



Certification Policy

For farms and group administrators

July, 2015

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Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| Contents..... | 3 |
| Introduction..... | 4 |
| The Sustainable Agriculture Network..... | 4 |
| SAN mission..... | 4 |
| SAN vision..... | 4 |
| Policy Objective and implementation..... | 4 |
| 1 General conditions..... | 4 |
| 2 The certificate..... | 5 |
| 2.1 Scope of the certificate..... | 5 |
| 2.2 Certification rules for group administrators..... | 6 |
| 2.3 Certificate validity..... | 6 |
| 2.4 Rules for the modification of certificate scope..... | 6 |
| 2.5 Group certification models..... | 7 |
| 2.6 Certification requirements..... | 8 |
| 2.7 Cancellation or denial of the certificate..... | 8 |
| 2.7.1 Conditions..... | 8 |
| 2.7.2 Consequences..... | 9 |
| 2.8 Cancellation under special conditions..... | 9 |
| 2.8.1 Conditions..... | 9 |
| 2.8.2 Consequences..... | 9 |
| 2.9 Special considerations for high-risk operations..... | 10 |
| 2.10 Permits for minor conversion of natural ecosystems..... | 10 |
| 3 The audit..... | 11 |
| 3.1 Audit scope..... | 11 |
| 3.1.1 Scope at farm level..... | 11 |
| 3.1.2 Scope at group administrator level..... | 11 |
| 3.2 Audit cycle..... | 12 |
| 3.3 Audit types..... | 12 |
| 3.3.1 Certification audit..... | 12 |
| 3.3.2 Annual audit..... | 13 |
| 3.3.3 Verification audit..... | 13 |
| 3.3.4 Research audit..... | 13 |
| 3.3.5 Non-programmed audit..... | 14 |
| 3.4 Evaluation of corrective actions..... | 14 |
| 4 Scoring system..... | 14 |
| 4.1 Criteria types..... | 14 |
| 4.1.1 Critical criteria..... | 14 |
| 4.1.2 Continuous improvement criteria..... | 15 |



| | | |
|-----|----------------------------|----|
| 4.2 | Evaluation and scores..... | 15 |
|-----|----------------------------|----|

Introduction

The Sustainable Agriculture Network

The Sustainable Agriculture Network (SAN) is a coalition of non-profit conservation and rural development organizations in the Americas, Africa, Europe and Asia promoting the environmental and social sustainability of agricultural and cattle activities through the development of good practice standards, certification and the training of rural producers throughout the world. Compliance with the SAN standards is required for certification and the right to use the Rainforest Alliance Certified™ seal on agricultural and cattle products.

The SAN/RA certification system is jointly owned by the Sustainable Agriculture Network (in Spanish, Red de Agricultura Sostenible, A. C.) and Rainforest Alliance (RA). SAN develops, manages and owns the standards and policies, and also coordinates the quality management behind the certification. RA is owner of the Rainforest Alliance Certified™ seal that identifies products from a certified farm and coordinates the market development for these products.

SAN mission

To be a global network transforming agriculture into a sustainable activity.

SAN vision

A world where agriculture contributes to the conservation of biodiversity and sustainable livelihoods.

Policy Objective and implementation

This certification policy establishes the conditions with which an organization shall conform in order to obtain and maintain certification based on the applicable SAN standards documents. This document replaces the current Farm and Group Administrator Certification Policy (January 2013) version and shall be binding for auditing process that take place as of October 1st, 2015.

1 General conditions

- a) Audits are based on an evaluation of conformity with the following SAN standards:
 - i) Sustainable Agriculture Standard and the List of Prohibited Pesticides, that are always applicable.
 - ii) Group Certification Standard, for the certification of group administrators.
 - iii) Standard for Sustainable Cattle Production Systems, for the certification of cattle production operations, when the applicant requests this activity to be included within the scope.
 - iv) Chain of Custody (CoC) Standard, for farms or group administrators that handle products from certified and non-certified farms. Should this be the case, only the following criteria of said standard may apply: 1.1, 1.2, 1.5, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3.
- b) For the purpose of this policy, two organization types are recognized: individual farms and group administrators.



