

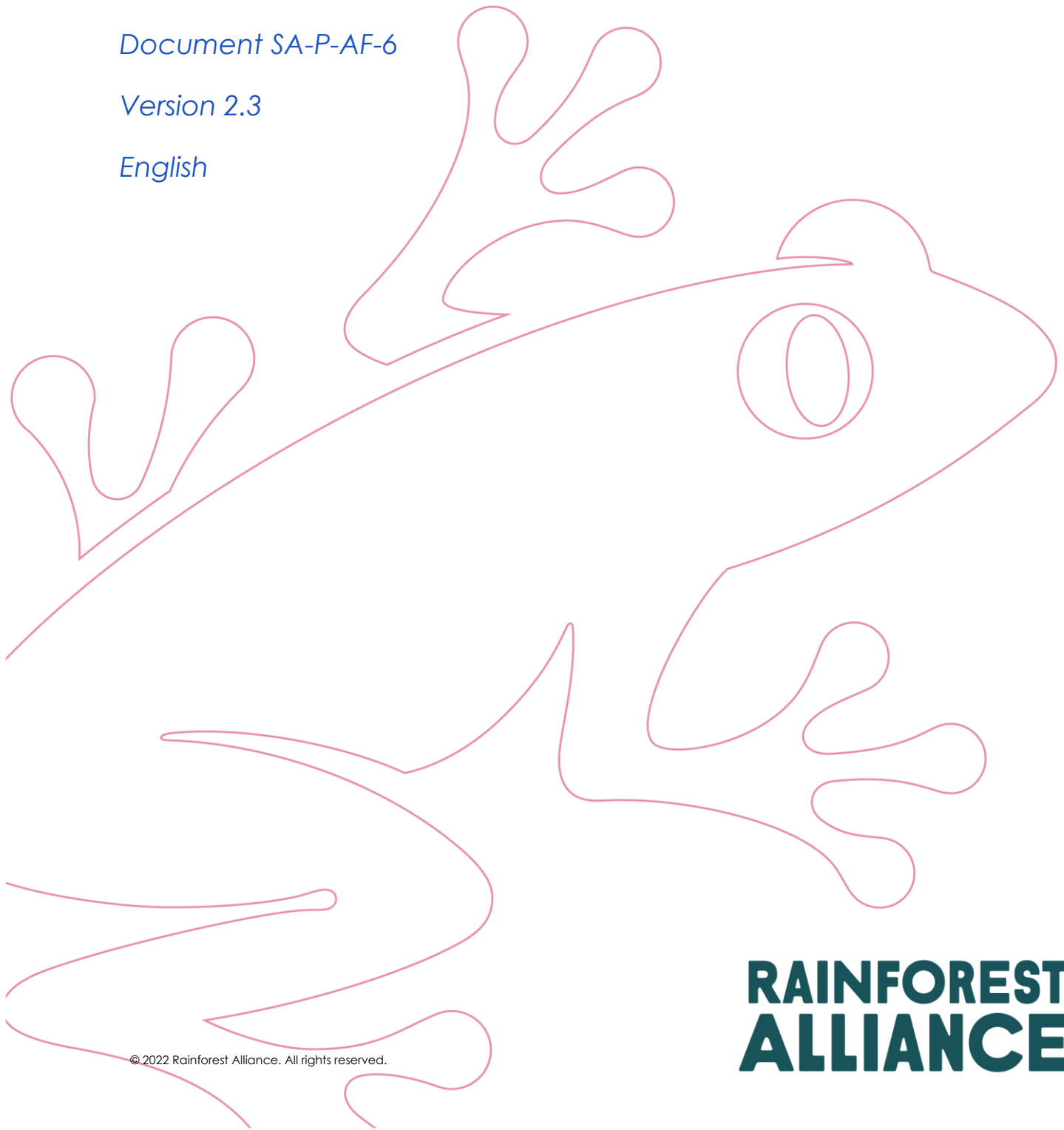
RAINFOREST ALLIANCE POLICY

FOR FARM AND SUPPLY CHAIN CERTIFICATION IN COCOA

Document SA-P-AF-6

Version 2.3

English





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

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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?

