**RAINFOREST ALLIANCE
2020 CERTIFICATION PROGRAM**

2020 RULES FOR CERTIFICATION BODIES

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**RAINFOREST
ALLIANCE**

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Rainforest Alliance Department Standards & Assurance		Director, Standards and Assurance	
Linked to:			
Rainforest Alliance 2020 Certification and Auditing Rules			
Replaces:			
Assurance documents of current Rainforest Alliance and UTZ programs			
Applicable to:			
Certification Bodies			
Country/Region:			
All countries			
Crop:		**Type of Certification:**	
All crops in the scope of the Rainforest Alliance Certified program.		All certification options listed in the Certification Rules	

About Rainforest Alliance

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.

Translation Disclaimer

For any question related to the precise meaning of the information contained in the translation, please refer to the official English version for clarification. Any discrepancies or differences in meaning due to translation are not binding and have no effect for auditing or certification purposes.

More information

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

¹ These rules cover all herbs and spices CHs that have no farming in scope. Where farming is in scope, these rules cover chilies and pepper, as well as all herbs and spices grown on Rainforest Alliance certified farms where other certified crops are grown. For all other cases, contact the UEBT certification@uebt.org for more information.

INTRODUCTION

The Rainforest Alliance 2020 Certification Program provides the foundation for our approach to "reimagining certification" – our vision for the future of certification. The new standard, assurance system and related data and technology systems are designed to deliver more value to the many people and businesses around the world that use Rainforest Alliance certification as an essential tool to support sustainable agricultural production and supply chains.

Farms, farmer groups and supply chain organizations that meet all applicable requirements of the Sustainable Agriculture Standard and comply with the process requirements of the Rainforest Alliance Assurance Rules are then able to sell, ship and/or buy their product as Rainforest Alliance Certified.

To expand the reach of the Rainforest Alliance Certification Program and to safeguard the system's integrity, quality, competitiveness and credibility, the Rainforest Alliance works with independent certification bodies (CBs) around the world. Authorized CBs certify farms, farmer groups and supply chain organizations against the Rainforest Alliance 2020 Sustainable Agriculture Standard.

The Rainforest Alliance is a full member of ISEAL, is committed to ISEAL's Code of Ethics and supports the ten ISEAL Credibility Principles, which represent the core values on which effective sustainability standards are built. 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 (the Impacts Code); and the Code of Good Practice for Assuring Conformity with Social and Environmental Standards (the Assurance Code).

The Rainforest Alliance manages, and is responsible for, a global Assurance System for Certification Bodies. 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 a general sense of purpose as well as a commitment to high quality, integrity, consistency 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 the Rainforest Alliance, and smallholders are not at a disadvantage or excluded from accessing certification services.

Just as the Sustainable Agriculture Standard is designed to promote continuous improvement by producers and supply chain actors, the Rainforest Alliance is committed to continuously improving its work, adopting a continuous improvement approach to the 2020 Certification Program. Documentation and systems will be updated accordingly to improve the program's assurance, and any changes will be communicated to Certification Bodies (CBs) and certificate holders and made available on the Rainforest Alliance website.

Overview of Assurance Rules & System

The Assurance Rules establish the rules for the various elements that provide assurance for the 2020 Certification Program. The rules are composed of two documents, each with two chapters. At the beginning of each chapter is an introduction that describes the target audience of that chapter.

The two documents are:

1. **2020 Rainforest Alliance Certification and Auditing Rules**

2. **2020 Rainforest Alliance Rules for Certification Bodies**

The Assurance System takes the contents of these two documents and translates them into the Rainforest Alliance technology systems that are designed to measure, ensure and improve compliance with the Sustainable Agriculture Standard's requirements. It aims to create a more robust and credible system by focusing attention on accuracy of data for informed decision processes, risk assessments and audit quality.

INNOVATIONS IN THE RAINFOREST ALLIANCE 2020 ASSURANCE SYSTEM

In line with the Rainforest Alliance's long-term vision of 'Reimagining Certification,' the Assurance System of the 2020 Certification Program introduces numerous innovations to ensure that certification is more context-specific, data-driven and risk-based.

Risk-based approach

The Rainforest Alliance 2020 Certification Program aims to promote a preventive approach instead of a reactive one, and the Assurance Rules have been developed within a risk-based framework to enable this approach. In this framework, data is collected at the beginning of the certification process, rather than at the end, allowing for risk analysis to be carried out.

Providing actionable information for program users, the program takes this better use of data to introduce the use of 'Risk Maps.' These are maps that are created through combining external data sources with location data. The maps then provide risk levels of countries, organizations and/or farm (or farm units) for key sustainability topics - child labor, forced labor and deforestation. Risk maps include a risk classification which serves as input for the certificate holder to take informed decisions for improvement, meet additional requirements to mitigate further the risks and to facilitate and strengthen the auditing process in case of medium or high risk.

Data monitoring

Ensuring that data is accessible throughout the certification process can provide an Assurance System that is more responsive and user centered. The Assurance System introduces a new way of monitoring data submitted via the Rainforest Alliance online platform at several different stages of the certification process, instead of waiting until the audit results have been reported to the Rainforest Alliance. This can help to avoid mistakes in the scope and provision of applicable requirements to the Certificate Holder.

Strengthened auditing

To strengthen the consistency of audit quality across Certification Bodies (CBs), the Assurance System provides specific requirements and guidance on how to audit specific topics, such as deforestation, child and forced labor, traceability, subcontractors, and personnel files. More generally, by offering a system that leverages data and auditing expertise, the system allows CBs to increase the usefulness and rigor of their audits. The Rainforest Alliance aims to work closely with the highest performing CBs and so now has the ability to limit the number of CBs both per country and globally, based on performance results. The Rainforest Alliance will implement legal and risk analyses as a condition for authorizing the geographical scope of CBs and introduce a fee system for the CB authorization process, designed to reduce the administrative requirements for CBs.

Innovations per chapter in this document

Rules for Authorizing Certification Bodies

- Auditor rotation and measures to avoid conflict of interest (e.g. payments, no technical assistance)

- New section on fraud and corruption prevention

- CB capacity assessment

Requirements for CB Personnel

- Minimum Competence Level requested for CB Personnel

- New defined roles for CB Personnel (management plus audit team)
- Clear CB staff separation (program management and audit team)

USING THIS DOCUMENT

Terms, definitions and abbreviations

A global glossary governing all Rainforest Alliance documentation can be found here.

Frequently used abbreviations in this document:

- CB – Certification Body
- CH – Certificate Holder
- RA – Rainforest Alliance
- RACP – Rainforest Alliance Certification Platform

Key verbal forms

In this and other assurance documents, the following verbal forms apply:

- "shall" indicates a requirement which is mandatory
- "should" indicates a recommendation
- "may" indicates a permission
- "can" indicates a possibility or a capability

Further details can be found in the **ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2**.

Implementation

The requirements referred to in this document are binding for all CBs that are or aspire to be part of the Rainforest Alliance Certification Program.

Non-fulfilment of any requirements in this document will result in one or more nonconformities (NCs) which may lead to suspension or cancellation of the authorization given to the CB.

An authorized CB or a CH may exceptionally deviate from the requirements of this document under the condition that the CB has received approval from the Rainforest Alliance prior to such deviation and the CB or CH provides documented justifications. For CBs, such justifications shall demonstrate the ability of the QMS of the CB to continuously deliver the expected results of the audit activities and certification processes. For CHs, such justifications shall demonstrate the ability of the management system of the CH to continuously demonstrate conformity of the CH with the assurance and standard rules that apply to their scope.

Such exception requests shall be submitted to certification@ra.org. The CB shall record justifications for deviation in the Rainforest Alliance Certification Platform (RACP). In the event that a CH does not have a valid contract with a CB, the request shall be submitted to customersuccess@ra.org.

The Rainforest Alliance reserves the right, at its sole discretion, not to accept a deviation from any of the requirements if the justifications do not sufficiently ensure confidence in the CB's decision.

If there is any conflict between the requirements in this document and those in other documents including legal and statutory requirements, the CB shall consult the Rainforest Alliance in a timely manner for further guidance on interpretation. The Rainforest Alliance will start carrying out evaluation and monitoring activities based on the Assurance System documents from their effective date.

Reference documents

In all cases, the current and valid version of the standards, normative documents or guidance documents shall be the reference documents in this document. The latest version of Rainforest Alliance documents, including the Assurance documents, can be found at the 2020 Certification Program webpage.

Rainforest Alliance documents:

- Sustainable Agriculture Standard including applicable annexes and tools
- 2020 Rainforest Alliance Certification and Auditing Rules
- 2020 Rainforest Alliance Rules for Certification Bodies
- Rainforest Alliance Labelling Policy
- Rainforest Alliance Traceability Rules
- Rainforest Alliance Glossary

External documents:

- ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015, Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems – Part 1: Requirements
- ISO 19011:2018 Guidelines for auditing management systems
- IAF MD 5:2019 Determination of Audit Time of Quality, Environmental, and Occupational Health & Safety Management Systems
- ISO/IEC 17065:2012 Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services

Contacting Rainforest Alliance

Technical support: Certification Bodies can contact techsupport@ra.org for assistance in accessing or using the Rainforest Alliance systems.

Certification Body support: Certification Bodies can contact the Rainforest Alliance Standards & Assurance department by using the following email addresses:

- certification@ra.org for questions about the Rainforest Alliance standards and Certification Rules, communication about partners (e.g. suspensions and withdrawals of certificates and activations) and CB authorization and training
- cbmanagement@ra.org for CB accounts and approvals
- cbmonitoring@ra.org for CB monitoring
- cbtraining@ra.org for CB training

Compliance with applicable laws

Rainforest Alliance strives for its CBs to be exemplary figures for improving social, economic, and environmental conditions in their areas of operation. In this regard, CBs shall obey national laws, regulations, and sector agreements or collective bargaining agreements. In the event that a national law, regulation, sector agreement or collective bargaining agreement is stricter than the requirements of the Rainforest Alliance Certification Program (Sustainable Agriculture Standard and Assurance documents) or vice versa, the strictest rule always prevails. For more information, refer to the **Sustainable Agriculture Standard**.

MAIN CHANGES FROM VERSION OF JULY 2021

The table below summarizes the main changes in this version of the Rules for Certification Bodies from the previous version published on 13 July 2021.

Section	Topic	Change
CHAPTER 1: RULES FOR AUTHORIZING CERTIFICATION BODIES		
1.1.18	Authorization	Addition: Submission of any legally required document such as GDPR is required in addition to the Authorization Agreement to complete the authorisation process.
1.1.19	Authorization	Clarification: Costs for addition of CB authorization scope are defined in the fee catalogue
1.1.20	Publication of authorized CBs and their scope	Clarification: Update of published scope of authorized CBs
1.2.4	General provisions	Addition: Submission of any legally required document such as GDPR is required in addition to the Authorization Agreement to obtain and maintain authorization.
1.2.14	Accreditation	Correction: Accepted accreditation scopes instead of certification scopes
1.2.17	Authorization scope	Correction: Adaptation of the authorization scope with the Published Rainforest Alliance Standard
1.2.21	Authorization scope	Addition: The CB must update the Rainforest Alliance Platform with regional and local offices.
1.2.24 d	Certification Agreement	Clarification: The copy of the Certification Agreement shared by the CB to the certificate holders shall be signed.
1.2.24	Certification Agreement	Amendment to numbering: Clauses 1.2.24 and 1.2.25 regarding the Certification Agreement have been combined and (previous) clause 1.2.25 has been deleted.
1.3.15	Training Services	Amendment: Training materials to be used by CBs for training services shall only be provided to the Rainforest Alliance upon request. Clarification: The Rainforest Alliance is not responsible for the content and the quality of the training materials.

1.3.16	Training Services	Addition: The Rainforest Alliance reserves the rights to approve or refuse CB training materials at any time.
1.3.27 and 1.3.34	Liability and Financing Confidentiality and public information	Amendment to numbering: Clauses 1.3.27 and 11.3.34 regarding the confidentiality of certificate holder information have been combined and clause 1.3.27 has been deleted.
1.3.27 to 1.3.120	Chapter 1.3	As a result of deleting clause 1.3.27 and adding clauses under the Section Competence management, the clause numbers of chapter 1.3 have changed from clause 1.3.27 to the end of the chapter 1.3.
1.3.36	Confidentiality and public information	Contracted auditors are considered as consultants. The non-disclosure declaration of CB personnel is not limited in time of 3 years after termination of employment or after the provision of services as defined before.
1.3.38	Confidentiality and public information	Addition: CB shall comply with any and all data protection laws applicable to CB.
1.3.41 a	Management of Impartiality and conflict of interest	Amendment: The frequency of the declaration of the CB personnel has been aligned to one year for all personnel and consultants.
1.3.41 g	Management of Impartiality and conflict of interest	Addition: All payments shall be recorded. Clarification: Certifiers also cannot accept payments.
1.3.84	Risk Assessment	Clarification of requirements for risk management plan for the CB Management system
1.3.86	Risk Assessment	Clarification of requirements for risk management plan for auditing the implementation of the standard by the CH.
1.3.98 to 1.3.104	Competence Management	Addition: Introduction of the concept of baseline and gap assessment for management of competence Amendments to requirements on recording of evidence of compliance with the requirements for each role (as defined in this document Chapter 2) in the CB Management Platform
1.3.113	Internal audit	Addition: The CB shall demonstrate the competence of the person(s) conducting the internal audit and the person(s) conducting the internal audit shall not be involved in activities part of the scope of the internal audit.

Table 1 CB Monitoring Audits	CB Monitoring General Provisions	Deleted: Review audit: CH no longer has to be reregistered in the RACP platform before a review audit can take place.
1.5.4	Sanctions General Provisions	Sanctions: Addition: The CB needs prior approval of the Rainforest Alliance to complete any pending audit process.
1.5.21 to 1.5.29	Personnel Sanctions	Amendment: Sanctions of auditors are extended to all CB personnel.
CHAPTER 2: RULES FOR CERTIFICATION BODIES PERSONNEL		
2	Personnel competences management	NEW RULE: Now rule number 2.3: Rainforest Alliance reserves the right to request CBs to integrate specific performance review and monitoring systems to manage CB personnel's competencies.
2	Training hours	NEW RULE: Now rule number 2.4 to clarify that training hours can be reached by combining one or more training sessions.
2	Training definition	NEW: A definition of training is included
2.1	Requirements for Database Administrator	NEW: Table with requirements for database administrator included
2.1	Authorization application	NEW RULE: Now rule number 2.1.4: CB personnel may request approval for any given role without having to start in a more junior position, provided they meet the corresponding 2020 Rainforest Alliance requirements.
2.2	Requirement to maintain authorization	NEW: Once approved in the Certification program, CB personnel must meet a series of requirements (training and field experience) to remain in the program.
2.2	Auditing experience measurement unit	NEW: CB personnel may now demonstrate compliance with field experience requirements using either number of audits or audit days to meet audit experience requirements.
2.2	Audit experience requirements	NEW: Now rule number 2.2.3: A single audit may be taken into consideration to comply with different audit experience requirements provided the audit scope is relevant for all corresponding topics such as social, G.A.P./organic, supply chain, and environmental audit experience.