- c) An organization may not hold two valid certificates from SAN accredited certification bodies (CB) simultaneously.
- d) Organizations that cultivate annual, bi-annual or perennial species that are not restricted by this policy's clauses 1.e and 1.f can be certified. These species can include but are not limited to trees of perennial crops such as fruits, nuts, coffee, cocoa, and tea, as well as ornamental plants, vegetables, spices and grasses.
- e) Organizations that cultivate products that are considered illegal in the country where they are grown, or by international agreements and conventions shall not be subject to audits or certification.
- f) Those organizations that cultivate one or more of the following crops are eligible for auditing. However, the following products cannot be included within the scope of certification or be declared certified:
 - i) *Jatropha (Jatropha curcas)*
 - ii) *Cotton (Gossypium hirsutum)*
 - iii) *Rice (Oryza sp.)* in flooded systems
 - iv) *Tobacco (Nicotiana tabacum)*
- g) For cattle operations, only cattle of the following species of bovines can be audited and certified, unless they are completely (100%) raised in stables or under nomadic production systems:
 - i) *Bos primigenius taurus*
 - ii) *Bos primigenius indicus*
 - iii) Crosses of the two previous species
 - iv) *Bubalus bubalis* (water buffalo)
- h) A certified organization shall not sell more product volume than the harvested product volume while holding a valid certificate. Only the product volume harvested after the date of the audit that led to a positive certification decision started can be commercialized with *Rainforest Alliance Certified* claims, once the certificate is issued.
- i) The applicant shall report to the CB any change in its management system, and production and administration practices or other circumstances that could have an impact on the sustainability of the operation or on the integrity of the product.
- j) It is the applicant's responsibility to submit its application with sufficient time in advance and to provide the CB with all the data required in the SAN Audit Planning Information.
- k) The SAN criteria apply to audited organizations in all cases and under all circumstances, except:
 - i) When applicable legislation is different and stricter. In this case, the law applies. The SAN Secretariat reserves the right to determine whether the applicable legislation is stricter than the SAN standards and decide whether the standard or the legislation will apply.
 - ii) When the audited organization could be exposed to legal or economic contingencies, in the sole opinion of the SAN. In this case, SAN will analyse each specific situation and communicate the corresponding decision.
- l) SAN reserves the right and holds the authority to analyse and define the interpretation of this policy and decide on unforeseen cases. Furthermore, SAN reserves the right to modify the content of this policy and SAN standards at any time. New versions of said documents and its implementation rules will be published on SAN's website.

2 The certificate

2.1 Scope of the certificate

- a) The certificate includes all crops produced within the legal responsibility of the audited organization and specifically the crop and/or the products of the productive system that are commercialized or intended for commercialization with *Rainforest Alliance Certified* claims.



- b) The certificate shall not include unauthorized crops listed in section 1.f of this policy.
- c) Farms and Group Administrators that are required to obtain compliance with the additional CoC criteria will not be issued an additional certificate.

2.2 Certification rules for group administrators

- a) The minimum size of a producer group is two member farms.
- b) All member farms of a producer group shall be located within the same country.
- c) A member farm shall not belong to two certified groups simultaneously.
- d) Should a member farm wish to sell certified product individually, there shall be a written agreement with the group administrator who shall register this individual transaction. The SAN Secretariat may request from the group administrator a copy of said agreement.
- e) A member farm that belongs to a certified group can only receive an individual certificate after undergoing a separate certification audit of this individual farm.
- f) The group administrator will be responsible for trading and commercializing the products covered in the scope of the certificate, unless it decides to delegate the responsibility for validating their claims in the Rainforest Alliance traceability systems to third parties. The certified group administrator shall inform the CB this decision within 10 working days after the issuance of the certificate.