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SA-S-SD-1 Rainforest Alliance 2020 Sustainable Agriculture Standard, Farm Requirements and all other annexes, guidances and policies listed in this document				
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(Prospective) farm and supply chain certified entities in the Rainforest Alliance 2020 Certification Program audited against the 2020 Sustainable Agriculture Standard (Farm Requirements and Supply Chain Requirements)				
Country/Region:				
Sections 1A, 2A and 3A of this policy apply in full to Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria and Cameroon. Sections 1B and 3B apply specifically to Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana. Section 1C and 3D apply to Côte d'Ivoire only. Section 3C applies to Ghana only.				
Crop:		Type of Certification:		
Cocoa		Farm and Supply Chain Certificate holders		

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

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MAIN CHANGES FROM VERSION 2.2 TO 2.3

From 1 July 2021 onwards, all audits are conducted against the new 2020 Rainforest Alliance Standard for certification under the 2020 Rainforest Alliance Certification Program. Version 2.0 of the Cocoa Policy was published in May 2021 to align with the 2020 Standard. The current document, version 2.3, contains minor changes to the previous versions and aligns with the requirements for the second transition year.

All requirements in version 2.3 of the Cocoa Policy must be complied with in addition to the requirements and rules of the Rainforest Alliance 2020 Certification Program as set out in the “applicable to” section on the previous page.

The table below summarizes the main changes in this version of the policy from the previous version 2.2 published in November 2022.

Summary Table (changes from version 2.2 to version 2.3)		
Pg.	Clause	Change
	Throughout document	Clauses applicable to transition year are extended until 30 June 2023 in context of second transition year
PRODUCER CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS		
7	1.1.a	Clause on farms in protected area: specification on accepted documents for producers in GO zone
7	1.3.a and 1.3.b	Clause on growth limit of group membership extended to Cameroon and Nigeria
8	1.4.b	New clause specifying that any changes to the GMR must be recorded in an added tab
8	1.5.a and 1.5.b	Clauses on increased GPS requirements have been delayed by one year because of second transition year
8	1.6.a	Clause on GPS mapping of area extended to 90% of producers for all groups
8	1.7.a	Specification that CH shall only contract trainers approved by Rainforest Alliance or Conseil du Café-Cacao for initial training on the new standard
8	1.7.b	New recommendation on use of Rainforest Alliance Associated Trainers for additional training
AUDIT PROCESS RULES		
10	3.1.c	Clause on obligation of CB to share list of sampled producers no longer than 24h (or before 3pm local time the previous say) before the visit to a section
10	3.2	Section on CB obligation to record deforestation risk inconsistency extended to all countries
11	3.3.d & 3.3.e	Note that CH in Côte d'Ivoire can only be audited during the harvest cycle corresponding to their risk level
12	3.4.d	Complaints on cost must now be sent through wacocoa@ra.org to be treated within 2 weeks
12	3.5	Audit allocation now only applicable to Ghana



13	3.6.a and 3.6.b	New clauses on obligation of CH in Cote d'Ivoire to have audit in harvest cycle corresponding to risk level
14	Annex	New annex on risk level of groups in Cote d'Ivoire and steps of the certification process
CLAUSES REMOVED FROM VERSION 2.2 (NO LONGER APPLICABLE)		
11	2.3	Section 2.3 on premium payment of UTZ/RA2017 legacy volumes
12	3.1.b	Clause on obligation of CB to send audit report to RA within 10 days after end of audit
12	3.1.c	Clause on obligation of CB to keep records of audit documents (remains applicable through RA Certification and Auditing Rules and ISO standards)
12	3.1.g	Clause on obligation of CB to audit premium payment on RA2017 and UTZ legacy volumes during first transition year
12	3.3.c	Clause on limitation of CH to refuse a surprise audit (no surprise audits are programmed during transition years)