2.2	Course on audit planning	NEW: The requirement to participate in a minimum 2-hour introductory basic course related to planning and implementing an audit/certification process moved from applying to all personnel to approval requirements for Scheme Manager and Databased administrator.
2.2	Acknowledgement of experience with legacy programs	NEW: Experience with legacy programs considered to meet social audit experience requirements. Pre-merger RA and UTZ are considered equal to other social standards such as Fairtrade, GRASP, SA8000, SMETA.
2.2	Experience requirements	NEW: Certification decision considered for Certifier's audit experience requirements. Certification decisions are also considered to meet field experience for the Certifier role.
2.2	Social Training Requirements	MODIFIED: Reduction of social training hours for Lead Auditor for social topics from 60 hours to 48. This grants more flexibility to meet authorization requirements.
2.2	Farm auditors in supply chain audits	NEW: Auditors and Lead Auditors with farm experience may now carry out supply chain audits.
2.2	Traceability training	NEW: Traceability training introduced for Auditor and Lead Auditor role; successfully participated in a 2-hour minimum, yearly face-to-face, or online training refresher on traceability

CHAPTER 1: RULES FOR AUTHORIZING CERTIFICATION BODIES

INTRODUCTION

This chapter applies to Rainforest Alliance and Certification Bodies that want to provide certification services to their clients under the Rainforest Alliance 2020 Certification Program.

Objectives of the chapter

- To communicate and explain the general rules that CBs shall fulfil in order to be authorized by the Rainforest Alliance to grant farm, group and Supply Chain certification

- To ensure adequate monitoring of the technical and administrative capabilities of the CBs and their personnel

1.1 AUTHORIZATION PROCESS

General provision

1.1.1 The CB that aims to carry out auditing and certification activities for the 2020 Rainforest Alliance Certification Program, which supersedes rules for pre-merger Rainforest Alliance and UTZ certification programs, shall achieve authorization for one or more scope of certification.

1.1.2 The CB shall undergo the authorization process in order to receive approval to conduct Rainforest Alliance audits using the Rainforest Alliance 2020 Standards.

1.1.3 The CB shall request authorization for geographic scope approval.

1.1.4 An authorized CB and applicant shall agree to all terms and conditions of this document.

1.1.5 The Rainforest Alliance reserves the right to:

a. Reject applications from the CB based on the merit of the application and program requirements.

b. Limit the number of CBs operating per authorization scope or overall in the system.

c. Reject and/or cancel authorizations to any CB if, in its sole opinion, it concludes that the CB does not:

   i. Comply with one or more of the Assurance System Rules.

   ii. Share the same values of the Rainforest Alliance on certification and credibility of certification programs.

   iii. Have the capacity to carry out certification operations and/or ensure credibility of these certificate holders.

   iv. Take timely actions to safeguard the reputation and credibility of the Rainforest Alliance.

d. Outsource entirely or partially the authorization procedure to an external CB oversight provider. If the Rainforest Alliance outsources any activity, the CB shall agree to:

   i. Provide full access to all information, including confidential information, necessary to effectively perform the authorization process.

   ii. Provide full access to its premises, locations, affiliate offices and those of their certificate holders for the purpose of third-party evaluations carried out by the appointed service provider.

   iii. Closely collaborate with the designated oversight body to the extent needed for successfully carrying out the authorization process.

   iv. Access to CB records, documents and other information related to previous UTZ and Rainforest Alliance certification and use them as part of the CB authorization process.

e. Charge fees related to the execution of the Rainforest Alliance Assurance Program as determined in the Rainforest Alliance Catalogue Fee.

f. Change the content of this document without previous notice.

g. Allocate CBs to certificate holders.

CB approval application

The Rainforest Alliance communicates to the CB if the application is accepted or rejected to continue with the next step of the authorization process and for which scopes if applicable.

1.1.6 The CB shall provide all necessary data, information and documents requested in the application process.

1.1.7 The Rainforest Alliance reviews that the application form and corresponding documents are complete and confirms receipt of its submission.

1.1.8 If the application is deemed incomplete, the CB may be asked to re-submit its application.

Application assessment

The application assessment consists of an office audit and field audits to evaluate that the CB has a system in place to manage the certification process according to these rules. The number of field audits is determined by the Rainforest Alliance. The Rainforest Alliance can decide to conduct the Office Audit remotely.

1.1.9 The CB shall bear the costs of this step of the evaluation.

1.1.10 The CB shall provide explanations and inputs requested by the Rainforest Alliance or the service provider carrying out the evaluation.

1.1.11 If nonconformities are identified, the CB shall close them, and the Rainforest Alliance shall conduct an assessment of closure of nonconformities.

1.1.12 The CB shall sign and agree on the terms and conditions of the application assessment.

Training

1.1.13 If the CB complies with the application assessment, it shall receive training on the use of the 2020 Standard, Certification system, and make use of all relevant training tools provided by the Rainforest Alliance.

1.1.14 The CB carries out their internal training program as indicated in the rules for CB personnel.

Authorization

1.1.15 If the CB complies with the application assessment and after successfully completing training requirements, the Rainforest Alliance will grant authorization that allows the CB to offer Rainforest Alliance certification services under conditions of its Authorization Agreement with the Rainforest Alliance.

1.1.16 The authorization may be partial or full scope. Partial authorization means that the CB only received authorization to operate with a reduced scope from the list of country and/or standard the CB originally requested.

1.1.17 The authorization may be fully or partially cancelled at any time by the Rainforest Alliance based on CB performance evaluations.

1.1.18 The CB shall sign a copy of the Authorization Agreement and other legally required agreements such as GDPR and return these to the Rainforest Alliance in order to attain the status of authorized. Authorization or Framework Agreements signed before January 1, 2021 shall not be sufficient to fulfil this rule.

1.1.19 In order to add a scope to an already authorized CB, the Rainforest Alliance will conduct an assessment and the CB shall bear the cost as determined in the Rainforest Alliance Catalogue Fee.

Publication of authorized CBs and their scope

1.1.20 The Rainforest Alliance will update the status in the Rainforest Alliance Assurance Platform and publish all authorized CBs on the website, including the following information:

    a. CB name and contact

    b. Approved geographic scope for Farming scope and/or for Supply Chain scope.
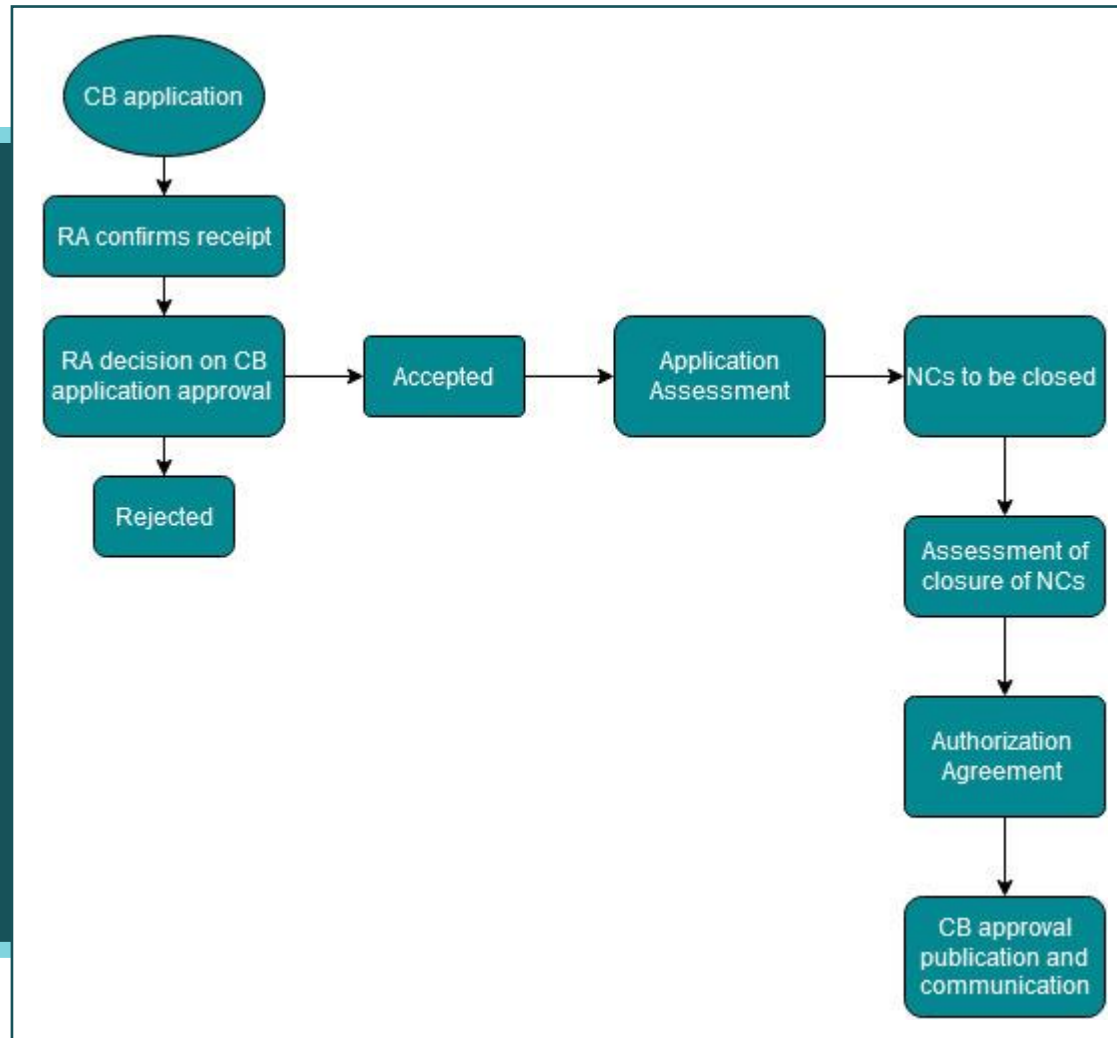
    c. CB status as authorized, sanctioned or cancelled

Figure 1. Authorization Process

1.2 GENERAL AUTHORIZATION RULES

General provisions

1.2.1 Based on the results of application assessment and CB Monitoring activities, decisions regarding the authorization, suspension, or cancellation of CBs are made by the Rainforest Alliance Certification Program CB Authorization Committee.

1.2.2 The CB is subject to the Rainforest Alliance CB Monitoring assessments and sanctions as indicated in this document or any other assurance system document.

1.2.3 Once CB authorization is granted, evaluation is done on a continual basis over time using different assessment mechanisms.

1.2.4 The existence of a signed and valid Authorization Agreement with the Rainforest Alliance and other legal agreements such as GDPR are required for a CB to obtain and maintain authorization.

1.2.5 The Rainforest Alliance reserves the right to make the final decision on interpretation in case of any discrepancy or lack of clarity in the interpretation of any the Rainforest Alliance rules, policies and protocols of the Assurance System.

1.2.6 The Rainforest Alliance has the right to observe and evaluate any certification-related process or activity implemented by a CB, or review and evaluate all certification-related documentation or information.

1.2.7 The Rainforest Alliance has the right to evaluate the compliance of any certificate holder related to the respective standard under which that certificate holder is certified including but not limited to accompanying the CB on audits and non-accompanied visits to certificate holders.

1.2.8 All inquiries regarding this document or topics not covered by this document shall be presented in writing to the Rainforest Alliance via email.

1.2.9 The CB shall be responsible for updating certification agreement content to reflect changes in any of the documents mentioned in this document.

1.2.10 The CB shall provide all certification-related information requested by the Rainforest Alliance within the time period that the Rainforest Alliance indicates.

1.2.11 The CB shall have CB personnel that can speak English for general training requirements and for accessing the Rainforest Alliance system documentation.

1.2.12 The CB shall comply with the Requirements and Guidelines for Use of the Rainforest Alliance Trademarks published on the Rainforest Alliance website.

ISO/IEC 17065 and 17021 accreditations

1.2.13 The CB shall be ISO/IEC 17065 or ISO/IEC 17021 (latest versions) accredited and comply with the following accreditation conditions:

    a. Accredited for a certification scheme accepted by the Rainforest Alliance, related to social or environmental issues in agriculture

    b. Accredited by an accreditation body that is a member of the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) that has signed a multilateral agreement (MLA) with IAF, or full member of ISEAL Alliance

1.2.14 The accepted accreditation scopes are:

    a. ISO/IEC17065 for Sustainable Agriculture or Supply Chain certification

    b. ISO/IEC17021 for Supply Chain certification only

1.2.15 The CB shall maintain ISO17065 or ISO17021 accreditation as described above. Failure to maintain accreditation, or lapse of accreditation, will result in the immediate suspension or cancellation of the Rainforest Alliance authorization.

    a. The CB shall provide a copy of a valid accreditation certificate to the Rainforest Alliance or to the organization evaluating the CB on its behalf.

    b. When renewing its ISO accreditation, the CB shall provide the valid certificate within 1 month of expiry of the accreditation certificate. Failure to do so will result in immediate suspension of the authorization. If the CB fails to provide a valid accreditation certificate within 3 months of the expiry of their last certificate, their Rainforest Alliance authorization shall be cancelled. In these cases, the CB can only obtain Rainforest Alliance authorization again by starting the application process again.

1.2.16 Rainforest Alliance Assurance System rules are additional to ISO17065 or ISO17021 rules.

    a. The CB shall apply all ISO17065 or ISO17021 rules, including its annexes, to the CB's certification activities and standardized operational procedures and policies that fall under the CB's authorized scope for the Rainforest Alliance.

    b. In case of discrepancy between what is required in an ISO rule and what is required under a Rainforest Alliance rule, the stricter and most complete rule (i.e., ISO or Rainforest Alliance rule) shall prevail, unless stated otherwise by the Rainforest Alliance. The Rainforest Alliance reserves the right to make the final decision on interpretation in case of any discrepancy or unclarity in the interpretation of the ISO rules in the scope of Rainforest Alliance certification.

Authorization scope

1.2.17 The CB shall define and request authorization for their scope of Rainforest Alliance certification operations. The scope shall be based on the following:

a. Standard scope includes Rainforest Alliance Sustainable Agriculture Standard for Farming and/or Rainforest Alliance Standard for Supply Chain

b. Geographic scope includes the country/countries for which a CB has demonstrated it has the auditing experience, technical knowledge, resources capacity and understanding local context and cultural practices to carry out evaluation and certification activities. CBs may carry out audits in any country that is not subject to sanctions from the United States government, as indicated in the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC).

1.2.18 Each CB may include one or more geographic and standard scopes as part of its portfolio.

1.2.19 An authorized CB shall only conduct audit and certification activities in locations for which it has authorized scopes.

1.2.20 The Rainforest Alliance may delegate the scope approval process to a third party.

1.2.21 The CB must submit to Rainforest Alliance all regional and local offices that it wishes to include as part of their scope which will be included in the CB authorization and updated in the Rainforest Alliance Platform.