2.3 Certificate validity

- a) The certificate has a 36-month validity, starting with the date of issue.
- b) The expiry date of the certificate is definitive, but the validity of the certificate could be extended in the following cases, without modification to the original certification issuance date:
 - i) Up to a maximum of six months in the event of a force majeure situation or a fortuitous event.
 - ii) A maximum of three months, when the organization is going through an appeal process, when the certification decision was to cancel the certificate.
 - iii) Up to three months in the case of organizations that have undergone a certification audit prior to termination of the 36-month cycle, and the certification decision has not been made by the CB.
- c) The validity of the certificate is subject to approval by the accredited certification body (CB).

2.4 Rules for the modification of certificate scope

- a) The inclusion of new crops or livestock activity within the scope of a certificate will be subject to a verification audit requested by the applicant.
- b) The applicant may request to change the certificate scope at any time during the audit cycle in order to increase or reduce the productive area, or increase or reduce the number of member farms.
- c) If, during a certification audit of a Group Administrator, one or more member farms fail to comply with the certification requirements defined in this policy, the Group Administrator may take action to remove those member farms from the group. Removal of said farms shall be confirmed by a verification audit.
- d) A certified organization may increase its production area or number of member farms by up to 10%, or change the composition of the group with up to 10% of new member farms, without being subject to an audit, under the condition that the applicant notifies the CB of this change no later than 30 calendar days after the increase took place.
- e) A certified organization may increase by up to 25% its production area, its number of member farms or change the composition of the group with up to 25% of new member farms, without being subject to an audit, under the condition that the applicant notifies the CB no later than 30 calendar days after the increase took place and if the certified organization complies with the following requirements:



- i) Having obtained a minimum overall score of 90% regarding the Sustainable Agriculture Standard and the Standard for Sustainable Cattle Production Systems (when applicable) in each of the audited farms during the previous regular audit.
- ii) Having obtained a minimum score of 90% regarding the Group Certification Standard during the previous regular audit.
- iii) Being free from violations regarding volumes of certified products within the traceability system.
- f) If the increase in area or number of member farms exceeds 25%, or if the group has more than 25% of new farms, the organization shall undergo a new certification audit.
- g) The applicant that intends to include new member farms within the scope of the certificate of a certified group administrator shall send documentation to the CB, proofing that these farms were internally inspected and found to comply with the applicable SAN standards and policies.
- h) The information of the most recent certification audit shall be used as reference in establishing the percentage increases described in clauses 3.4.d, e and f.
- i) The applicant shall not include a member farm from another group whose certificate was cancelled due to non-conformities on such member farm until four months after the certificate's cancelation.

2.5 Group certification models

SAN recognizes the group certification models described in the following table. In each case the Group Administrator is responsible for the development and implementation of the Internal Management System including but not limited to coordinating the commercialization of product, training and technical assistance for staff and group members, as well as internal inspections and the corresponding follow-up actions.

| Model | Group Administrator | Additional observations |
|--|--|--|
| 1. Farm organization | An organization of producers, such as a cooperative or association. | |
| 2. Farm with suppliers of product | A farm that buys products from third-party producers. | |
| 3. Several farms under one single administration | A physical person or legal entity that owns or holds more than one farm under the same management system. | For legal reasons, the owners or holders of these farms may be different physical persons or legal entities, who have a formal legal relation. |
| 4. Marketing body and suppliers | An organization that purchases and markets products from different independent farms. | |
| 5. Federation of groups | A federation that groups organizations such as cooperatives or associations. | |
| 6. Communal lands | The local government or some representative organization of ethnic or religious groups. | May be members of private groups with the right to use the land. The area that each producer can use or specific areas to be shared among members are defined. |
| 7. Local service provider | An external agent such as a consultancy office, a cooperating organization, an NGO, a supplier of inputs or a church. | |
| 8. Government as facilitator | A government, through one of its agencies, or its representative. This model is often related to tax benefits and regulatory provisions. | Chambers of commerce and export associations run by the government are also included, that may fix costs and volumes as part of their mandate. |