ABBREVIATIONS

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



INTRODUCTION

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

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

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



APPLICABILITY OF REQUIREMENTS

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

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

SECTION		REQUIREMENT	COTE D'IVOIRE	GHANA	CAMEROON	NIGERIA
1. FARM CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS	1A	1.1 Farms in protected areas	✓	✓	✓	✓
		1.2 Member monitoring	✓	✓	✓	✓
		1.3 growth in group membership	✓	✓	✓	✓
	1B	1.4 GMR	✓	✓		
		1.5 Geolocation data	✓	✓		
		1.6 Yield estimation	✓	✓		
	1C	1.7 Training	✓			
2. SUPPLY CHAIN CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS	2A	2.1 Certification – eligibility rules	✓	✓	✓	✓
		2.2 SD payment	✓	✓	✓	✓
3. AUDIT PROCESS RULES	3A	3.1 CB rights and obligations to comply with the audit process	✓	✓	✓	✓
		3.2 CB obligations to provide information on deforestation risk	✓	✓	✓	✓
		3.3 CH obligations to comply with the audit process	✓	✓	✓	✓
	3B	3.4 Certification cost transparency	✓	✓		
	3C	3.5 Audit allocation		✓		
	3D	3.6 CH obligations to comply with risk level	✓			
ANNEX 1		Risk level in Cote d'Ivoire	✓			



1. FARM CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

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

1.1. Farms in protected areas

- a. Producers in Protected Areas will not be certified if the Protected Area (PA) is classified as a no-go zone. Groups must remove group members in no-go zones in order to be certified. Producers in PA that are classified as GO zones may be certified under the following conditions:
 - Cote d'Ivoire:
 - i. The CH can provide the decree or order which declassifies the PA. The decree must be emitted by the authority in charge of the management of the PA (SODEFOR or OIPR).
 - ii. The CH can provide the decree or order allowing agricultural activities in an enclave. The decree must be emitted by the authority in charge of the management of the PA (SODEFOR or OIPR).
 - Ghana:
 - i. the CH can provide the allocation paper from the Forestry Commission of Ghana indicating that the area has been assigned/given to the farmer. Actions in the management plan of the protected area are adhered to and implemented by the farmer
 - Cameroon:
 - i. The CH can provide a ministerial decree, an up-to-date version of the management plan approved by MINFOF, or a memorandum of understanding proving that the authorities have authorized farming in the PA.
 - Nigeria:
 - i. The CH can provide a genuine permit from a relevant authority (Department of Forestry of the Ministry of Environment) indicating the allocated farm area and the concerned farmer.

Note: More information on protected areas can be found in [Guidance D. Geolocation Data Requirements and Risk Maps](#).

1.2. Member Monitoring

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

1.3. Growth in Group Membership

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



B. APPLICABLE TO CÔTE D'IVOIRE AND GHANA

1.4. Group Member Registry (GMR)

- a. The National ID number of all group members in possession of such must be indicated in the new GMR template. CHs in Côte d'Ivoire must indicate the National ID number for at least 30% of group members. CHs in Ghana must indicate the National ID number for at least 25% of group members.
- b. Any changes to the GMR between the submission of the deforestation and encroachment risk maps to the CB and the first day of the audit must be recorded in an added tab in the GMR, noting the date of the change.

1.5. Geolocation data

- a. In year 1 of certification (1 July 2023 – 30 June 2024), geolocation data is available for 100% of all farm units, of which at least 30% is in the form of polygons. This is an acceleration of requirement 1.2.14 L1 in the RA 2020 Sustainable Agricultural Standard.
- b. In year 4 of certification (start of second certification cycle), polygons are available for 100% of the farm units. This is an acceleration of requirement 1.2.15 L2 in the RA 2020 Sustainable Agricultural Standard

1.6. Yield estimation

- a. The total certified area is determined through the use of a GPS tool for at least 90% of producers.

C. APPLICABLE TO CÔTE D'IVOIRE ONLY

1.7. Training

- a. From January 2022, (prospective) Certificate Holders in Côte d'Ivoire shall only contract the training services of professionals approved by the Rainforest Alliance or Conseil du Café Cacao. The initial training on the new standard and related documentation shall be provided by Rainforest Alliance or the Associated Trainers.
- b. For additional trainings (follow up, coaching or further training), certificate holders are recommended to contract the training services of Associated Trainers of Rainforest Alliance.



2. SUPPLY CHAIN CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

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

2.1. Certification – Eligibility rules

- a. From 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023, all Supply Chain CHs taking legal ownership of certified cocoa or derivative products in Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria and Cameroon shall have their (first or second) transition audit on-site.
- b. If a Supply Chain CH receives a non-certification decision, the CH shall wait 6 months after the decision is taken before reapplying for certification.