Organizational structure, legal and contractual matters

1.2.22 The CB shall make available and communicate any changes in its organizational structure, ownership and the legal registration of the CB. If the CB is a legal entity that is wholly or partly owned by a larger organization, the CB clearly documents the activities, structure and governance of the larger organization.

1.2.23 CBs shall provide the Rainforest Alliance the contact information of the person(s) in the CB that will be the principal liaisons with the Rainforest Alliance for assurance activities and update in the Rainforest Alliance Assurance Platform as needed.

Certification agreement

1.2.24 The CB shall sign a certification agreement with a legal entity covering all operations that seek certification or that are current certificate holders. The CB shall comply with the following requirements regarding certification agreements:

a. Certification agreements shall require the operation's compliance with all requirements in the Certification Rules, the Rules for the Authorization of Certification Bodies, Auditing Rules, Supply Chain Policy and other binding documents published by the Rainforest Alliance and shall refer to or cite specific requirements as necessary.

b. The certification agreement shall cover at least the duration of the certificate to be issued for the CH.

c. The CB shall not include technical or compliance requirements that are stricter than those stipulated in the effective Rainforest Alliance Certification Program documents. The CB shall seek Rainforest Alliance approval for any possible requirements that are stricter than those stated in these documents.

d. The CB shall provide a signed copy of the certification agreement to certificate holders before any audit takes place.

e. The CB shall provide a copy of its certification agreement template to Rainforest Alliance and when updates are required as set forth in the binding documents, provide Rainforest Alliance an updated template. The Rainforest Alliance has the right to request and review certification agreement templates or certification agreements for specific operations at any time and must be provided with the relevant agreement within five business days after the date of the request.

f. The CB shall include a description of the services it will provide to the CH and a clause explaining all the costs to the operation, including an explanation of the concept of unannounced surveillance audits and the CH's responsibility to pay for these.

g. The CB shall include a provision where the audit team shall have access to the CH´s facilities, personnel and documented information within the certification scope.

h. The CB shall include a provision allowing it to terminate the certification agreement in the event its authorization is suspended or cancelled.

i. The CB shall include a clause where it may stop the audit process in the event the applicant or certificate holder does not collaborate with the audit as required in the certification rules.

j. The CB shall include a provision for resolution of disputes related to certification decisions and related matters. In the event a CH disputes a certification decision or related matter, it must agree to first follow the CB's grievance procedure, and in the event that the disagreement continues, the CH must then submit the dispute to the Rainforest Alliance grievance procedure. The CH must agree that it will only take legal action against the Rainforest Alliance upon the final disposition of its dispute through the CB and the Rainforest Alliance grievance procedures.

k. The CB shall include the following clauses in their certification agreements (in English, Spanish or local language as determined by the CB). If inclusion of any of the following clauses is prohibited by local law, the CB shall inform the Rainforest Alliance of such prohibition and the Rainforest Alliance shall advise the CB on whether a functionally similar clause may be used. The certification agreement shall state that each of clauses i) through viii) is subject to applicable law:

    i. For groups, the certificate holder agrees to cause each group member to conform to the applicable standards and comply with all obligations thereof, including without limitation all provisions relating to the certificate holder under the certification agreement as set forth in these clauses i) through viii).

    ii. The certificate holder agrees that any representation it makes with respect to the Rainforest Alliance, certified product, the scope of an operation's certification to the Rainforest Alliance standards, or with respect to its collaboration with or support for the Rainforest Alliance, shall be fair and accurate. The CH shall restrict its representations with respect to certification of certified product to the applicable Rainforest Alliance 2020 Standard (or subsequent Rainforest Alliance standards) and not with respect to products, product characteristics or agricultural operations not included within the scope of the certificate of

the CH that covers the certified product. The CH agrees that it will not use any Rainforest Alliance trademarks or make claims, representations, public statements or use language about or references to the Rainforest Alliance in connection with the direct or indirect sale, marketing or advertising of products that are not certified products except as specifically permitted in a license agreement with the Rainforest Alliance.

iii. The certificate holder agrees to adhere to the timelines established by the Rainforest Alliance for the certification process as communicated by the CB.

iv. The certificate holder has the right to appeal any certification decision according to the Certification Rules.

v. The certificate holder shall not use its certification in such a manner as to harm the reputation of the Rainforest Alliance and shall not make any statement regarding its certification that may be considered misleading or unauthorized.

vi. The certificate holder shall not use the name, certification mark, logos or other trademarks of the Rainforest Alliance except as permitted in a licensing agreement with the Rainforest Alliance. The certificate holder shall fully cooperate with the Rainforest Alliance and the CB with respect to any unauthorized use, infringement, or dilution of the trademarks or other intellectual property rights of the Rainforest Alliance.

vii. The certificate holder hereby agrees to notify the CB in writing within 48 hours of any fundamental departure from its systems and procedures, or of any changes to its management, structure or ownership, or of any other information that could affect the certificate holder's conformance with the applicable standards or compliance with applicable law.

viii. In the event of an inconsistency between the certification agreement and the standards, rules, policies or procedures required by the Rainforest Alliance, the certificate holder agrees and acknowledges that the provisions of the Rainforest Alliance standards, rules, policies and procedures shall govern. Upon suspension or cancellation of the certificate, the certificate holder shall agree to immediately:

    a. Comply to the sell-off requirements defined on the Certification Rules.

        i. Cease to make any use of any trademark of the Rainforest Alliance to sell any previously labeled product unless such trademark is removed, and/or to make any claims that imply that such product, or certificate holder's enterprise or certificate holder, conforms to the applicable standards.

        ii. At the certificate holder's own expense, remove all uses of names, initials, logos, certification marks or other trademarks of the Rainforest Alliance from its products (or, where removal is not possible, recall any such products), documents, advertising and/or marketing materials, physical or electronic promotion material or media, in brochures or on webpages, signs or other documentation and business-to business communications, once required by the Certification Rules.

    b. Cooperate with the CB and the Rainforest Alliance to confirm that these obligations have been met.

c. Identify all relevant existing clients and notify them of the suspension or cancellation in writing within three business days of the suspension or cancellation and corresponding implications and maintain records of such notification.

d. Notwithstanding the foregoing, for a period beginning on the effective date of suspension or cancellation of the certificate and ending on the date that is 6 months from the suspension or cancellation date, the certificate holder may sell certified products in accordance with the Rainforest Alliance Supply Chain Policy and applicable Certification Rules and policies, which may be amended from time to time.

e. If a CB decides not to certify or cancels or suspends a certificate, the certificate holder may not change its CB until the next certification audit and cycle after the certification decision was made.

f. Comply with the Rainforest Alliance requirements for transparency and confidentiality as set forth in its licensing agreement with the Rainforest Alliance.

g. The Rainforest Alliance is entitled to visit, at its own discretion and cost, any certificate holder, with or without notification to the CB or to the certificate holder. The Rainforest Alliance may observe certificate holders during the visit or conduct an audit with or without the CB. The CB and the Rainforest Alliance have the right to access and review any of the certificate holder´s documentation and the right to inspect any of the certificate holder´s sites and operations in the certification scope.

h. The Rainforest Alliance has the right to request the CB to conduct unannounced or investigation audits of a certificate holder.

i. The Rainforest Alliance has the right to display the certificate holder's name on transaction certificates for sales of certified products from that farm or group, throughout the supply chain to the final seller of the certified products as long as segregation is maintained.

j. The Rainforest Alliance has the right to display the certificate holder's name on transaction certificates issued by or to the certificate holder or one of its sites.

k. The certificate holder acknowledges that it may not use the Rainforest Alliance Certified™ certification mark other than pursuant to the terms of a valid written license agreement executed between the certificate holder and Rainforest Alliance, including prior written approval by Rainforest Alliance for any use, and agrees to adhere to the Requirements and Guidelines for Use of Rainforest Alliance Trademarks as published on the Rainforest Alliance website.

1.3 CB MANAGEMENT SYSTEM RULES

General provisions

1.3.1   The CB shall implement and document a management system that meets the requirements set forth in ISO 17065 containing all necessary activities, personnel, procedures, policies, tools, and resources required for carrying out Rainforest Alliance certificate holders under the CB's authorization scope.

1.3.2   It is the CB´s responsibility to ensure that the allocated activities, personnel, procedures, policies, tools, and resources are adequate to effectively carry out the certification activities in their authorization scope.

1.3.3   The CB shall have defined protocols for implementation of changes in system, including timelines by which changes come into effect and mechanisms to communicate those changes to affected personnel and stakeholders, including the Rainforest Alliance.

Pre-assessment[1]

1.3.4   Pre-assessment is a service in which the CB personnel will analyze the level of compliance of an organization interested in being Rainforest Alliance-certified prior to any contracted certification service being provided.

1.3.5   Pre-assessment is optional. A CH can directly request the CB to perform such service, however the CB is not obliged to fulfil the request. In the case that the CB does offer such services, the CB and its staff shall not communicate in any way that by using such a service will make certification easier or cheaper.

1.3.6   The CB shall develop and effectively implement a documented procedure for managing pre-assessment service such that its services do not impose any potential or materialized conflict of interest and ensure that offering such a service does not entail any consultancy at any time that the CB and the CH have a business relationship.

1.3.7   The CB shall offer pre-assessment services only when it has identified and mitigated all potential conflicts of interest resulted from such activities.

1.3.8   The CB shall maintain relevant records of each request for a pre-assessment and the results of each step during this process including but not limited to communications regarding the request, the plan(s) for the activities, the costs and personnel involved, and the content of the service provided.

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[1] Applicable when the CB does conduct pre-assessment services or has the intention to conduct these

1.3.9 The CB shall consistently and sufficiently document the results of pre-assessments including but not limited to using a template for all pre-assessments.

1.3.10 Pre-assessment shall be performed separately prior to the actual audit, i.e. a pre-assessment shall not replace a certification/surveillance audit.

1.3.11 Pre-assessment shall be performed by person(s) who shall not perform any certification activities of the same CH.

1.3.12 Duration of a pre-assessment shall be agreed upon between the CB and its CH, and the CB shall record this information and shall not count this time for a pre-assessment as audit time for other types of audit.

1.3.13 The CB shall publicly publish on its websites whether pre-assessment services are offered by that CB and if yes, the CB shall publish its procedures accompanying with a public fees structure for these services.

Training service[2]

1.3.14 Training is an optional service that the CB may offer to its CHs and public audience given that such an activity shall not include any consultancy as defined in this document and shall not affect the later certification process between the CB and its CH.

1.3.15 On request of Rainforest Alliance, the CB shall submit to the Rainforest Alliance the training materials that it intends to use for such training services. The Rainforest Alliance is not responsible for the content and the quality of the training materials.

1.3.16 The Rainforest Alliance reserves the rights to:

    a. Approve or refuse such materials.

    b. Attend such a training at its own costs.

1.3.17 The CB is allowed to offer training services on the conditions that no consultancy[1] is included in such a training session.

1.3.18 The CB and its personnel shall not communicate in any way that by using such a service will make certification easier or cheaper.

1.3.19 The CB shall effectively implement a documented procedure for managing training service such that these services do not impose any potential or materialized conflict of interest and ensure that offering such a service does not entail any consultancy at any time that the CB and the CH have a business relationship.

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[2] Applicable when the CB does conduct training services or has the intention to conduct these.

[1] Refer to ISO17021 and ISO 17065 for definitions of consultancy.

1.3.20 The CB shall publicly publish on its websites whether training services are offered by that CB and if yes, the CB shall publish its procedures accompanying with a public fees structure for these services.

1.3.21 The CB shall maintain relevant records of each request for a training and the results of each step during this process including but not limited to communications regarding the request, the plan(s) for the activities, the costs and personnel involved, and the content of the service provided.

1.3.22 For any type of training that the CB offers to one or more CHs, the CB shall ensure that such a training provides only generic information that explains the requirements of the Rainforest Alliance Certification Program, its assurance system and the procedures directly linked to the certification process of the CB. The CB shall not provide any organization-specific recommendations or solutions at any time during such a service.

1.3.23 For each training session provided, the CB shall maintain relevant records including at least: training agenda which has locations, duration, topics to be covered, names of trainers, training content, list of participants, costs and fees charged to the participants.

1.3.24 The CB shall ensure that the CB trainers shall not audit the CHs who they trained for at least 2 years after such a training was given.

Liability and financing

1.3.25 The CB shall provide evidence regarding the validity of extra-contractual civil insurance to cover damages and losses caused to third parties.

1.3.26 The extra-contractual civil insurance shall also cover for damages and losses caused to third parties because of errors or omissions during the certification process.

1.3.27 If this insurance is not available in the CB's home country or does not cover one or more of the countries within the geographic scope of the CB, evidence of sufficient financial reserves, including a plan for their use, shall be provided for covering any potential liability or civil claims.

1.3.28 The CB and/or its parent organization shall ensure financial stability.

1.3.29 Financial stability shall be demonstrated in the CB's Capacity Assessment annually.

1.3.30 The CB shall provide to the Rainforest Alliance, upon request, any audited financial statements or annual reports.

Confidentiality and public information

1.3.31 The CB shall have a policy on provision of information management and data protection. This policy shall be publicly available for certificate holders.

1.3.32 The CB shall provide all information and data from certification processes to Rainforest Alliance as requested in the Rainforest Alliance Assurance Platform or other official communication channel as part of assurance processes and as stipulated in these regulations and related assurance system rules.

1.3.33 The Rainforest Alliance retains the right to publish contact and organizational information about CBs and certificate holders on its website due to its commitment to transparency. Under exceptional circumstances, certificate holders can request through CBs that Rainforest Alliance not publish certain information if its publication poses proven threats to the health and safety of certificate holder's owners or employees. CBs shall agree with these certificate holders on alternative contact and organizational information that is directly linked to the certificate holders.

1.3.34 The CB shall have a procedure to ensure confidential and proprietary information it obtains from certificate holders is protected, including the intellectual property rights and confidentiality of the production and processing technologies used.

1.3.35 The CB shall not publish, disclose, disseminate or otherwise make publicly available or use information or data obtained from certification processes except for uses stipulated in the Rainforest Alliance Certification Rules, Supply Chain Policy, and certification agreements. For the avoidance of doubt, the CB shall (i) share data associated with the audit process with Rainforest Alliance, and (ii) publish audit report public summaries for all audit types, regardless of whether the certificate holder passed such audit. Public summaries may include a description of nonconformities.

1.3.36 All CB personnel, including persons involved in certification decisions and consultants (i.e. contracted auditors), shall complete and sign a non-disclosure declaration with the CB that indicates their agreement with the restrictions on information and data use and disclosure set forth in these regulations. The declaration must be legally binding and prohibit the use and disclosure of certification information and data even after termination of employment or after the provision of services.

1.3.37 The CB shall have the necessary policies and procedures to deal with confidentiality violations by its personnel. CBs shall also have the necessary policies and procedures to limit access to certification data and information to those persons that have signed the non-disclosure agreement mentioned in the previous clause, and to prevent access by persons who have not signed such an agreement.

