is issued. Grievances must be submitted to Rainforest Alliance at the latest two weeks after the outcome of the appeal of the non-certification decision to the CB.
- e. If a group receives a non-certification decision from a transition, certification or surveillance audit, the group cannot apply again for certification for the same harvest. They can apply for certification again at the earliest for the following harvest. E.g., a group wants to have their certificate starting for the main 2021 harvest but receives a non-certification following their audit. The group cannot be certified for the 2021 harvest, whichever the audit date, and can only be certified at the earliest for the harvest following the main 2021 harvest.
- f. If a group receives a non-certification decision after a surprise or investigation audit, the group shall wait at least one full harvest period from the date the non-certification was taken. E.g., a certified group goes through a surprise audit in the middle of their small harvest of April 2022 and receives a non-certification decision. The group must wait for the rest of their April 2022 harvest and the full 2022 main harvest: the earliest the group can be certified is April 2023.
- g. Once the group has confirmed an audit date with the CB, the group may only reschedule their audit once. Any further attempts to reschedule will result in the audit being moved to the next harvest cycle

B. APPLICABLE TO CÔTE D'IVOIRE AND GHANA

3.3. Audit Allocation

- a. Audit allocation remains applicable to all audits of farm CHs against the 2020 Rainforest Alliance Standard from 1 July 2021 onwards. Audit allocation does not apply to supply chain CHs.
- b. Farm audits against the 2020 Rainforest Alliance Standard are allocated to CBs by the Rainforest Alliance.
- c. Upfront Audit costs including auditors' expenses (as a proportion of total cost) are covered in the contract between the CH and the CB and paid to the CB ahead of the audit.
- d. The Rainforest Alliance reserves the right to intervene in the audit planning process and request changes to improve audit quality, if the proposed plan does not conform to Rainforest Alliance guidance in terms of audit team composition, sample size and composition or audit duration.
- e. The Rainforest Alliance reserves the right to refuse an auditor proposed by a CB on the grounds of insufficient experience or proven poor performance.



- f. CBs must update on a weekly basis the information on the progress of the certification process for the groups in their audit tracking file.

3.4. CB obligations to comply with certification cost transparency

The CB shall have a transparent cost calculation system, which shall be reflected in the offer for audit and certification services that is provided to the allocated CH. This includes but is not limited to:

- a. CBs must complete and include the certification cost transparency tool in all certification offers made to farm CHs in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana for all audits taking place from 1 July 2021 onwards. The total price on the offer shall correspond to the total price indicated in the template. Rainforest Alliance reserves the right to request the completed certification cost template in case of price-related grievances raised by CHs.
- b. The total price on the offer must include basic follow-up of closure of non-conformities. If follow-up audit on-site is needed, a complementary offer must be drawn up and invoiced based on the same fee structure
- c. If the total price on the invoice differs from the price on the initial offer, the CB must clearly indicate the reason for the difference.
- d. Negotiation and acceptance of the offer for audit services remains the responsibility of CBs and CHs. If a disagreement should arise, the CH must first appeal directly to the CB. Where CHs are unable to resolve a complaint related to audit costs, they may then submit a grievance to the Rainforest Alliance through [the Grievance Procedure](#) within two weeks of the outcome of the appeal with the CB. Rainforest Alliance will adjudicate the grievance based on compliance with the transparency requirements and coherence with cost information already collected from CBs.

3.5 CB obligations to provide information on deforestation risk

- a. CBs must submit to the Rainforest Alliance any evidence of inconsistency between the deforestation risk analysis provided by the Rainforest Alliance and observations of deforestation risk made on the ground. If during an audit, the audit team finds that the deforestation risk of a farm unit is lower than indicated in the deforestation risk analysis, they must provide this evidence in the Rainforest Alliance inconsistency record template. The inconsistency record and evidence must be shared with Rainforest Alliance when the license request is submitted.