2.2. Sustainability Differential Payment

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



3. AUDIT PROCESS RULES

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

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

- a. CBs use the traceability tool provided by the Rainforest Alliance to assess traceability of the CH;
- b. The pre-audit sample list must be documented. This list may contain more producers than the minimum required sample number to give options to the auditors should the producers not be available during the audit.
- c. CBs share the list of sampled producers within 24 hours prior to the visit to those producers, but not later than 3 pm local time of the previous day. Each day, CBs must share the list of sampled producers in the section they will visit the next day.
- d. The CB must send the final audit report to the CH at the latest ten days after the last audit day.
- e. CBs must pay out of pocket expenses needed for conducting the audit to their auditors prior to the audit taking place.
- f. CBs are only required to conduct stakeholder consultation prior to the onsite audit, in the following cases:
 - If the previous audit report raised an NC on child and/or forced labor.
 - If there are any complaints related to child and/or forced labor.
 - Upon RA request if there is evidence of reputational risks associated with child and/or forced labor linked to this CH.
- g. Once the group has confirmed an audit date with the CB, the group may only reschedule their audit once. Any further attempts to reschedule will result in the audit being moved to the next harvest cycle

3.2 CB obligations to provide information on deforestation risk

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

3.3 CH obligations to comply with the audit process

- a. At least 75% of the total number of audited producers must come from the auditor's pre-sampled list.



- b. A minimum of 75% of audited producers are able to show some form of official ID to prove their identity during the audit. If a National ID number is indicated for the audited producer in the GMR, the producer must be able to show the corresponding ID. If no National ID number is indicated, the producer can show another form of identification (health insurance card, birth certificate, etc.).

- c. Appeals to the CB on non-certification decisions must be submitted to the CB by the CH at the latest two weeks after the non-certification decision is issued. Grievances must be submitted to Rainforest Alliance at the latest two weeks after the outcome of the appeal of the non-certification decision to the CB.

- d. If a group receives a non-certification decision from a transition, certification or surveillance audit, the group cannot apply again for certification for the same harvest. They can apply for certification again at the earliest for the following harvest. E.g., a group wants to have their certificate starting for the main 2022 harvest but receives a non-certification following their audit. The group cannot be certified for the 2022 harvest, whichever the audit date, and can only be certified at the earliest for the harvest following the main 2022 harvest. Groups in Cote d'Ivoire can only reapply for certification during the October harvest cycle (see annex 1: risk level in Cote d'Ivoire).

- e. If a group receives a non-certification decision after a surprise or investigation audit, the group shall wait at least one full harvest period from the date the non-certification was taken. E.g., a certified group goes through a surprise audit in the middle of their small harvest of April 2022 and receives a non-certification decision. The group must wait for the rest of their April 2022 harvest and the full 2022 main harvest: the earliest the group can be certified is April 2023. Groups in Cote d'Ivoire can only reapply for certification during the October harvest cycle (see annex 1: risk level in Cote d'Ivoire).



B. APPLICABLE TO CÔTE D'IVOIRE AND GHANA

3.4 CB obligations to comply with certification cost transparency

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

- b. CBs must complete and include the certification cost transparency tool in all certification offers made to farm CHs in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana. The total price on the offer shall correspond to the total price indicated in the template. Rainforest Alliance reserves the right to request the completed certification cost template in case of price-related grievances raised by CHs.
- c. The total price on the offer must include basic follow-up of closure of non-conformities. If follow-up audit on-site is needed, a complementary offer must be drawn up and invoiced based on the same fee structure
- d. If the total price on the invoice differs from the price on the initial offer, the CB must clearly indicate the reason for the difference.
- e. Negotiation and acceptance of the offer for audit services remains the responsibility of CBs and CHs. If a disagreement should arise, the CH must first appeal directly to the CB. Where CHs are unable to resolve a complaint related to audit costs, they may then submit a formal complaint to the Rainforest Alliance through the wacocoa@ra.org within two weeks of the outcome of the appeal with the CB and before signing the contract. Rainforest Alliance will adjudicate the complaint based on compliance with the transparency requirements and coherence with cost information already collected from CBs. Rainforest Alliance will issue a decision within 2 weeks.