1.3.38 The CB shall immediately report to the Rainforest Alliance any violations of nondisclosure agreements and any intentional or unintentional disclosure or dissemination of confidential certification data and information. With respect to the collection, processing or transfer of personal information in connection with the Rainforest Alliance Certification Program, the CB shall comply with any and all data protection laws applicable to CB. Unreported incidents or violations of applicable data protection laws (including but not limited to any required data breach notifications) may result in a determination of nonconformities or other sanctions assigned by the Rainforest Alliance.

Management of impartiality and conflict of interest

1.3.39 As part of its risk management system, the CB shall define and document potential risks to impartiality and conflicts of interest within its certificate holders and how these potential risks and conflicts should be avoided or mitigated.

1.3.40 The CB shall have a mechanism to monitor and manage these risks and conflicts since the start of the certification process.

1.3.41 The CB shall have a written conflict of interest and impartiality management procedure that:

a. Ensures that all CB personnel, including personnel that make certification decisions, reviewers, auditors, technical experts and interpreters contracted for audit and certification processes, shall complete a declaration stating any potential or existing conflicts of interest including property, financial, work and family ties with certificate holder or applicant and its personnel. This declaration shall be updated at least annually and whenever a potential conflict arises.

b. When there is a conflict of interest risk involving certifiers and auditors, the respective individuals shall not be involved in the related audit or certification decision processes.

c. Ensures that the CB has a conflict of interest disclosure policy that requires auditors and personnel involved in auditing and certification activities to report any potential or real conflict of interest in any given situation of the certification process including auditing situation.

d. Ensures that auditors do not audit the same certificate holders where they conducted technical assistance activities or having worked or provided any consultancy in the last two years for an operation, one of its subsidiaries or a company of the same parent group.

e. Ensures that certifiers do not make decisions about the same certificate holders in which they participated in the most recent audit (any audit type) or where they conducted technical assistance activities or provided consultancy or having worked in the last two years for a CH, one of its subsidiaries or a company of the same parent group.

f. Ensures that an auditor shall not audit the same CH for more than two consecutive audits (excluding follow-up audits).

g. All payments related to the certification process must be received exclusively by the CB and not by the auditors nor the certifier. All payments shall be recorded; ensures that auditors have enough financial resources provided in order to conduct an audit with no dependency on the CH.

h. Ensures that for Investigation Audits, the CB shall use auditors that did not participate in the last audit of the CH.

i. Ensures that the CB documents and implements a code of conduct to be applied by each employee and contractor. The code of conduct shall prohibit employees and auditors from accepting any money, gift, gratuity or item of value from the certificate holder. The code of conduct needs to have measures to be taken in case of bribery or coercion. When bribery or coercion of an auditor or a member of an independent committee is suspected, the CB shall report this situation to the Rainforest Alliance.

j. The Rainforest Alliance reserves the right to standardize one single conflict of interest management mechanism and make it binding for all CBs.

Ethical certification to prevent fraud and corruption

1.3.42 The CB shall develop a corporate culture of honesty and integrity and shall be committed to preventing and eradicating the likelihood of fraud and maintaining the integrity in the Rainforest Alliance auditing services it provides to certificate holders. It establishes procedures and protections that allows it to act preventively on suspected fraud or corruption by its personnel, consultants or any person providing a service under the CB's responsibility.

1.3.43 For the purpose of this document, fraud is "a knowing misrepresentation of the truth or concealment of a material fact to induce another to act to his or her detriment." It may involve but it is not limited to:

    a. bribery and corruption

    b. manipulation, falsification or alteration of audit records or documents

    c. deliberate omission of audit evidence witnessed through documentation, interviews or observation

    d. assigning conformity or closing nonconformities by misrepresenting the evidence

    e. usurpation of the Rainforest Alliance's or the CB's interests for personal gain

    f. payment or receipts of bribes or other inappropriate payments and/or gifts/favors

1.3.44 The CB has a public statement against corruption. It is published on its website and communicated to all personnel, consultants working on its behalf and all certificate holders or applicants, no later than when the CB sends the quotation for the audit service.

1.3.45 The public statement shall inform certificate holders that the certificate holder must account for all sales of certified product. The certificate holder must register each transaction of certified product in the Rainforest Alliance's systems to allow for the issuance of transaction certificates.

1.3.46 The CB has a publicly available zero-tolerance anti-corruption policy applicable to all personnel and consultants working on its behalf. It includes the commitment to conduct its work in an honest and ethical manner.

    a. The policy shall explicitly prohibit all forms of bribery, such as money, gifts, loans, fees, hospitality, services, discounts or any other advantage or benefit in the expectation that a certification advantage will be received in return or to reward any audit service received. It also includes offering, promising, giving, accepting or seeking a bribe.

    b. It includes a comprehensive list of examples that can be considered corruption.

1.3.47 The CB creates and implements a documented mechanism to detect fraud, including mechanisms for internal and external parties to anonymously report activities where corruption may be taking place, and it includes measures to mitigate or eradicate the likelihood of retaliation. The CB investigates suspected or voiced concerns of fraud or fraudulent behavior.

1.3.48 The CB shall implement a rigorous sanction policy for cases of detected corruption with its personnel, consultants and certificate holders or potential certificate holders.

   a. Sanctions to personnel and consultants include progressive disciplinary measures that could result in dismissal or cancellation of contracts.

   b. The CB shall inform the Rainforest Alliance immediately when a case of fraud or corruption is detected or under investigation.

   c. The Rainforest Alliance reserves the right to exclude any personnel of the CB or certificate holders that conducted fraud or corruption from the Rainforest Alliance Program (in any position).

1.3.49 The CB creates a mechanism to remediate detected cases of corruption that include but are not limited to repeating an audit service at the CB's own cost, returning any good that was received or reimbursing the client's money.

Grievance procedure

Grievances are based on the services provided by the CB to the certificate holder.

1.3.50 The CB shall have documented grievance submission and management procedures in compliance with section 7.13 of ISO17065. These procedures shall be available to the public on the CB's websites and accessible to certificate holders and other stakeholders.

1.3.51 CB websites shall include easily recognizable direct access to a description of the grievance, as well as to any online or digital complaint or incident reporting process. The access can be to a general grievance management process if CBs offer certification services for more than one scheme. Easily recognizable must be a link that contains the word "complaint" in the languages used on the website and can be recognized by users as being associated with the complaint and incident management process.

1.3.52 Grievance and inquiry submission mechanisms shall include at least an email address, a local or national telephone number that can be attended by CB personnel during working hours and a postal address.

1.3.53 The CB shall ensure that it has the capacity to receive and manage grievances in all the official languages of the countries in which it has active certificates.

1.3.54 The CB shall ensure the confidentiality of the complainant, unless the complainant authorizes the CB or the Rainforest Alliance to share the information or the complainant publicly shares information.

1.3.55 The CB shall follow up on specific grievances as requested by the Rainforest Alliance.

1.3.56 Commercial or intellectual proprietary information about the audited operation shall not be divulged in any public documents about the complaint without the written consent of the certificate holder.

1.3.57 The CB shall respond within 10 calendar days to the persons submitting Rainforest Alliance grievances and inquiries to acknowledge their submissions, and to provide them with information about the next steps in the process and when they can expect an outcome. CBs shall keep these persons informed of major findings and provide them with a summary of the outcome of the process when there is a final decision or result. If the submission did not include contact information for responding, then the CB should complete the process and record the information in the Rainforest Alliance Assurance Platform. The CB will have 30 calendar days to resolve a grievance (including making a certification decision in the case an investigation audit is conducted). If the CB needs additional time, the CB shall inform timely to the Rainforest Alliance.

1.3.58 The CB shall do an appraisal to assess risk of anonymous grievances, but the CB is under no obligation to investigate the complaint if there is no sufficient preliminary evidence or information. Grievances submitted on behalf of a group, such as a community or labor organization, shall have at least one viable contact person to manage communications and further inquiries.

1.3.59 The CB shall record the actions taken to investigate and resolve the grievance in a digital log. The actions recorded shall include the date the grievance is received, the name and contact information of the complainant, the nature of the complaint, the evidence, the name of the certificate holder involved, any actions taken to investigate the grievance, the findings of investigations and the decision made about the grievance.

1.3.60 All grievances and reported incidents and their findings should be analyzed as part of regular quality management system reviews and the necessary adjustments made to CB certification management systems and processes.

Appeals procedure

Appeals are based only to any certification decision provided by the CB to the certificate holder.

1.3.61 The CB shall have a procedure to receive, evaluate and make decisions on appeals.

1.3.62 The procedure shall be made publicly available on the CB website, and the CB shall provide it to the client.

1.3.63 The CB shall not resolve appeals by changing the certification scope in order to eliminate a problem in the scope of the certification granted.

1.3.64 The appeals shall be analyzed by at least two persons who did not participate in the audit or decision-making process related to the certification, who do not have any conflicts of interest related to the certificate holder, and one of whom shall have a level of lead auditor for the specific certification scope.

1.3.65 The CB shall resolve and communicate the result of any appeal within 30 calendar days. The CB shall record the appeal date and eventually its results in RACP and update the status as an appeal process.

Rules for disseminating information and official certification documents

1.3.66 The CB shall have a procedure in place to disseminate information to CB personnel and certificate holders about the Rainforest Alliance Certification Program, including its official standards, rules, policies and other certification documents within two business days from the date communicated by the Rainforest Alliance.

1.3.67 The CB shall have mechanisms in place, including contact points for questions, to answer certificate holder and CB personnel questions and provide explanations about official communications.

1.3.68 The CB shall keep records of these communications to certificate holders, personnel and consultants.

1.3.69 The CB shall provide the Rainforest Alliance with contact information (names, email addresses, work address and telephone numbers) of at least one person in their organization to receive all official communications about the assurance system from the Rainforest Alliance. The CB shall immediately inform the Rainforest Alliance of any changes in these contacts through the Rainforest Alliance Assurance Platform and via email.

1.3.70 The CB personnel involved in the process of disseminating, internally or externally, information and documents shall understand the information dissemination procedure and receive training on the Rainforest Alliance Certification Programs and its documents.

    a. CB personnel above-mentioned shall be considered as part of the CB's Rainforest Alliance Certification team.

    b. The Rainforest Alliance will send all official communications to the above-mentioned contacts. These communications can include digital documents or hyperlinks to documents that are meant only for CBs such as requirements, policies and procedures, forms and templates. These communications can also include information and digital documents or hyperlinks to documents whose target audience includes auditors and certificate holders.

1.3.71 The CB shall provide physical documents to those certificate holders that do not have access to the Internet or the technology to receive digital documents.

Control of documents and records

1.3.72 The CB shall maintain and update all documents needed to comply with the Rules for Authorizing Certification Bodies and related Assurance rules.

1.3.73 The CB shall have a procedure in place for document and record control for all audit processes and certification. Record and documents shall be maintained for minimum five years.

1.3.74 Documents that become obsolete in less than three years from publication shall be kept for a minimum total of three years (time while current + time obsolete = three years) before elimination.

1.3.75 The CB shall maintain digital or physical copies of the documents and make them available to the Rainforest Alliance within five business days of being requested.

1.3.76 The CB shall provide any documentation or records required by the Rainforest Alliance through the Rainforest Alliance Assurance Platform or other official communication channel, such as email.

Applicable laws assessment

1.3.77 For each of their geographic scopes, the CB shall document and maintain an up-to-date registry of all applicable laws and regulations that apply to each of the requirements and related compliance of the Rainforest Alliance 2020 Standards.

1.3.78 The assessment and registry shall be made using a template provided by the Rainforest Alliance.

1.3.79 The CB shall submit the assessment as requirement to obtain Rainforest Alliance authorization to operate.

1.3.80 The assessment shall be updated yearly and re-submitted by January 31st of each year to maintain authorization.

1.3.81 The CB shall have ready access to the applicable laws and regulations and be able to produce digital copies of the relevant text within five calendar days of any request by the Rainforest Alliance for information. Access can include, but is not limited to, a viable URL or website link and electronic, physical or photographic copies of the relevant text of the laws or regulations. When laws and regulations are not available online, the CB and the Rainforest Alliance shall agree on a feasible production date.

1.3.82 The CB shall make a laws assessment report available to the public and its certificate holders. This report shall contain per criteria of the standard:

    a. Full official name of the applicable laws and regulations

    b. Dates of publication and when the legislation came into force

1.3.83 The Rainforest Alliance reserves the right to consolidate assessments from all CBs to harmonize the interpretation and verification of the Rainforest Alliance Standards and auditing mechanisms and add other laws. The Rainforest Alliance can require that harmonized assessments and interpretations be binding for CBs for certification activities and performance and compliance evaluations.

Risk Assessment

1.3.84 The CB shall maintain a risk management plan for the CB's Management System including at least:

    a. A registry of risks identified to the integrity of the CB's management system and certification operations

    b. A quantification of those risks

    c. A description of the strategies being employed to mitigate each of these risks

1.3.85 The plan shall include a revision schedule annually and be revised as risks arise or change.

1.3.86 The CB shall maintain a risk management plan for auditing the implementation of the Standard. The CB shall perform a Risk Assessment in which they assess compliance risks for all Rainforest Alliance Standards requirements by country in which they audit and certify farms, groups and Supply Chain actors. When requested by the Rainforest Alliance, these assessments can include analysis by crop.

1.3.87 The CB shall submit the Risk Assessment as requirement to obtain Rainforest Alliance authorization to operate.

1.3.88 The CB shall identify risks at least yearly and submit the outcome to the Rainforest Alliance by January 31st of every year to maintain authorization.

    a.   The CB shall describe these risks, their contexts and the verification methods to audit and interpret related criteria.

    b.   The Risk Assessment shall be made using the template provided by the Rainforest Alliance.

1.3.89 The CB shall indicate minimal competence required to audit and the additional verification methods required by the Rainforest Alliance as indicated in the Auditing Rules.

1.3.90 The Rainforest Alliance may request a copy of the Risk Assessment at any time.

1.3.91 The Rainforest Alliance will use these Risk Assessments to evaluate how CBs will evaluate, detect and manage compliance risks during audits.

1.3.92 The CB shall annually review the Risk Assessment and update it as needed for certificate holders.

1.3.93 The CB should discuss and compare— on at least an annual basis— the Risk Assessment for each scope with other Rainforest Alliance authorized CBs operating in the same geographical scope.

1.3.94 The CB is encouraged to collaborate on Risk Assessments; however, each CB is responsible for keeping their respective assessments up to date.

1.3.95 The CB shall not outsource Risk Assessments but can contract specialists to investigate risks in a new scope or to advise CBs on specific risks. CBs assume full responsibility for any Risk Assessment or part of an assessment contributed by specialists.

1.3.96 The Rainforest Alliance may consolidate Risk Assessments to harmonize the interpretation of risks, verification of the Rainforest Alliance Standards, auditing methods, competence and add other obligatory risks.

1.3.97 The Rainforest Alliance reserves the right to request region-specific risk analysis within one country.

Competence management

1.3.98 The CB shall manage and be responsible for the competence and performance of the Certification Team (CB personnel and contracted consultant involved in the certification process).

1.3.99 The CB is responsible for identifying competent personnel to integrate into the Certification team and ensure their competence to perform the work.

1.3.100 The CB shall register the contact information of the Certification Team in the Rainforest Alliance Assurance Platform and update any change.