2.6 Certification requirements

- a) Should the requirements described in this section not be met by the audited organization, the certificate will be denied or cancelled.
- b) The applicant and the audited organization shall comply with the administrative requirements defined by the CB and the Certification Agreement signed with the CB.
- c) The audited organization shall undergo the corresponding audit, within the periods established in this policy, or allow and cooperate in the carrying out of any research or non-programmed audit.
- d) The audited organization shall conform with the following requirements regarding compliance with applicable SAN standards:
 - i) A minimum overall score of 80% of the applicable standard(s).
 - ii) A minimum score per principle of 50%.
 - iii) All applicable critical criteria are in total conformity.
 - iv) When applicable, be free of major nonconformities with the respective criteria of the CoC Standard.
- e) In addition, the group administrators shall show a gradual increase in their minimum overall score for the Group Certification Standard, in the following manner:
 - i) 85%, in the second regular audit.
 - ii) 90%, in the third regular audit, and henceforth.
- f) The requirements relating to the increase in the minimum overall score for group administrators are obligatory, counting from the first certification of the first cycle, even when:
 - i) An organization has already been previously certified, independently of the reasons for which its certificate was cancelled, the time during which its certificate was cancelled, or the CB of which it was a client.
 - ii) The change in the name of an already certified group or a certification audit resulting from the inclusion of more or different farms, an increase in production area, or new crops or activities.

2.7 Cancelation or denial of the certificate

2.7.1 Conditions

The CB will cancel or deny the certificate of an organization in the following cases:

- a) When an organization fails to comply with one or more certification requirements during a certification or annual audit and the CB does not authorize a verification audit, or when an evaluation of corrective actions is not possible.
- b) When a certified organization does not comply with one or more certification requirements during a verification, research or non-programmed audit; or when total conformity with a critical criterion is not confirmed during an evaluation of corrective actions.
- c) When a certified organization refuses to receive or deliberately hinders the carrying out of a non-programmed or research audit requested by the CB.
- d) When an applicant or the certified organization fails to conform to the conditions laid out in the Certification Agreement signed with the CB.
- e) When the applicant or certified organization fails to conform to the current version of the Requirements and Guidelines for use of the Rainforest Alliance Trademarks.
- f) When the applicant or the certified organization requests the cancelation of its certificate.
- g) When the applicant or the certified organization fails to comply with any applicable requirement stipulated in this policy.



2.7.2 Consequences

- a) The cancellation of a certificate is valid starting with the date of the CB's communication to the applicant about the decision.
- b) From the moment the CB notifies the certified organization about a certificate cancellation, the organization can only declare and sell a product as certified, if the product was harvested while the certificate was valid.
 - i) These sales can take place for a six-month period after the cancellation date while stocks last. The balance of the quota shall represent what the certified organization has harvested up to cancellation date.
 - ii) The organization shall inform the CB about the volume of certified product in stock within five working days after the cancellation.
 - iii) The authorization described in this clause does not apply to organizations whose certificate was cancelled due to non-conformities in critical criteria 2.2 (destruction of high-value ecosystems), 5.2 (discrimination), 5.8 (hiring of child labour) or 5.10 (forced labour) of the Sustainable Agriculture Standard.
- c) The organizations whose certificate has been cancelled and who would like to be re-certified, shall initiate a new audit cycle.
- d) There are no time restrictions for conducting a new certification audit on an organization whose certificate was denied or cancelled, provided that the reasons that led to this decision do not match the description of the conditions for a "cancellation under special circumstances" (see Section 2.8).
- e) An organization where non-conformity with critical criterion 2.2 of the Sustainable Agriculture Standard is evidenced, loses the right to be certified indefinitely. In the case of group administrators, this ban only applies to those member farms where such non-conformity was identified.

2.8 Cancellation under special conditions

2.8.1 Conditions

An organization's certificate may be cancelled "under special conditions", in the following cases:

- a) When, in the sole opinion of the SAN or the CB, the organization exerts coercion or makes any form of implicit or explicit threats to the moral or physical integrity or the life of any members of the CB auditing team or staff, through the employees of the audited organization or the applicant, or people under its influence or orders.
- b) When, in the sole opinion of the SAN or the CB, the organization participates in illegal, fraudulent or unethical activities that could discredit the certification program.