C. APPLICABLE TO GHANA

3.5 Audit Allocation

- a. Audit allocation remains applicable to all audits of farm CHs against the 2020 Rainforest Alliance Standard in Ghana from 1 July 2022 onwards. Audit allocation does not apply to supply chain CHs.
- b. Farm audits against the 2020 Rainforest Alliance Standard are allocated to CBs by the Rainforest Alliance.
- c. Upfront Audit costs including auditors' expenses (as a proportion of total cost) are covered in the contract between the CH and the CB and paid to the CB ahead of the audit.
- d. The Rainforest Alliance reserves the right to intervene in the audit planning process and request changes to improve audit quality, if the proposed plan does not conform to Rainforest Alliance guidance in terms of audit team composition, sample size and composition or audit duration.
- e. CBs must update on a weekly basis the information on the progress of the certification process for the groups in their audit tracking file.



D. APPLICABLE TO COTE D'IVOIRE

3.6 CH obligations to comply with risk level

CHs in Cote d'Ivoire must be audited in the audit cycle (April or October) corresponding to the risk level which is assigned to them by Rainforest Alliance.

CHs will be informed of their risk by Rainforest Alliance level yearly ahead of the following certification year (high risk groups will be notified by June 1st. low risk groups will be notified by December 1st). For a detailed overview of steps of the certification process for groups in Cote d'Ivoire, please consult Annex 1: risk level in Cote d'Ivoire

- a. (Prospective) CHs in Cote d'Ivoire with a very low (1), low (2) or medium (3) risk level must have their audit during the small harvest (April cycle), between January 1st and June 30th.
- b. (Prospective) CHs in Cote d'Ivoire with a high (4) or very high (5) risk level must have their audit during the main harvest (October cycle), between May 1st and November 1st.



ANNEX 1: RISK LEVEL IN COTE D'IVOIRE

1.1 Calculation of risk level

Rainforest Alliance will determine the risk level for all registered cocoa groups each year. The risk level of a CH only determines in which harvest cycle the CH must be audited and has no further impact on the audit process. (Very) low and medium risk CHs must have their audit during the April harvest cycle, while (very) high risk CHs must have their audit during the October harvest cycle.

Rainforest Alliance will determine the risk level for existing and new CHs in Côte d'Ivoire based on available data. Risk level is classified on a scale from 1 (very low risk) to 5 (very high risk). CH will be notified of their risk level and corresponding audit period in advance (see section 1.4 steps of the audit process for detailed timelines). Rainforest Alliance will also verify that the CB is aware of appropriate risk level for each CH they chose to audit prior to the CB handshake in the RACP platform by verifying the information provided by the CB in the audit planning file.

Risk level	Interpretation	Audit procedure
1	Very low risk	Audit: January 1 st – June 30 th
2	Low risk	
3	Medium risk	
4	High risk	Audit: May 1 st – November 1 st
5	Very high risk	

All CHs that are new to the Rainforest Alliance 2020 program will automatically be assigned very high risk. This also applies to CHs who come back to the program after a non-certification decision. Risk level may be increased or decreased the following year based on an assessment of Rainforest Alliance.

Factors used to determine the CH risk level

Rainforest Alliance uses a range of factors to calculate the risk level of a CH. These include, but are not limited to:

- Non-conformities raised on key credibility topics during the last two audits (see full list of requirements under section 1.3.2).
- Previous non-certification decision in the last two years
- New groups (new groups will automatically be considered as high risk groups)
- Size and average yield of group
- Results of deforestation risk maps
- Other relevant factors based on data or observations

1.2 Consequences of change of risk level

If a CH's risk level changes they may also need to change their audit cycle for the following year. This happens in the following cases:

- if a (very) low or medium risk CH becomes high or very high risk
- if a (very) high risk CH becomes (very) low or medium risk

Example 1: a medium (3) risk CH conducts their audit in March 2023 as per the audit period described in 3.6. In June, the risk level is re-calculated based on data from the audit, and the



CH's risk level is changed to high risk (4). The following year, the CH must have an audit between May and November 2024 (October cycle).

Example 2: a high (4) risk CH conducts their audit in August 2022 as per the audit period described in 3.6. In November, the risk level is re-calculated based on data from the audit and the CH's risk level is changed to medium (3) risk. The following year, the CH must have an audit between January and June 2023 (April cycle). This means the CH will be audited ahead of the validity period of the new certificate and will be able to submit their certificate in time to receive their license to trade certified volumes.

Note: Certificate Holders who receive a non-certification decision following their audit automatically become high risk and can only re-apply for an audit in the main harvest (October season) of the following year.