1.3.101 The CB shall have described and implemented a competence management policy and procedure according to requirements set out in ISO/IEC 17065 section 6.1.2.

1.3.102 The description of each member of the Certification Team in the Rainforest Alliance Assurance Platform shall contain at least the evidences of meeting the requirements for each role as defined in this document in Chapter 2.

1.3.103 The CB shall have an internal performance evaluation and monitoring mechanism to assess the performance of all CB personnel and consultant members of the Certification Team every year.

    i.   The results shall be reflected in the CB's internal training needs and training program.

    ii.   This system shall be composed of at least:

- A compliance review of the requirement per role mentioned in Chapter 2 of this document

- A list of competence and performance criteria per role

- A baseline and gap assessment of the competences linked to each role

- Monitoring of the performance. A mechanism is in place for the CB to monitor at least annually the competence and performance of each member of the Certification Team using the list of competence and performance criteria. Performance evaluation shall be recorded.

- Mechanisms to provide immediate and effective feedback to the members of the Certification Team to correct detected weaknesses and foster performance and quality improvements. Evaluation of the competency and performance of all auditors through the periodic review of records, audit team feedback and interviews, operation feedback and interviews, as well as in-person assessments, observations and examinations and other performance assessment mechanisms done every year. A witness assessment of each auditor, lead auditor and lead auditor for social topics shall take place at least every two years.

1.3.104 Based on the outcome of the performance monitoring and evaluation in 1.3.103, the CB shall address any performance gap by a personal competency improvement plan that should start its implementation within six months from the identification of the performance gap. And where applicable, the results of the performance evaluation shall be addressed and reflected in the CB's internal training needs and training program.

CB capacity assessment

1.3.105 The CB capacity assessment shall evaluate the capacity of the CB's certification team to work with the CB on the Rainforest Alliance program without jeopardizing the quality and credibility of the Rainforest Alliance certification system. This assessment shall demonstrate:

    a. Enough qualified personnel members meeting the Rules for CB Personnel to cover demand of all audits and evaluations as per the CB's certificate holders.

    b. The right qualified personnel based on risk assessment level for the audit and country scope and also to ensure their skills are aligned to the type of certificate holder.

    c. Financial stability of the CB's operations.

        i. CBs shall have Financial Statements indicating that the organization is financially sustainable.

        ii. CBs shall have financial projection of growth for the next three years.

        iii. Enough internal resources and financial means to access external resources for carrying audits.

1.3.106 The capacity assessment shall include but is not limited to:

    a. A list of all personnel in the Rainforest Alliance Certification team.

    b. Expected amount of efforts (e.g., working day) of personnel in the certification process according to the number of expected audits throughout the year.

    c. Number of outsourced work planning to use for the year based on total number of certificate holders.

    d. Number and type of certificate holders the CB provides audit and certification services to.

    e. Cost of audit services (administrative, certification and logistics) including monetary value of labor/day per different category of personnel.

    f. Forecast of number and type of audits per year.

1.3.107 The CB shall assess and plan their capacity (financial and human resources) to conduct audits and services related to the certification process. The CB shall submit and update the capacity plan to the Rainforest Alliance Assurance Platform every January 31st.

Management review and internal audit

1.3.108 To gather inputs for the management review, the CB shall:

    a. Implement and use the results of the performance review and monitoring system as defined in section 1.3.98 to 1.3.104 Competence Management.

    b. Use the results of the capacity assessment.

    c. Use the results of the Risk Management mechanism required in section 1.3.84 to 1.3.97.

    d. Review the Rainforest Alliance Certification process audits results, including nonconformity trends and certification decisions (positive and negative) per certification scope.

    e. Use results of the CB monitoring activities conducted by Rainforest Alliance.

    f. Use complaints and appeals received; carry out a survey of 5% of certified operations (CH contact that was present in the audit process) or a minimum of five certificate holders, whichever is greater, to determine operation satisfaction with respect to quality and performance of services rendered; perceived competency and service orientation of personnel and auditors; timeliness of the delivery of information and reports; satisfaction with the field evaluation process(es) and results; timeliness of attention to and resolution of inquiries and complaints; and quality and usefulness of audit reports.

    g. Use results of internal and external audits.

1.3.109 The CB has a mechanism in place to ensure that the results of the management review are effectively used to improve their system´s performance.

1.3.110 The CB shall implement an internal audit program which identifies the CB's shortcoming in implementing the Rainforest Alliance audits and certification program, including requirements of ISO/IEC 17065:2012 section 8.6.

1.3.111 The internal audit shall cover all applicable Rainforest Alliance requirements and ISO/IEC 17065:2012 requirements at least annually.

1.3.112 The CB's internal audit program shall apply a depth and sampling level which gives confidence in its results being representative.

1.3.113 The personnel conducting the internal audit shall demonstrate skills and qualification to conduct the internal audit. The personnel conducting the audits shall not be involved in any activity covered by the scope of the audit.

1.3.114 The internal audit shall take into account results from external assessments and evaluate how these results have been addressed.

1.3.115 The internal audit results shall be subjected to management review.

1.3.116 The CB shall conduct a root-cause analysis and implement a corrective action plan to manage any nonconformities identified during the internal audit.

1.3.117 The CB shall implement preventive actions to avoid or minimize any nonconformities.

1.3.118 The Rainforest Alliance shall review implementation and compliance with corrective and preventive action plans. Frequency to be determined by the Rainforest Alliance.

Stakeholder input

1.3.119 The CB shall implement processes for stakeholders to provide input about CB's certificate holders and auditors performance respectively and shall ensure that stakeholders are informed of these opportunities to engage. The CB shall keep record of inputs provided as well as the contact details of the stakeholders providing input.

1.3.120 The CB shall gather additional stakeholder input about the assurance system beyond input from certificate holders in order to strengthen the credibility of the assessment and can be useful information to support the CB management system. Stakeholders can potentially provide input to audits, on the quality of auditors or the certification process, and on risks to the integrity of the CB and certificate holders.

1.4   CB MONITORING

General provisions

CB monitoring is a continuous assessment process to evaluate CBs regarding compliance with the Assurance Rules and performance on the implementation of certification operations, including quality of audits.

1.4.1   The Rainforest Alliance has the right to review any aspect of CB performance at any time and assign nonconformities and sanctions if needed. Nevertheless, some audits are specific events as described in **Table 1**.

1.4.2   The Rainforest Alliance reserves the right to outsource entirely or partially the CB monitoring audits to an external CB oversight services provider(s). The service provider will carry out the work on the behalf of the Rainforest Alliance and hence information or documents within the scope of external CB oversight requested by the service provider shall be deemed requested by the Rainforest Alliance.

1.4.3   The CB monitoring plan will be based on CB's performance status at that time. Changes in CB's performance status can lead to modifications to the plan. CB will need to cover the costs of any additional audits due to changes in performance status or the costs of any unannounced audits related to complaints or significant performance lapses discovered through continuous evaluation processes.

1.4.4   The number, scope and duration of audits will be determined by the Rainforest Alliance using a risk-based approach to reduce credibility risks to its certification program, as well as, but not limited to:

a.   Number of audits conducted; geographic scopes being audited

b.   Results of the previous monitoring period

c.   Results of previous monitoring audits

d.   Feedback received by the Rainforest Alliance from certificate holders and stakeholders; suspicions of misconduct/poor performance

e.   CB and auditor performance

1.4.5   The Rainforest Alliance will provide the CB with a report for each type of audit. Reports will include the dates and scopes of the audit and the site where applicable, the name of the evaluators, the findings, opportunity for improvements, assigned corrective actions and implementation periods as necessary. CB's performance status will also be indicated based on the results of the audit.

1.4.6   The CB shall carry out a root cause analysis of the assigned nonconformities and submit a description of the root cause analysis as well as a written corrective action for each nonconformity to the Rainforest Alliance within no more than 10 calendar days of the receipt of the assessment or evaluation report. The corrective actions shall describe how they address the root causes and will lead to the expected outcomes indicated by the Rainforest Alliance.

1.4.7   The CB shall provide corrective action implementation evidence to the Rainforest Alliance within 60 calendar days if not stipulated differently for the expected outcomes.

1.4.8   The Rainforest Alliance carries out desk or on-site verification assessments, or a combination of the two, as needed to confirm implementation of corrective actions and achievement of expected outcomes.

Table 1. CB Monitoring Audits

Office audit
These are more complete and detailed audits of CB processes, procedures and documentation that occur in one or more of a CB's working sites or scopes.

These audits include but are not limited to:

    a. A review of the certification management system and related documentation to the requirements and other rules

    b. A review of a representative sample of the certification records of the CB, considering the whole certification process

    c. Interpretation of the Standards and Policies

    d. Interviews with CB personnel, certificate holders and other stakeholders to evaluate different aspects of CB and auditor performance

    e. Verification of CB implementation of corrective actions, other compliance or requested information

Some office audits can be unannounced or on short notice in order to investigate specific issues, incidents or complaints.

The Rainforest Alliance has the right to extend on-site audits to other geographic scopes or sites as needed to assess and verify compliance with Rainforest Alliance requirements.

Desk audit
These are reviews of information based on documents, records or other materials that can be transferred electronically or otherwise examined without visiting CB operations.

Desk audits with specific scopes will be announced in advance, and the Rainforest Alliance will request documentation and other materials from CBs; however, desk audits are part of the continuous performance evaluation process and can occur at any time.

Desk audits can also be unannounced based on materials or documents already available to the Rainforest Alliance, or that CBs are supposed to have available on the Rainforest Alliance Assurance Platform, or that can be made available on short notice.

Auditor and CB performance evaluations based on reviews of audit reports and other documentation related to the audit and certification process are also a type of desk audit.

Shadow audit

This is part of the CB on-site audit where the Rainforest Alliance auditor observes the performance of the CB auditor(s) and assesses to what extent the auditor is correctly addressing the Rainforest Alliance Sustainable Agriculture Standard or Supply Chain Standard whichever one applicable. The shadow audit is performed by having a Rainforest Alliance auditor accompanying the CB audit team and therefore it is carried out at the same time as the CB's selected audit.

The CB shall, upon confirmation of the Rainforest Alliance to perform a shadow audit, inform the CH and include necessary details of such participation of the Rainforest Alliance in its audit plan.

The conditions of a shadow audit as well as the arrangements needed (if it is an audit combined with other schemes) shall be agreed upon in advance with the Certification Manager. If necessary, communications must be sent to any other involved party (e.g. other certification standards).

The Rainforest Alliance reserves the rights to require the CB to adjust its certification process based on the findings of the shadow audit including but not limited to:

   a. Modification of CB's audit findings

   b. Adjustment of CB's certification decision

   c. Performing additional (on-site) audit activities

Review audit

This audit is conducted by a Rainforest Alliance auditor to evaluate and monitor the performance of the CB through a visit to the CH, independently of the CB, to evaluate the CB's auditors who audited that certificate holder and the CB's subsequent quality control and certification decision processes. The review audit is performed after a CB's audit has been conducted, and therefore it can be carried out at any time. The CB shall, upon confirmation of the Rainforest Alliance to perform a review audit, provide all required information for the Rainforest Alliance audit team to prepare for such an audit.

The Rainforest Alliance can also independently evaluate certificate holder's compliance with the applicable standards at any time as part of any investigation or quality control process.

Most review audits are fully announced to the organization in advance. However, the Rainforest Alliance reserves the right to perform a review audit unannounced or with a short notice prior to the visit.

The Rainforest Alliance reserves the rights to require the CB to adjust its certification process based on the findings of the review audit including but not limited to:

    a. Modification of CB's audit findings

    b. Adjustment of CB's certification decision

    c. Performing additional (on-site) audit activities

    d. The Rainforest Alliance reserves the rights to suspend the CH's certificate for an (in)definite period and/or not allow the organization to get certified for a (in)definite period based on the findings of a review audit.

1.5 SANCTIONS

General provisions

1.5.1   The Rainforest Alliance reserves the right to sanction CBs based on evidence of improper procedure or behavior that jeopardizes the credibility of the Rainforest Alliance and/or compromises its assurance system. There are four levels of sanctions that the Rainforest Alliance can impose on a CB: warning, yellow card, red card or cancellation of the CB's authorization.

1.5.2   The sanction given depends on the severity of the misconduct and on previous sanctions given to the CB as explained below. The Rainforest Alliance may decide on any level of sanction at any moment. This means that there is no need to follow a linear sequence of sanctions (i.e. a red card may be directly issued without any previous warning or yellow card) until the end of a monitoring period.

1.5.3   The CB is responsible for informing certificate holders of the sanction received from the Rainforest Alliance (red or yellow card) and must explain to certificate holders the communication channels and the follow-up.

1.5.4   The CB is responsible for completing any pending audit process with prior approval of the Rainforest Alliance (the audit plan has been sent to the CH) and for complying with the deadlines stipulated in the contract with the client.

1.5.5   If the CB does not have personnel capacity as the certification process may be delayed, the CB shall request the Rainforest Alliance for support in order to avoid breaching client's sales contracts.

1.5.6   The CB shall provide all certificate holder information to a new CB, if the CH decides to move after it has been notified that the current CB has been sanctioned.

1.5.7   The CB is responsible for responding legally to any demand that the client makes for the damages caused by not complying with the audit processes.

Warning

1.5.8 A warning is the lowest level of sanction. Other than the necessary corrective action, a warning does not have any immediate implications for the CB. However, consecutive warnings can lead to a higher level of sanction.

1.5.9 The sanction status for warnings is not published on the Rainforest Alliance website.

1.5.10 Situations in which a warning may be issued include but are not limited to:

    a. Unjustified delay during the certification process or communication with the Rainforest Alliance.

    b. Corrective actions that do not address the NCs identified or not carried out in a timely manner.

    c. Inaccurate or incomplete information provided by certifier, auditor or Scheme Manager.

    d. Violations of the Certification Rules (e.g. sending a certificate to the certificate holder prior to certification being granted).

1.5.11 After receiving a warning, the CB shall submit a corrective action plan within 30 calendar days; disrespecting this indication can lead to an upgrade of the sanction. Also, repetitive warnings for the same reason can lead to an upgrade of the sanction.

Yellow card

1.5.12 A yellow card is the second level of sanction. Situations in which a yellow card can be issued include but are not limited to:

    a. Further misconduct after a warning in the previous 12 months.

    b. Further misconduct after two warnings in the previous 24 months.

    c. When the CB disrespects a decision taken by the Rainforest Alliance.

    d. Credibility risks arising to the Rainforest Alliance program due to performance of the CB.

    e. No collaboration such as failure to provide requested information by the Rainforest Alliance.