2.8.2 Consequences

- a) The organization that has been the object of "cancellation under special conditions" cannot commercialize any product as certified from the moment the CB cancels its certificate, even if the product had been harvested prior to this decision or in the case of documents supporting commercial transactions before the date of cancellation. Clause 2.7.2.b is not applicable in this case.
- b) It will be made public on the SAN and CB websites that the organization's certificate has been cancelled.
- c) The organization whose certificate has been cancelled under special conditions cannot apply for a certification audit during a 36-month period following the date of cancellation of its certificate.



2.9 Special considerations for high-risk operations

- a) Rainforest Alliance reserves the right to cancel or deny use of the Rainforest Alliance Certified™ trademarks in the case of farms or group administrators whose subsidiaries, head offices or affiliates are found to be involved in the destruction of high-value ecosystems, the hiring of child or forced labour, or discrimination, that could reflect badly the name of the SAN or Rainforest Alliance, in the sole opinion of the SAN or Rainforest Alliance, as the case may be.
- b) SAN and Rainforest Alliance will analyse each situation, as the result of a research audit process.

2.10 Permits for minor conversion of natural ecosystems

- a) Minor conversion of natural ecosystems- but never for high value ecosystems - that have inadvertently been conducted by a certified farm or member farm of a certified group administrator is permitted only under the following conditions:
 - i) The conversion event is the first one during the farm's SAN certification history. A second conversion event on a certified farm results in the cancelling of the certificate without any option to reapply for a new certification audit;
 - ii) The converted area is located outside of High Value ecosystem areas, protected areas, or land that is illegal to convert;
 - iii) A specific, time-bound plan for the required restoration is prepared by an ecological restoration specialist and submitted for approval to the responsible certification body within three months of the date of conversion:
 - A. The conversion is mitigated through restoration in the area that was converted;
 - B. The converted natural ecosystem area is promptly taken out of agricultural production and designated with the aim to restore the area to its former natural condition;
 - C. On larger farms, conversion of natural ecosystems of up to 2% of the farm area or 50 hectares (whichever is less) is only permitted if such conversion is compensated by at least a 1.5:1 ratio of ecologically comparable areas, as specified in a time-bound plan prepared by a qualified professional and approved by the SAN Secretariat or its designee;
 - D. The plan is fully implemented, with primary restoration work being initiated within six months and completed within two years from the date of the plan's approval;
 - E. Conversion of up to 10% of the farm area or 1 hectare (whichever is less) is permitted without the need for compensation. In the case of smallholder groups, these thresholds apply at the level of each member farm;
 - F. In the event that it is impracticable to restore the affected area, the conversion is compensated by setting-aside for conservation at least a 1.5:1 ratio of ecologically comparable areas.
- b) If conversion of natural ecosystems up to 1% of the total certificate land area is planned by a certified farm, it will not be a cause for certificate cancellation provided that the responsible certification body was informed beforehand and authorized the conversion under the following conditions:
 - i) Conversion of natural ecosystems will take place for the reason of installing farm infrastructure (farm roads; irrigation channels, ponds, and reservoirs; permanently installed farm machinery; and washing, processing, and packing areas or facilities) only or for smallholder households to plant food crops;
 - ii) The conversion event is the first one during the farm's SAN certification history. A second conversion event on a certified farm results in the cancelling of the certificate without any option to reapply for a new certification audit.