1.3 Non-conformities in key credibility risk areas

Hereunder is a list of requirements from the Rainforest Alliance Sustainable Agriculture Standard Farm Requirements version 1.2 that are considered as part of the risk profile of a CH. These requirements are an indication of key credibility topics for the Rainforest Alliance and the cocoa sector in West Africa. The number of non-conformities against these requirements detected by the CB will be taken into account as a factor for the new risk level calculation following the audit. Please note that factors for changes of risk level are not limited to this list.

Chapter 1: Management

- 1.5.1 Grievance Mechanism

Chapter 2: Traceability

- 2.1.5 Products sold can be matched to certified farms where they were produced
- 2.1.6 Total sales do not exceed production
- 2.1.7 Double-selling of volumes
- 2.1.8 Group members keep sales receipts

Chapter 3: Income and Shared Responsibility

- 3.2.1 Payment of SD

Chapter 4: Farming

- 4.6.1 Use of Prohibited Pesticides
- 4.6.2 Pesticide Risk Mitigation
- 4.6.3 PPE for handling of pesticides
- 4.6.6 Protection of natural ecosystems from pesticides

Chapter 5: Social Topics

- 5.1.3 Monitoring system for child labor, forced labor, discrimination, and workplace violence and harassment.
- 5.1.4 Remediation plan for child labor, forced labor, discrimination, workplace violence and harassment.
- 5.2.1 Freedom of Association
- 5.2.2 Right to Collective bargaining
- 5.3.3 & 5.3.4 Minimum wage
- 5.3.8 Equal pay
- 5.3.9 & 5.3.10 Third-party labor providers
- 5.5.4 Children of workers
- 5.6.9 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- 5.6.11 Pregnant workers
- 5.6.12 Dangerous situations
- 5.8.2 FPIC for Indigenous groups

Chapter 6: Environment

- 6.1.1 No conversion of natural ecosystems
- 6.1.2 Protected Areas
- 6.3.1 Protection of drinking water
- 6.4.1 Protection of threatened animals
- 6.4.2 Invasive species
- 6.6.3 & 6.7.1 Disposal of wastewater & waste

Additional requirements to be verified by the CB

- Group members show commitment to the cooperative by paying their membership fee (*part sociale*)



1.4 Steps of the audit process

No	Step	Low – medium risk groups	High – very high risk groups
1	Rainforest Alliance informs the CH of their risk level for their next certification cycle	No later than December 1st	No later than April 1st
2	The CH uploads their GMR to the RACP	Between November and March	Between March and August
3	RA notifies CH that it may now contract a CB of their choice	One week following upload of GMR	One week following upload of GMR
4	The CH shares the CAF with the CB	As soon as possible	As soon as possible
5	The CH and CB sign a contract agreeing on price and audit duration and then complete the handshake function on RACP	As soon as possible	As soon as possible
6	The CB records CH details, including the contract date, in the SharePoint planning file	Within one week of signing the contract	Within one week of signing the contract
7	The CH and CB agree on an audit date which is indicated by the CB in the planning file	No later than six weeks before the first day of the audit	No later than six weeks before the first day of the audit
8	The CH sends all audit preparation documents (as per Certification and Auditing rules 1.2) to the CB	No later than four weeks before the first day of the audit	No later than four weeks before the first day of the audit
9	The CB conducts the audit	Between January 1 st and June 30 th	Between May 1 st and November 1 st . Groups are strongly encouraged to complete their audit before <u>September 1st</u> to increase the probability of obtaining their agrément
10	The CH closes non-conformities within 10 weeks of the last day of the audit	No later than 10 weeks after the last day of the audit	No later than 10 weeks after the last day of the audit
11	The CB submits the license request with the certification decision to RA	No later than 12 weeks after the last day of the audit	No later than 12 weeks after the last day of the audit
12	RA reviews the license request and, in the case of a positive certification decision, activates the license	Two weeks after submission of the license request	Two weeks after submission of the license request
13	In the case of a non-certification decision, the group automatically becomes high risk and may only apply for an audit in October of the following year. RA notifies the group of this.	Two weeks after submission of the license request	Two weeks after submission of the license request
14	RA reviews data from the audit to evaluate the CH's risk level for the following season. Audit cycle is subject to change based on risk level.	See step 1	See step 1