1.5.13 A yellow card still allows the CB to continue with all activities as usual although:

    a. The sanction status is published on the Rainforest Alliance website for a minimum of 90 calendar days.

    b. The CB shall submit a plan with clear root cause analysis, corrections and corrective actions in order to resolve, as well as avoid, reoccurrence of the issues that led to the sanction. The deadline to submit this action plan to the Rainforest Alliance is 30 calendar days after receiving the sanction communication.

c. If no action is taken by the CB during the first six months after receiving the sanction communication, the Rainforest Alliance will assess the possibility of suspending temporarily the approval of the CB.

d. Upon receipt of the notification from the CB that corrective actions have been fully implemented, the Rainforest Alliance shall carry out a follow-up assessment and make a final decision within 90 calendar days after the assessment is finalized. The new assessment can be both at office and at field level depending on the sanction decision:

    i. An office audit will assess the improvements made in the Management System of the CB; when the sanction is coming from a previous office audit, the assessment in the office is conducted as a follow-up audit in which the implementation of all corrective measures submitted by the CB are thoroughly assessed.

    ii. At least one shadow/review audit is conducted in order to check the improvements made at field level (the update of procedures/instructions applicable to the auditors). The audit can only take place after the CB has submitted its completed corrective actions. Depending on the relevance of the findings that lead the Rainforest Alliance to issue the sanction, more verification activities could eventually be planned.

    iii. The result of this new assessment (office and shadow/review audits) is communicated to the CB, together with the updated situation: either the yellow card is lifted or the status is upgraded to a higher level of sanction.

Red card

1.5.14 Situations in which a red card can be issued include but are not limited to:

a. Proven misconduct of a CB while holding a yellow card status.

b. Negative outcome of the monitoring audit performed to lift yellow card status.

c. When the conditions for the approval are not met to its fullest (e.g. no Scheme Manager or certifier is available in the CB for a certain commodity or scope, the accreditation status/scope is no longer valid).

d. Breach of Authorization Agreement between the CB and the Rainforest Alliance.

1.5.15 A red card leads to a suspension of the CB's Rainforest Alliance activities. the Rainforest Alliance distinguishes two types of red card, depending of the nature of the suspension issued:

a. A temporary suspension: for an unspecified period, the CB is not allowed to conduct certification and surveillance audits, nor sign (new) contracts with new certificate holders until the issue(s) that led to the sanction decision are solved. The Rainforest Alliance reserves the right to assign a deadline for the resolution of the issue; if the deadline is not respected, the sanction can be upgraded to approval cancellation. A suspension is published on the Rainforest Alliance website for the duration of the sanction, and all the CB's current certificate holders are informed by the CB about the suspension.

b. A partial suspension (limited to scope, commodity, sector, type of certificate holders, geographical scope: under this sanction status and for an unspecified period, the CB is not allowed to conduct certification and surveillance audits, nor sign (new) contracts with new certificate holders for the scope/commodity/region included in the sanction communication until the issue(s) that led to the decision are solved. All the CB's current certificate holders under the scope of the partial suspension, are informed by the CB about the suspension.

1.5.16 For the duration of the suspension, the CB shall work on a thorough corrective action plan to mitigate all issues that led to the sanction. the Rainforest Alliance will evaluate the proposed corrective action plan, and once it has been approved and implemented, The Rainforest Alliance will decide on the CB's status.

1.5.17 Before a final decision is taken:

a. The CB (Scheme Manager, certifiers and auditors [at least those that were conducting audits in the 12 months prior to the communication of the sanction] as well as all relevant personnel, such as quality managers, if requested) shall participate in training on the Rainforest Alliance standards, with a minimum duration of 2 days, using materials developed by the Rainforest Alliance. The cost for this training shall be met by the CB.

b. A follow-up audit at office level shall be passed (the period of 60 days for corrective actions is applicable).

c. If the result of the office audit was positive (i.e. nonconformities or issues that led to the sanction are fully closed/solved): at least one shadow or review audit shall be conducted in order to check whether the actions taken at office level have translated into improvements in the field. Depending on the severity of the original findings that led The Rainforest Alliance to issue the sanction additional verification activities could eventually be planned.

d. If the final decision is negative, the approval of the CB will be cancelled (see next level of sanction). Also, when more than 12 months have passed since issuing the suspension, without it being lifted, the Rainforest Alliance reserves the right to cancel the approval of the CB.

Cancellation

1.5.18 The cancellation of the CB's approval is the highest level of sanction. It means the CB is no longer a Rainforest Alliance-approved CB. The CB is therefore not allowed to perform certification and surveillance audits or sign new contracts and is removed from the Rainforest Alliance list of approved CBs.

1.5.19 Upon cancellation of approval, the CB is responsible and liable for the issued certificates until they are not valid or decided differently by the Rainforest Alliance.

1.5.20 Situations in which the Rainforest Alliance can decide to cancel a CB's approval include but are not limited to:

a. Deliberate misconduct of the CB (e.g. performing audits or signing new contracts whilst subject to a red card)

b. Misconduct that seriously damages the Rainforest Alliance's reputation and credibility

c. A temporary suspension that has not been lifted in the defined timeframe

Auditor/Personnel sanctions

1.5.21   The CB shall establish and implement a system for sanctioning auditors/personnel who are part of the Certification Team.

1.5.22   The CB shall include the sanctions based on **Table 2** below as part of their program.

1.5.23   The Rainforest Alliance reserves the right to request the CB to sanction auditors/personnel based on evidence.

1.5.24   The CB will inform the Rainforest Alliance of sanctions applied to auditors/personnel decided by the CB and updated in the Rainforest Alliance Assurance Platform accordingly.

1.5.25   The auditor/personnel has the right to appeal any decision regarding his/her status made by the CB or the Rainforest Alliance.

Table 2. Auditor/Personnel Sanctions

Action	Causes	Sanctions
1. Warning	Weaknesses or deficiencies identified in the Rainforest Alliance performance evaluations that involve a nonconformity or an evidenced complaint about the auditor/personnel from a third party	The CB should notify the auditor/personnel of this warning in writing, indicating which aspects must be improved or whether further training is required for improvement.
2. Suspension	An auditor/personnel may be suspended in any of the following situations: a. Results indicating low performance in the annual evaluation conducted by the Rainforest Alliance, which prevents the auditor/personnel from achieving a medium or high level of performance b. Number of nonconformities identified during audits leading to a fundamental failure of the audit process to detect conformance with one or more	For causes a and b: suspension for six months during which time the weakness/deficiency must be corrected. The corrective actions established by the CB will be implemented in order to comply with these rules and/or the performance assessment. These actions include specific training and/or field work, according to the requirements of each case. The Rainforest Alliance may include additional requirements for compliance. 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

Action	Causes	Sanctions
	critical criteria; review of reports assessments conducted by the Rainforest Alliance c. The auditor didn't address the corrective action requirements resulting from the shadow audit d. Lack of attentions to previous warning or repeated warnings e. Conflict of interest	performance in order to obtain the status of leader or instructor once again. In addition, the status of the certifier is suspended until he/she achieves and demonstrates the desired performance in order to obtain the status of the certifier again. In addition, the auditor is suspended from inclusion in the team of auditors for a geographical expansion. For cause c, d and e: suspension for three months. During this time, the CB investigates the case in order to establish the severity of the deficiency and takes 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. Downgrading of the auditor's category	The audit team member may be downgraded from its current role.	The sanctions to auditors may apply to a specific auditor scope including but not limited to the following or a combination: • per country • per crop or sector • per type of audited system (farm or Supply Chain)

Action	Causes	Sanctions
4. Cancellation	The auditor's/personnel's name may be removed from the Rainforest Alliance Assurance Platform under the following circumstances: a. Serious or repeated deficiencies or nonconformities directly related to the auditor's/personnel's performance and/or conduct b. Inactivity of the auditor where he/she has not conducted audits in the last two years and has not met the corresponding Requirements to Maintain Authorization c. Not participated in training courses requested by the Rainforest Alliance d. Reported evidence of a clear conflict of interest situation e. Failure to address suspension and reinstate competence within 12 months f. Intentionally conducted fraud as defined under 1.3.44	Cancellation of the auditor/personnel results in disqualification from conducting audits/certification process activities for all Rainforest Alliance-approved certification bodies during a period established by the Rainforest Alliance. Auditors/personnel who did conduct fraud as defined under 1.3.44 will not be accepted in the Rainforest Alliance program anymore (in any position).

Auditor/personnel status reactivation

In order to reactivate the auditor's status, the following requirements must be met:

1.5.26 For auditors, conduct at least two audits accompanying an audit team; auditors reinstate their previous category after field practice.

1.5.27 Complete the required training that would have taken place during the period of inactivity.

1.5.28 Any additional requirements for the reactivation of the conditions established by the Rainforest Alliance.

1.5.29 The Rainforest Alliance may request monitoring audit reports/certification processes in case of any risk detected or due to third party complaints.

Appeals to the Rainforest Alliance

1.5.30 The CB has the right to appeal to the Rainforest Alliance about sanctions and authorization decisions implemented, unless clearly stipulated otherwise.

1.5.31 A CB shall maintain the status it held immediately before the results being appealed. If the appeal is accepted and upheld, then the CB shall maintain its pre-appeal performance status.

1.5.32 All appeals shall be made within 10 calendar days of the reception of the communication decision. The Rainforest Alliance will review the appeal and decide within 10 calendar days. All appeal decisions made are final and binding.

1.5.33 The final appeal decision shall be communicated by the Rainforest Alliance to the appellant.

1.6 ASSURANCE COSTS

1.6.1 The Rainforest Alliance may charge fees for different Assurance System activities and services. These activities and services may include fees and costs for the authorization and CB monitoring audits and fixed fees for certain certification services.

1.6.2 The Rainforest Alliance will review and publish fees on an annual basis, or earlier, if deemed necessary. The Rainforest Alliance can modify the catalogue fee and include additional fees as needed, providing at least 90 calendar days of advance notice to CBs.

1.6.3 Fees and costs of any third party involved in any stage of the assurance process, if decided by the Rainforest Alliance, are independently determined by the appointed service provider and must be paid directly to them.

1.6.4 Until further notice, the Rainforest Alliance will not charge CBs for (if conducted directly by the Rainforest Alliance):

    a. Costs of required regular quality and performance assessments needed to maintain CB authorization to provide Rainforest Alliance certification

b. Auditor performance reviews (remote and online) as required by the quality assurance system

c. Desk evaluation and documentation reviews

d. On-site assessments

e. Shadow and review audits

f. Use of the Rainforest Alliance Certified™ certification mark

1.6.5 The Rainforest Alliance will charge CBs for:

a. The verification of the implementation of corrective actions to achieve expected outcomes including any assessment (remote or on-site follow-up)

b. Any Rainforest Alliance involvement in corrective actions such as required training

c. The Application Assessment within the Authorization Process

d. Additional training needed as part of the Authorization Process

CHAPTER 2: RULES FOR CERTIFICATION BODIES PERSONNEL

INTRODUCTION

The rules included in this chapter set the minimum requirements Certification Bodies (CB) Personnel must comply with to be authorized to provide certification services to their clients under the Rainforest Alliance 2020 Certification Program.

2.1 CB personnel meeting the requirements described in this document for their corresponding roles and scope shall become members of the Rainforest Alliance CB Training program and will have access to its training offer.

2.2 Rainforest Alliance reserves the right to request CB personnel to follow specific training courses to meet competencies and performance criteria.

2.3 Rainforest Alliance reserves the right to request CBs to integrate specific performance review and monitoring systems to manage their CB personnel's competencies.

Training courses requirements

Rainforest Alliance's CB training defines **training** as all capacity-building activities designed on clear learning objectives that aim to bridge gaps in knowledge, skills, and/or attitudes to ensure CB personnel have consistent levels of competence and understanding of the Rainforest Alliance Certification Program.

2.4 Training hours can be reached by combining one or more training sessions. For example, CB personnel can follow two courses of 20 hours each and one training of eight hours to reach the 48-hour training requirement.

2.5 Training courses[3] referred to in the requirements may be held face-to-face or online.

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[3] If training sessions cannot meet the requirements set forth in this document, exemptions may be granted on a case by case basis by sending an email to CBmanagement@ra.org and CBtraining@ra.org.

2.6 If a duration is not stated, then the course shall have a minimum length of **40 hours**.

2.7 Every training course delivered will result in a certificate when successfully completed.

2.8 The certificate of the training course shall specify the course content and duration.

2.9 When requirements mention training in ISO, SAI, or any other standards and/or guidelines, the training shall cover the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments).

   a. If a new version of the corresponding ISO standard is released after the CB personnel was registered in the Rainforest Alliance Certification Platform (RACP) and received training on the previous version, a refresher training will be taken into consideration to meet the requirement 2.7. (

      i. The refresher training may be developed and provided internally by an approved CB instructor or an external training provider.)

2.10 The ISO Lead Auditor training courses shall cover applicable standards on quality auditing, auditing techniques, the focus of the audits (professional behavior and communication) and reporting, and it shall also include a practical case study.

Objectives

This chapter describes the rules and requirements that govern the competency and performance of CB personnel of the Rainforest Alliance Certification process.

It is intended to be used primarily by:

- Scheme managers from approved/applicant Rainforest Alliance Certification Body's to better understand staff responsibilities and requirements for their specific role as well as guidance for the development of internal training programs.

- Auditors, freelancer or affiliated, to an approved/applicant Rainforest Alliance Certification Body.

- Certificate holders, clients and the public to better understand Rainforest Alliance CB personnel requirements.

This chapter intends to ensure that the Certification Body personnel and other contractors involved in the Rainforest Alliance Certification Program audit process have the necessary competencies to perform consistent and accurate audit assessments. It is intended to be used in connection with the other Rainforest Alliance assurance documents and aims to:

- Define the structure of the Rainforest Alliance approved CB personnel and other personnel involved in the certification process and addressed as the CB personnel from here onwards.

- Lists the requirements relating to the approval of CB personnel and other contractors involved in the Rainforest Alliance Certification Program.

- Establish the responsibilities of each of the actors for the CB within the certification process.

Scope and implementation

Whilst CB personnel are required to be hired by a Rainforest Alliance approved CB, they shall be individually approved, and their eligibility and/or permanence in the certification program will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

The requirements referred to in this document are binding for all authorized Rainforest Alliance CBs and any personnel used by those CBs to implement Rainforest Alliance certification activities. CBs that employ or contract persons to provide auditing services shall ensure compliance with the relevant requirements mentioned in this document.

2.1   CB PERSONNEL STRUCTURE

CB personnel refers to all those hired workers, independent contractors and consultants who hold a legal relationship with a Rainforest Alliance approved CB and who are involved and/or carry out assurance activities within the Rainforest Alliance certification process. The Rainforest Alliance authorized CB structure consists of two sub-teams: the Program Management team and the Audit team.

- **The Program Management team:** Shall include CB personnel involved in the management of an audit program. Please refer to Section 5 of ISO 19011:2018-Managing an audit program.

- **The Audit team:** Shall include CB personnel involved in activities related to conducting an audit. Please refer to Section 6 of ISO 19011:2018-Conducting an audit.

Table 1 shows the Rainforest Alliance authorized CB personnel structure.

Table 1: CB Personnel Members Structure

Team	Role	
Program Management team	Scheme Manager	Database Administrator
	Certifier	
Audit team	Trainee	Lead Auditor for Social Topics
	Auditor	CB Instructor
	Lead Auditor	Technical Expert

2.1.1   A CB structure shall consist of—at minimum— a scheme manager, certifier, database administrator, lead auditor and CB instructor.