3 The audit

3.1 Audit scope

- a) Applicable criteria of the Sustainable Agriculture Standard will be evaluated both at the level of individual farms as well as member farms of a group administrator. All applicable criteria shall be evaluated on each of the member farms that form part of the audit sample.
- b) The Group Certification Standard is evaluated at the group administrator level.
- c) All applicable criteria of the Sustainable Agriculture Standard will also be evaluated in the farm's cattle production areas during the audit. Criterion 8.6 is the only exception when auditing cattle farms that grow secondary crops with GMO varieties. Said crops – with GMO and non-GMO varieties grown on the same farm – shall not be considered certified or sold with Rainforest Alliance Certified claims.
- d) Compliance with applicable criteria of the CoC standard will be assessed at farm level, in the case of individual farms, and at group administrator level in the case of groups.
- e) In the case that a certified farm or certified group administrator and its member farms have ceded, leased or handled over for use by third parties parts of its properties, the audited organization is responsible for demonstrating compliance with the applicable critical criteria in these ceded, leased or handled parts of land within its property limits. The audited organization shall ensure that the SAN audit team has access to such parts of land. Should non-conformities be identified in those lands, the audited organization will be held responsible of their consequences and its certificate may be cancelled or denied.
- f) The modification of the audit scope is only allowed prior authorization by the CB.

3.1.1 Scope at farm level

The whole area within the farm's limits ("whole farm" concept) is included within the scope of the audit including:

- a) Areas destined for agricultural use, forest, and cattle production as well as natural land and aquatic ecosystems, land covered by high-value ecosystems and fallow land.
- b) Areas involving human activity and other infrastructure within its limits that include but are not restricted to: administrative infrastructure, collection points, processing and packing units and storage facilities.
- c) Infrastructure owned or leased outside the farm limits but which is directly related to activities included in the scope. This may include, but is not limited to administrative infrastructure, collection points, processing and packing units and storage facilities.
- d) Workers and people who live temporarily or permanently on the farm.
- e) People from the communities who are or may be directly affected by the farm's activities.
- f) Documentation relating to social, agronomic and environmental management.

3.1.2 Scope at group administrator level

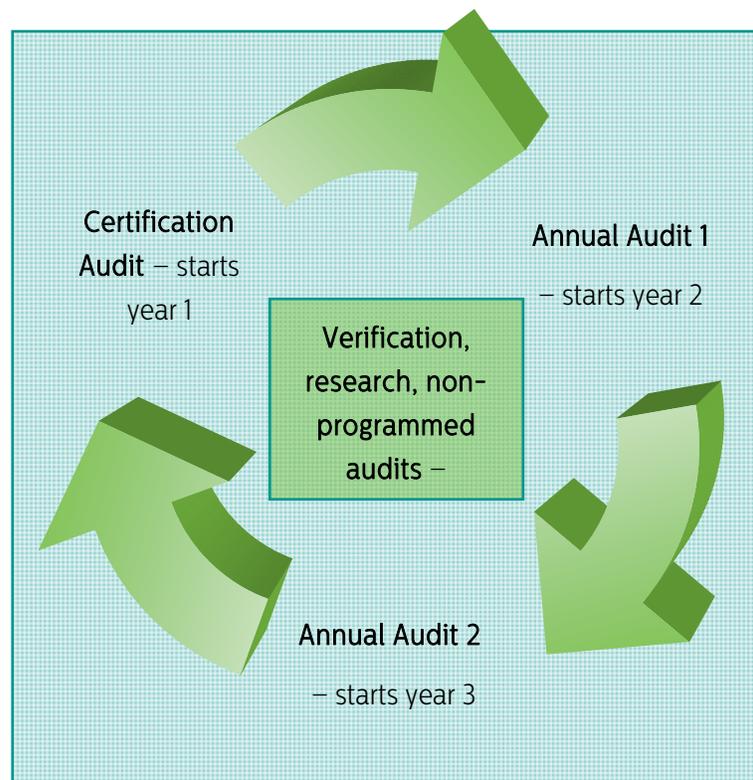
Included within the scope of the group administrator audit are:

- a) Infrastructure owned or administered by the group administrator, related to the production activity included in the scope. This includes but is not limited to roads, housing, administrative, collection, storage, processing and packing infrastructure, as well as their surroundings.
- b) Documentation relating to the internal management system.



3.2 Audit cycle

- a) In order to initiate the cycle, the audited organization shall be subject to a certification audit to evaluate conformity with SAN's applicable standards and policies.
- b) On conforming to the certification requirements, the organization receives a certificate issued by an accredited CB.
- c) During the audit cycle the certified organization shall be subject to two annual audits, within the periods established in this policy.
- d) The certified organization may be subject to research or non-programmed audits at any time during the audit cycle.



3.3 Audit types

There are five SAN audit types: two regular and three irregular audits. The regular audits include the certification audit and the annual audit that are obligatory and always programmed in coordination with the applicant. These include the possible evaluation of corrective actions. The irregular audits include verification, research and non-programmed audits. These are carried out in response to specific circumstances and have different objectives.

3.3.1 Certification audit

- a) The objective of the certification audit is to establish the level of conformity of the organization with applicable SAN standards.
- b) An organization is subject to this type of audit when applying for SAN certification for the first time, and again at the beginning of each audit cycle.



- c) The applicant shall present an application for each farm or group administrator to an accredited CB. The programming of the certification audit is mutually agreed upon.
- d) The decision to grant or deny a certificate is taken by the CB on the basis of results of the certification audit.
- e) A certification audit shall always take place on site.
- f) The applicant assumes the costs of a certification audit.

3.3.2 Annual audit

- a) The objective of an annual audit is to establish whether the certified organization complies with applicable SAN standards and has carried out the corrective actions for the non-conformities identified in previous audits.
- b) Annual audits take place after the certification or a previous annual audit. The certified organization shall undergo two annual audits during a cycle, and they shall take place between nine and 15 months after the anniversary date of issue of the certificate, on years two and three.
- c) It is the applicant's responsibility to apply for annual audits under its responsibility in a timely manner and in agreement with the CB.
- d) The certificate is maintained or cancelled as a result of an annual audit.
- e) An annual audit shall always be carried out on site.
- f) The applicant assumes the costs of an annual audit.

3.3.3 Verification audit

- a) A verification audit's objectives are:
 - i) To verify the implementation of a corrective action plan based on the report of the previous audit; or
 - ii) To evaluate specific aspects of a new crop or cattle activity planned for inclusion in the scope; or
 - iii) To verify removal of member farms that did not meet the certification requirements.
- b) Verification audits carried out based on objectives i) and iii) of the previous clause shall take place within a 4-month period, from the date of the certification decision of the previous audit.
- c) The applicant shall schedule verification audits in agreement with the CB. These audits may take place after a certification or annual audit in which the audited organization did not conform to one or more certification requirements, only if the audited farm or member farms and the audited facilities have received an overall score of at least 70% with applicable SAN standards.
- d) A certificate can be authorized, denied, maintained or cancelled as a result of a verification audit.
- e) The audited organization may receive a verification desk audit only when conformity can be demonstrated through documentation.
- f) The applicant assumes the costs of a verification audit.
- g) The audited organization cannot opt for a verification audit if during the previous audit evidence of non-conformity with one or more critical criteria relating to the destruction of high-value ecosystems, the hiring of child labour, forced labour, or discrimination was detected. A verification audit can take place in the aforementioned situations, only when the non-conformity is related to documentation.
- h) During the period between the previous audit and the verification audit, the organization maintains its certification status.

3.3.4 Research audit

- a) A research audit is programmed in response to a complaint about the performance of a certified organization relating to one or more critical criteria of the applicable SAN Standards.
- b) A research audit could be carried out at any time during the audit cycle when the CB determines sufficient evidence to confirm the received complaint, based on its policies and procedures.



- c) The certified organization shall accept and facilitate any research audit approved by the CB. The applicant and the certified organization may be given advance warning of the decision of the CB to carry out a research audit of the certified organization, only if doing so can avoid serious logistical obstacles.
- d) A certificate could be maintained or cancelled as a result of a research audit.
- e) The certified organization may be subject to a desk research audit only if it is possible to demonstrate conformity through documents and/or interviews carried out off site.
- f) The cost of these audits may be charged to the applicant should the complaint be confirmed.