2.1.2   All CB personnel roles may be carried out by hired workers, independent contractors and consultants provided they meet the requirements set for the corresponding role and scope.

2.1.3   All CB personnel involved shall be assigned to one or more roles.

2.1.4   CB personnel may request approval for any given role without having to start in a more junior position, provided they meet the corresponding 2020 Rainforest Alliance Rules for CB personnel requirements.

2.1.5   All CB audit team and certifiers shall meet at least once a year (virtually or physically) to carry out calibration activities or sessions.

2.1.6   The program management team shall have a procedure in place to assess auditors' performance and competence at least on an annual basis**.** The procedure shall allow CBs to demonstrate that their auditors comply with the requirements outlined in this document. The procedure may include (but is not limited to) assessments, witness activities, interviews, etc.

Program management team

Scheme manager

The scheme manager acts as the first point of contact for the Rainforest Alliance. The scheme manager is responsible for the administrative management and compliance of the CB's account in the Rainforest Alliance CB Management platform.

2.1.7   The scheme manager shall:

    a.   Ensure that all CB personnel meet the qualifications described in this document

    b.   Update CB personnel and certificate holders about changes in the certification program

    c.   Apply for extensions or new scopes to CB management

    d.   Update and provide documentation and/or reports to the Rainforest Alliance when requested

    e.   Coordinate all reporting in the Rainforest Alliance traceability system

    f.   Properly manage corresponding CB accounts in the Rainforest Alliance CB Management platform including but not limited to keeping the list of staff and their contact details up to date

    g.   Ensure that follow-up communications with the Rainforest Alliance are addressed

    h.   Inform the Rainforest Alliance when there are changes that can affect CB compliance with Rainforest Alliance requirements

i. Inform the Rainforest Alliance when the CB receives an action from its accreditation body or any other scheme the CB is approved for

j. Oversee and provide follow up on queries and complaints from and about certificate holders

k. Ensure that all auditors conduct audits following the Rainforest Alliance's assurance system

l. Ensure that an internal audit of Rainforest Alliance certification management activities is conducted at least annually to ensure CB's compliance with the corresponding Rainforest Alliance's Assurance System

Certifier

The certifier is a CB personnel member that takes the certification decision and reviews audit reports to ensure proper interpretation and reporting.

2.1.8 The certifier shall:

a. Make the final certification decision

b. Modify the recommendation of the audit team due to inconsistencies identified in the audit report

c. Request the lead auditor to clarify or expand any section from the audit report when necessary

d. In coordination with the lead auditor, represent the audit team in communications with the auditee and other interested parties

e. Dismiss a nonconformity

f. Issue a new nonconformity

g. Review corrective action plans for the closure of nonconformities and evaluate the evidence for closing NCs

h. Review an appeal based on a certification decision

i. Conduct the quality review of the audit reports and ensure that accurate, complete and consistent information is recorded in the Rainforest Alliance CB management tool

j. Notify the audit team of any data or reporting inaccuracies including (but not limited to) the nonconformities evaluated in the audit report

k. Propose improvements to the scheme manager on the certification process for audit quality review and auditor competence

2.1.9 Certifiers may also perform audits provided they comply with the corresponding requirements for their role within the audit team. To comply with the "four-eyes principle," another Rainforest Alliance approved certifier within the CB shall make the certification decision.

2.1.10 Certifiers that work as independent contractors for a CB may be approved if their relationship with the CB is exclusive (i.e. the certifier does not also work for another Rainforest Alliance approved CB as a certifier and/or an auditor.)

2.1.11 In case two or more people are required to take the certification decision, at least one staff member involved shall comply with all the requirements set for the certifier role, and the rest shall meet those of the lead auditor

Database administrator

The database administrator manages the CB account in the Rainforest Alliance CB Management platform and ensures data quality and correct data input in the Rainforest Alliance Certification Platform (RACP).

2.1.12 The database administrator shall:

    a. Input data on certification processes for applicants and certificate holders, ensuring each step follows the certification process and timeline rules.

    b. Ensure data quality and update certificate holder information as needed. Data quality includes accurate certificate information, as well as consistency of information across the various fields and attachments in the RACP and Rainforest Alliance CB Management platform.

    c. Update auditor records in the Rainforest Alliance CB Management platform.

    d. Follow up on specific data input or record updates according to the Rainforest Alliance Rules for Certification and Rules for Auditing.

Audit team

Trainee

A trainee is an auditor candidate that has yet to attain a higher auditor classification.

2.1.13 Trainees shall be supervised by the lead auditor during the auditing process and shall not make any decisions, identify findings or noncompliances independently.

Auditor

An auditor is a CB personnel who conducts audits within the audit team and can be a contributing author of audit reports.

2.1.14 Auditors shall be under the direction of the lead auditor during the audit process. If an audit is conducted by a single auditor rather than an audit team, the auditor shall meet the same competency requirements as those defined for a lead auditor.

Lead auditor

A lead auditor may lead or carry out any of the audits described in the Rainforest Alliance Certification and Auditing Rules for the scope in which they are qualified and approved.

2.1.15 The lead auditor shall:

 a. Be responsible for the writing of the audit report and is the principal author.

 b. Represent the CB and the audit team during the audit.

 c. Select competent audit team members to carry out the audit.

 d. Direct and manage the audit team during and after the audit.

 e. Provide guidance and on-the-job training to trainees.

 f. Provide evidence to the certifier to be used as a basis for the certification decision.

Lead auditor for social topics

A lead auditor for social topics is a member of the audit team with a vast level of experience and expertise in social auditing. They shall be included in audits that meet the conditions described in Annex AR4: Auditing Social Topics of the 2020 Rainforest Alliance Auditing Rules.

2.1.16 When an audit meets the conditions mentioned in Annex AR4: Auditing Social Audits, the lead auditor for social topics shall substitute the lead auditor within the audit team.

2.1.17 Lead auditor for social topics shall:

 a. Be responsible for the writing of the audit report and is the principal author.

 b. Represent the CB and the audit team during the audit.

 c. Select competent audit team members to carry out the audit.

 d. Direct and manage the audit team during and after the audit.

e. Provide guidance and on-the-job training to trainees, specifically on auditing social topics[4].

f. Provide evidence to the certifier serving as a basis for the certification decision.

g. Perform workers' interviews on (very) high risk on social topics.

CB instructor

A CB instructor conducts capacity-building activities for CB personnel who are involved in the Rainforest Alliance auditing process.

2.1.18 CB instructors shall always comply with all requirements set for the lead auditor in addition to the ones stated for instructors.

2.1.19 CB instructors shall only perform training on their approved scope which shall correspond to their approved scope as lead auditors.

2.1.20 CB instructors are not obliged to deliver training on ISO standards; however, they are accountable for its quality.

Internal training requirements

2.1.21 The CB Instructor shall oversee all training designed and delivered internally for CB personnel.

2.1.22 CB instructors shall make use of the training material and guidelines provided by Rainforest Alliance as a basis to develop internal training material.

2.1.23 CB instructors or other CB personnel may carry internal training to CB personnel to meet the training requirements outlined in this document, provided they have the relevant skills, knowledge, and experience to conduct a high-quality training.

2.1.24 Internal training courses may be developed and delivered by an external training provider unless stated otherwise. An **external training provider** is a contracted individual or organization that carries out training and development activities for the CB personnel.

2.1.25 External training providers shall:

a. Have sufficient knowledge, experience and skills on the topics for which they are hired to train.

b. Have demonstrable experience in the corresponding sector, commodity and/or topic.

c. Be supervised by an authorized CB Instructor.

2.1.26 Any training material used by either internal or external training providers shall be stored and archived for a minimum of five years.

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[4] When referring to social topics, it refers to all topics and requirements included in Chapter 5 Social of the Farm and Supply Chain Standards.

2.1.27 All internal training carried out by either internal or external training providers shall include at a minimum:

   a. Training agenda, including date and program

   b. List of registered participants, including signatures

   c. Final assessment (practical and/or theoretical) and its corresponding scores per participant

   d. Feedback form and answers

Technical expert

A technical expert is an individual or group of auditors or professionals with academic and professional qualifications and expertise that enable them to support the certification processes in very specific subject areas[5]. Technical experts provide knowledge and technical support to the audit team.

2.1.28 Technical experts may provide advice and evidence to the certifier so that he or she takes an informed certification decision but may not take the certification decision themselves.

2.1.29 Technical experts may carry out some functions of auditors such as conducting interviews, document reviews and field observations if they also meet the requirements for the auditor.

2.1.30 Technical experts may provide technical opinions to the audit team about compliance.

2.2   PERSONNEL APPROVAL REQUIREMENTS

Approval requirements outline compulsory competencies for CB personnel who wish to be authorized to provide certification services to their clients under the Rainforest Alliance 2020 Certification Program. Approval requirements are divided into two categories:

   • **Requirements for all personnel** are core, good auditing practices and are formulated as compliance criteria (yes/no) applicable to all roles. These are independent of CB's scope requests or approvals.

   • **Requirements per roles** are a set of requirements corresponding to the Standard's scope that applies to a given member of personnel—Farm and/or Supply Chain Standard—and position within the CB structure, e.g. scheme manager, auditor, etc.

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[5] Examples include specialists in occupational health and safety, labor issues, water treatment, biodiversity, high conservation value ecosystems, and similar topics.

Requirements for all personnel

2.2.1 CB personnel shall meet the corresponding approval requirements to be eligible for the Rainforest Alliance Certification Program CB personnel approval.

2.2.2 CB personnel shall always meet the List of Requirements for all personnel (see Table 2).

2.2.3 A single audit may be taken into consideration to comply with different audit experience requirements provided the audit scope is relevant for all corresponding topics such as social, G.A.P./organic, supply chain and environmental audit experience.

Table 2: List of Requirements for All Personnel

Requirements	
1	Personal registration in the corresponding CB database within the Rainforest Alliance CB Management platform
2	Personal registration in the Rainforest Alliance Learning Network

Program management team

Scheme manager

Table 3: Scheme Manager Requirements for Farm and Supply Chain Scopes

No.	Approval Requirements	Scope	
		Farm	Supply Chain
1	Fluent in written and oral skills in **Spanish** and/or **English**; suitable for reporting to the Rainforest Alliance	X	X
2	Knowledge of relevant information systems and tools necessary to carry out quality monitoring activities on the certification process such as, but not limited to, Microsoft Excel, the Rainforest Alliance Learning Network (RALN), the Rainforest Alliance Certification Platform (RACP) and the Rainforest Alliance CB Management platform	X	X
3	Participate in a minimum 2-hour introductory basic training related to planning and implementing an audit/certification process. This course shall cover the main ISO 19011 guidelines and ISO 17065 principles	X	X

Certifier

Table 4: Certifier Requirements for Farm and Supply Chain Scope

No.	Approval Requirements	Requirements to Maintain Authorization	Scope	
			Farm	Supply Chain
1	Knowledge of relevant information systems and tools necessary to carry out quality monitoring activities on the Rainforest Alliance certification process such as, but not limited to, Microsoft Excel, the Rainforest Alliance Learning Network (RALN), the Rainforest Alliance Certification Platform (RACP) and the Rainforest Alliance CB Management platform	At least **2** days per year of field visits[6] as an observer **or** auditor related to **social standards**, such as (but not limited to) Rainforest Alliance or UTZ, Fairtrade, GRASP, SA8000, SMETA	X	X
2	In-depth knowledge of applicable national and local laws and regulations as well as how to interpret their application during the audit[7]		X	X
3	**18** months working as a quality reviewer for Voluntary Sustainability Standards **OR** Conducted **10** quality reviews of Voluntary Sustainability Standards in the last **4 years**	Successfully participated in a **6-hour** face-to-face or online training or auditing refresher course on auditing **social topics**	X	X
4	Successful completion of a **certified** ISO 9001 lead auditor course **OR certified** ISO 22000 lead auditor **OR certified** ISO 14001 course provided by an **ISO accredited agency** such as (but not limited to) IRCA, RABQSA, RAC, SAATCA, CRBA, ICA.		X	X
5	Successful completion of **16 hours** of basic or advanced **social auditor training** such as (but not limited to) SA8000:2014, SMETA, ETI **OR** At least **3** years of experience working as a certifier or lead auditor in **social standards** such as (but not limited to) Fairtrade, GRASP, SA8000, SMETA		X	X

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[6] Remote audits are also allowed

[7] Including but not limited to environmental, Labor, Human rights, Workplace & safety law, Public health & safety law, Laws governing ownership and use of land, and Indigenous people's rights, if applicable.

| 6 | **In the last 4 years:** Having participated in at least **6** audits **or** a minimum of **15** days of audit as a witness or lead auditor related to **social standards**, such as (but not limited to) Rainforest Alliance or UTZ, Fairtrade, GRASP, SA8000, SMETA **OR** **6** certification decisions related to **social standards**, such as (but not limited to) Rainforest Alliance or UTZ, Fairtrade, GRASP, SA8000, SMETA **OR** Being an APSCA Certified Social Compliance Auditor | | X | X |

Table 5: Additional Certifier Requirements for Farm Scope

No.	Approval Requirements	Requirements to Maintain Authorization	Scope	
			Farm	Supply Chain
1	Successful completion of post-high school (post-secondary school) training in agriculture or horticulture, natural resources, environmental sciences, social sciences, science, rural development or similar. This shall include the understanding and application of Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) **OR** At least **5** years of experience working as a certifier or lead auditor in the mentioned fields **OR** At least **5** years of work experience in agriculture or horticulture	At least **2** days per year of field visits[8] as an observer **or** auditor related to applicable **commodity category production, GAP, and/or environmental standards**	X	
2	Demonstrate knowledge of the applicable **commodity category**[9] production[10] **OR** **In the last 4 years:** Having participated in at least **10** audits **or** a minimum of **25** audit days as a witness or lead auditor related to the applicable **commodity category** production **OR** **10** certification decisions related to applicable commodity category production audits		X	

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[8] Remote audits are also allowed

[9] Please see Annex 13, tab "Crop list" of the Sustainable Agriculture Standard for a complete list of the Rainforest Alliance's crop categories.

[10] This requirement aims to ensure that the candidate has general knowledge of the commodity category to be audited. This can be proven with an internal or external training certificate, university degree, and/or course or diploma, etc.