3.3.5 Non-programmed audit

- a) A non-programmed audit is carried out to supervise conformity with applicable critical criteria of SAN Standards on a sample of certified organizations.
- b) A non-programmed audit is carried out at any time during the audit cycle.
- c) The non-programmed audit is an unannounced process. However, the applicant and the certified organization may be given advance warning when doing so can avoid significant logistical obstacles.
- d) A certificate is maintained or cancelled as a result of a non-programmed audit.
- e) A non-programmed audit will always be carried out on site, although it is possible that the audited organization be requested to send additional information for desktop revision.
- f) The CB assumes the costs of a non-programmed audit.

3.4 Evaluation of corrective actions

- a) An evaluation of corrective actions is not, in itself, an audit but rather an extension of the original audit and is carried out prior to issuing the final report. The results of this evaluation will be included in the audit report to be used as the basis for the certification decision.
- b) An evaluation of corrective actions can only take place after certification and annual audits in which a non-conformity with a single critical criterion was identified or when the audited organization or one member farm scores 75% or above.
 - i) Only aspects relating to the identified non-conformity with the critical criterion or to the non-conformities that led to a score below 80% are evaluated.
 - ii) The audited organization cannot opt for this evaluation if it did not conform with a criterion relating to the destruction of high-value ecosystems, the hiring of child or forced labour, or discrimination.
 - iii) An evaluation of corrective actions can take place in the aforementioned situations, only when the non-conformity is related to documentation.
- c) An evaluation of corrective actions shall be completed within 60 calendar days after the closing meeting. The audited organization maintains its certification status during this period.
- d) If it is possible to evaluate the corrective action through documents, a site visit will not be necessary.
- e) The applicant shall assume the costs of an evaluation of corrective actions.

4 Scoring system

4.1 Criteria types

There are two types of criteria: critical and continuous improvement.

4.1.1 Critical criteria

- a) Critical criteria are identified with the text “Critical criteria” at the beginning of a SAN standard criterion.



- b) All applicable critical criteria shall be complied with in total conformity in order for the audited organization to obtain or maintain the certificate.
- c) Non-conformities with critical criteria cannot be resolved during the audit.

4.1.2 Continuous improvement criteria

- a) A major or minor non-conformity with these criteria does not prevent, *per se*, an audited organization obtaining or maintaining the certificate.
- b) This type of criterion allows for the organization’s flexibility to develop and implement a plan for continuous improvement in order to conform to the evaluated SAN standards.
- c) Non-conformities with continuous improvement criteria may be resolved during the audit.

4.2 Evaluation and scores

- a) The conformity of an organization is evaluated at criterion and principle level, and overall. The manner in which conformity is evaluated is indicated below:

| Level | | Evaluation |
|-----------|--|---|
| Criterion | In conformity | The audited organization complies with all applicable elements of the criterion. One (1.0) point is assigned. |
| | Major non-conformity | The audited organization complies with less than 50% of applicable elements of the criterion. Zero points are assigned. |
| | Minor non-conformity | The audited organization complies with more than 50% of applicable elements of the criterion. Half a point (0.5) is assigned. |
| | Not applicable | The element to be evaluated is not present within the scope of the audit. Does not affect the score. |
| Principle | The sum of the scores for applicable criteria of the principle is divided by the number of applicable criteria of the principle; the result is multiplied by 100. | |
| Overall | The scores for applicable criteria of the evaluated standard are added up and are divided by the total number of applicable criteria; the result is multiplied by 100. | |

- b) Evaluation of conformity in those criteria of the CoC Standard in farms and groups that require to be audited to this additional set of criteria (see Section 1.a), will follow the rules on conformity evaluation that are described in the CoC Policy and in the Accreditation Requirements for Certification Bodies. Applicable criteria of the CoC Standard shall be evaluated in addition to criterion 1.10 of the Sustainable Agriculture Standard and criterion 2.3 of the Group Certification Standard.