3	**In the last 4 years:** Having participated in at least **10** audits **or** at least **25** days as a witness or lead auditor related to auditing **GAP and/or organic agriculture standards,** such as (but not limited to) UTZ, Rainforest Alliance, GLOBAL GAP, national standards (relevant scopes), Organic **OR** **10** certification decisions related to **GAP and/or organic agriculture standard** audits, such as (but not limited to) UTZ, Rainforest Alliance, GLOBAL GAP, national standards (relevant scopes), Organic		X	
4	**In the last 4 years:** Having participated in at least **10** audits **or** at least **25** days as a witness or lead auditor related to **environmental standards**, such as (but not limited to) UTZ, Rainforest Alliance, ISO 14001 **OR** **10** certification decisions related to **environmental standards** audits, such as (but not limited to) UTZ, Rainforest Alliance, ISO 14001		X	

Table 6: Additional Certifier Requirements for Supply Chain Scope

No	Approval Requirements	Requirements to Maintain Authorization	Scope	
			Farm	Supply Chain
1	Successful completion of a post-high school (postsecondary school) training in corporate social responsibility, agriculture, horticulture, or a food-related discipline whose primary focus is any combination of an industrial process, quality control, food safety, hygiene, or traceability[11] **OR** At least **5** years of experience working as a certifier or lead auditor in the mentioned fields **OR** At least **5** years of work experience in corporate social responsibility, agriculture, horticulture, or the food industry	At least **2** days per year of field visits[12] as observer **or** auditor related to processing systems **and/or** supply chains		x
2	Demonstrate knowledge of applicable commodity category processing systems[13] **OR** **In the last 4 years:** Having participated in at least **10** audits **or** at least **25** audit days as a witness or lead auditor on applicable **commodity category processing systems** **OR** **10** certification decisions related to applicable **commodity category processing systems'** audits			X

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

[12] Remote audits are also allowed.

[13] This requirement aims to ensure that the candidate has a general knowledge of the commodity category to be audited. This can be proven with an internal or external training certificate, university degree, and/or course, diploma, etc.

| 3 | **In the last 4 years:**
Having participated in at least **10** audits *or* at least **25** audit days as a witness or lead auditor in **supply chain standards,** such as (but not limited to) the Rainforest Alliance, UTZ, ASC/MSC, BRC, FSC, GFSI, HACCP, IFS, ISO 9001(scope 1 or 3), ISO 22000 (scope B or C), RSPO

OR

10 certification decisions in **supply chain standard audits**, such as (but not limited to) the Rainforest Alliance, UTZ, ASC/MSC, BRC, FSC, GFSI, HACCP, IFS, ISO 9001(scope 1 or 3), ISO 22000 (scope B or C), RSPO | | | X |

Database Administrator

Table 7: Certifier Requirements for Farm and Supply Chain Scope

No.	New Approval Requirements	Requirements to Maintain Authorization	Scope	
			Farm	Supply Chain
1	Knowledge of relevant information systems and tools necessary to carry out quality monitoring activities on the certification process such as, but not limited to, Microsoft Excel, the Rainforest Alliance Learning Network (RALN), the Rainforest Alliance Certification Platform (RACP) and the Rainforest Alliance CB Management platform	Successfully participated in a **1-hour** minimum yearly face-to-face or online refresher training on the **Rainforest Alliance Certification Platform** (RACP)	X	X
2	Participate in a minimum **2-hour** introductory basic training related to **planning and implementing an audit/certification process**. This course shall cover the main **ISO 19011 guidelines and ISO 17065 principles**		X	X

Audit team categories

The audit team refers to the CB personnel who perform audits for a CB (as employees or independent contractors). The categories have a sequential logic, each building upon the previous category.

2.2.4   An approved CB may work with a lead auditor or an audit team.

2.2.5   For CB personnel to proceed to the next category, they shall comply and remain compliant with the previous category requirements. This does not apply to technical experts who provide services and support to the audit team.

Trainee

Table 8: Trainee Requirements for Farm and Supply Chain Scopes

No.	Approval Requirements	Requirements to Maintain Authorization	Scope	
			Farm	Supply Chain
1	Successful completion of a minimum of **8 hours** of face-to-face or online training on **auditing principles and the Rainforest Alliance certification process**	Successfully participated in a **4-hour** minimum, yearly face-to-face or online refresher training on **auditing principles and the Rainforest Alliance Certification process**	X	X
2	Successful completion of post-high school (post-secondary school) training in fields with a primary focus in, or any combination of, corporate social responsibility, agriculture, horticulture or a food-related discipline whose primary focus is any combination of an industrial process, quality control, food safety, or hygiene traceability[14.] **OR** At least **3** years of relevant working experience in the mentioned fields	Having participated in at least **2** audits or at least **5** audit days as a trainee per year in the applicable **commodity category processing systems** and/or **supply chain standards**		X
3	Successful completion of post-high school (post-secondary school) training in fields with a primary focus in or any combination of	Having participated in at least **2** audits or at least **5** audit days as a trainee per year	X	

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

	agriculture, natural resources, environmental sciences, social sciences, rural development or similar **OR** At least **3** years of relevant working experience in the mentioned fields	related to applicable **commodity category production**		

Auditor

Table 9: Auditor Requirements for Farm and Supply Chain Scopes

No.	Approval Requirements	Requirements to Maintain Authorization	Scope	
			Farm	Supply Chain
1	In-depth knowledge of applicable national and local laws and regulations as well as how to interpret their application during the audit[15]	A minimum of **1** audit or **3** audit days as a trainee or auditor per year related to **social standards** such as (but not limited to) Rainforest Alliance or UTZ, Fairtrade, GRASP, SA8000, SMETA	X	X
2	**In the last 4 years:** Having participated in at least **3** audits *or* at least **8** audit days of audit as a trainee or auditor in **social standards**, such as (but not limited to) Rainforest Alliance, UTZ, Fairtrade, GRASP, SA8000, SMETA **OR** Being an APSCA Certified Social Compliance Auditor		X	X

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[15] Including but not limited to environmental, Labor, Human rights, Workplace & safety law, Public health & safety law, Laws governing ownership and use of land, and Indigenous people's rights, if applicable.

#	Requirement	Refresher			
3	Successful completion of **24 hours** of basic or advanced **social auditor training** such as (but not limited to) SA8000:2014, SMETA, ETI	Successfully participated in a yearly refresher face-to-face or online training for a minimum of **12 hours** on **auditing social topics** related to the Rainforest Alliance Certification program. This course may be developed and provided internally by an approved CB instructor or an external training provider.	X	X	
4	Successful completion of **4 hours** of training on **traceability** in applicable commodity category processing systems. The training should include foundational knowledge as well as practical training on applicable traceability systems.	Successfully participated in a **2-hour** minimum, yearly face-to-face or online training refresher on **traceability in the Rainforest Alliance Certification program**			X
5	**In the last 4 years:** Having participated in at least **5** audits **or** at least **13** audit days as a trainee or auditor in applicable **commodity category processing systems and/or supply chain standards** such as (but not limited to) the Rainforest Alliance, UTZ, ASC/ MSC, BRC, FSC, GFSI, HACCP, IFS, ISO 9001(scope 1 or 3), ISO 22000 (scope B or C), RSPO **OR** Having participated in at least **5** audits *or* at least **13** audit days as a trainee or auditor related to **applicable commodity category GAP and/or organic agriculture and/or environmental standards** such as (but not limited to) GLOBAL GAP, national standards (relevant scopes), Organic, UTZ, Rainforest Alliance, Fairtrade, GRASP, ISO 1401, SA8000, SMETA	At least **2** audits or **5** audit days per year related to applicable **commodity category producing/processing, supply chains, GAP, and/or environmental standards**			X
6	**In the last 4 years:** Having participated in at least **5** audits *or* at least **13** audit days as a trainee or auditor related to **applicable commodity category, producing GAP and/or organic agriculture and/or environmental standards** such as (but not limited to) GLOBAL GAP, national standards (relevant scopes), Organic, UTZ, Rainforest Alliance, Fairtrade, GRASP, ISO 1401, SA8000, SMETA		X		

Lead auditor

Table 10: Lead Auditor Requirements for Farm and Supply Chain Scopes

No.	Approval Requirements	Requirements to Maintain Authorization	Scope	
			Farm	Supply Chain
1	Successful completion of an in-depth **40-**hour ISO 9001 lead auditor course **OR** ISO 22000 course **OR** ISO 14001 course	Successfully participated in a **16-hour minimum** yearly face-to-face or online training refresher on **auditing social topics** related to the Rainforest Alliance Certification program	X	X
2	Successful completion of an in-depth **16**-hour **ISO 19011** lead auditor course		X	X
3	Successful completion of **40 hours**[16] of basic or advanced **social auditor training** such as (but not limited to) SA8000, SMETA, ETI		X	X
4	**In the last 4 years:** Having participated in at least **8** audits *or* at least **20** days as a (witness) auditor in **social standards** such as (but not limited to) UTZ, Rainforest Alliance, Fairtrade, GRASP, SA8000, SMETA **OR** Being an APSCA Certified Social Compliance Auditor	A minimum of **4** audits or **10** audit days as a (witness) auditor or lead auditor per year in **social standards** such as (but not limited to) Rainforest Alliance, UTZ, Fairtrade, GRASP, SA8000, SMETA	X	X

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[16] Hours can be reached by combining one or more training sessions, e.g. CB personnel can follow two courses of 20 hours each.

Table 11: Additional Lead Auditor Requirements for Farm Scope

No.	Approval Requirement	Requirement to Maintain Authorization	Scope	
			Farm	Supply Chain
1	Demonstrable knowledge of the production of the applicable commodity category[17] **OR** Having participated in at least **10** audits **or** at least **25** days as an auditor in the relevant **commodity category production** audits	A minimum of **5** audits or **13** audit days as a (witness) auditor or lead auditor per year related to applicable **commodity category processing, GAP, and/or environmental standards**	X	
2	**In the last 4 years:** Having participated in at least **10** audits **or** at least **25** days as an auditor related to **GAP and/or organic agriculture and/or environmental standards** such as (but not limited to) GLOBAL GAP, national standards (relevant scopes), Organic, UTZ, Rainforest Alliance, Fairtrade, GRASP, ISO 1401, SA8000, SMETA		X	

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[17] Please see Annex 13, tab "Crop list" of the Sustainable Agriculture Standard for a complete list of the Rainforest Alliance's crop categories. This requirement aims to ensure that the candidate has general knowledge of the commodity category to be audited. This can be proven with an internal or external training certificate, university degree, and/or course or diploma, etc.

Table 12: Additional Lead Auditor Requirements for Supply Chain Scope

No.	Approval Requirement	Requirement to Maintain Authorization	Scope	
			Farm	Supply Chain
1	Successful completion of **4** hours of training on **traceability** in applicable commodity category processing systems. The training should include foundational knowledge as well as practical training on applicable traceability systems.	Successfully participated in a **2-hour** minimum face-to-face or online refresher training per year on **traceability in the Rainforest Alliance Certification program**		X
2	Demonstratable knowledge of the production of the applicable commodity category processing systems[18] **OR** Having participated in at least **10** audits **or** at least **15** days as a (witness) auditor on applicable commodity category processing systems	A minimum of **5** audits or **13** audit days per year as a (witness) auditor related to applicable **commodity category processing and/or supply chain standards**		X
3	**In the last 4 years:** **10** audits and at least **25** days as a (witness) auditor in **supply chain standards** such as, but not limited to, the Rainforest Alliance, UTZ, ASC/MSC, BRC, FSC, GFSI, HACCP, IFS, ISO 9001(scope1or 3), ISO 22000 (scope B or C), RSPO **OR** Having participated in at least **10** audits **or** at least **25** days as a (witness) auditor related to **GAP and/or organic agriculture and/or environmental standards** such as (but not limited to) GLOBAL GAP, national standards (relevant scopes), Organic, UTZ, Rainforest Alliance, Fairtrade, GRASP, ISO 1401, SA8000, SMETA			X

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[18] Please see Annex 13, tab "Crop list" of the Sustainable Agriculture Standard for a complete list of the Rainforest Alliance's crop categories. This requirement aims to ensure that the candidate has general knowledge of the commodity category to be audited. This can be proven with an internal or external training certificate, university degree, and/or course or diploma, etc.

Lead auditor for social topics

2.2.6 In addition to the requirements set in Table 13, lead auditors for social topics shall meet the requirements for the lead auditor listed in Table 10, and 11 and/or 12 if applicable.

Table 13: Lead Auditor for Social Topics Requirements for Farm and Supply Chain Scopes

No.	Approval Requirement	Requirement to Maintain Authorization	Scope	
			Farm	Supply Chain
1	**In the last 4 years:** Having participated in at least **16** relevant audits as (lead) auditor *or 40* audit days related to **social standards** such as (but not limited to) Rainforest Alliance, UTZ, Fairtrade, GRASP, SA80000, SMETA	A minimum of **5** audits **or** at least **13** audit days per year related to **social standards** such as (but not limited to) Rainforest Alliance, UTZ, Fairtrade, GRASP, SA80000, SMETA	X	X
2	Successful completion of **48** hours of advanced **social auditor training** such as (but not limited to) SA8000, SMETA, ETI. ***This course shall be delivered by an accredited external training provider or by the CB instructor or other personnel, provided they completed an external 40-hour social auditor training such as (but not limited to) SA8000, SMETA, ETI.*** **OR** Being an APSCA Certified Social Compliance Auditor	Successfully participated in a yearly refresher training of a minimum of **24** hours of face-to-face or online training on **social auditing**	X	X
		Lead **20** interviews with Certificate Holder staff members and workers during the audit processes, including but not limited to, the Rainforest Alliance, UTZ, Fairtrade, GRASP, SA8000, SMETA	X	X

Instructor

Table 14: Instructor Requirements for Farm and Supply Chain Scopes

No.	Approval Requirement	Requirement to Maintain Authorization	Scope	
			Farm	Supply Chain
1	Have successfully completed the **Rainforest Alliance CB instructor training**[19]	Successfully participated in the yearly **Rainforest Alliance CB instructor training**	X	X
2	Successful completion of a **certified** ISO 9001 lead auditor course **OR certified** ISO 22000 lead auditor **OR Certified** ISO 14001 course provided by an **ISO accredited agency** such as (but not limited to) IRCA, RABQSA, RAC, SAATCA, CRBA, ICA approved	Deliver **2** internal training sessions or at least **16** hours per year to auditors on **good auditing practices, social standards, relevant commodity category producing/processing, supply chains, and/or environmental standards** such as (but not limited to) GLOBALGAP, national standards (relevant scopes), Organic, Fairtrade, ISO 14001, UTZ, the Rainforest Alliance, GRASP, SA8000, SMETA	X	X
3	**In their entire professional life:** Deliver **8** training sessions **or 24 hours** training for auditors on good auditing practices and environmental and/or social standards such as (but not limited to) GLOBALGAP, national standards (relevant scopes), Organic, Fairtrade, GRASP, ISO 14001, UTZ, the Rainforest Alliance, SA8000, SMETA		X	X
4	**In their entire professional life:** Having participated in at least **40** audits *or* at least **60** days as a lead or witness auditor or auditor for **Voluntary Sustainability Standards**	A minimum of **7** audits or **18** audit days per year as a lead or witness auditor or auditor for **Voluntary Sustainability Standards**	X	X
5	Successful completion of a total **40 hours** of in-depth **social auditor training** such as (but not limited to) SA8000, SMETA, ETI	Successfully participated in a yearly refresher training of a minimum of **20** hours of face-to-face or online training on **social auditing**	X	X

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[19] For information about dates, location, and duration of this training, please contact cbtraining@ra.org.

Technical Expert

Table 15: Technical Expert Requirements for Farm and Supply Chain Scopes

Requirements	
1	Master's Degree or equivalent in the field of study for which he/she is providing support as a technical expert **OR** A University Degree in related fields, combined with specialized experience, may be considered instead of a master's degree