



GENERAL CERTIFICATION PROCEDURE

*LOCAL AGRIFOOD PROCEDURE – SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
PROGRAM*

PL-CIV-ITD_CCD 01

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**BUREAU
VERITAS**

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Bureau Veritas Ivory Coast

Agri Food & Trade – Programme Développement Durable

CHANGE HISTORY

Revision date	Nature of modifications
01 – 09 – 2014	Creation
01 – 05 – 2019	Update following internal reorganization
26 – 09 – 2019	Update following the evaluation of the RA / UTZ insurance program
22 – 12 – 2020	Update following the evaluation of the RA / UTZ insurance program
24 – 02 – 2021	Update in line with the new RA rules following the UTZ –RA merger
05 – 08 – 2022	Upgrading and readjusting
31 – 08 – 2023	Upgrading and readjusting

1 OBJECT

The purpose of this document is to define the process of Certification of an organization's production and supply systems in accordance with the Rainforest Alliance certification program.

2 SCOPE

This procedure applies to all certification activity of the Sustainable Development Program unit of Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire and to any type of entity regardless of its size, membership in an association or group. without abusive conditions, financial or otherwise.

3 RESPONSIBILITIES

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31 – 08 – 2023		31 – 08 – 2023		31 – 08 – 2023
Visa	Visa	Visa	Visa	Visa

4 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

- ISO/IEC 17065:2012 Conformity assessment — Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services
- RAINFOREST ALLIANCE POLICY: regarding the certification of farms and the chain of custody for cocoa
- RAINFOREST ALLIANCE 2020 Certification Program 2020 Rules For Certification Bodies;
- RAINFOREST ALLIANCE certification program 2020 rules for audits and certification 2020;
- RAINFOREST ALLIANCE Standard For Sustainable Agriculture Requirements for agricultural operations;
- RAINFOREST ALLIANCE Sustainable Agriculture Standard Supply Chain Requirements.

The current versions are available at: <https://www.rainforest-alliance.org/fr/documents-de-certification/>

5 IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 CERTIFICATION CONTRACT PROPOSAL

The certification contract proposal is carried out in accordance with the requirements of the certification rules, accreditation rules of certification bodies, audit rules, supply chain policy and other binding documents published by Rainforest Alliance and reference or cite specific requirements where necessary.

5.1.1 application

After registration on the Rainforest Alliance Certification Platform (PCRA) and approval by the Rainforest Alliance, the certificate holder chooses, based on its scope, a certification body (CB) authorized by the Rainforest Alliance. Following a call for tender or a spontaneous request from the certificate holder or an allocation from the Rainforest Alliance, Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire sends the certificate holder the certification request form (FDC) allowing to collect the following information:

- Identity and contact details of the certificate holder (name, address, etc.).
- Activities carried out (processes, products, etc.)
- Organization of the certificate holder (number of sites, staff, etc.)
- List of certifications and qualifications already held.
- Nature of the certification requested (reference, certification scope, etc.)
- Etc.

The application form is sent to the certificate holder at the same time as the following documents:

- Rainforest Alliance Rules for Audits and Certification 2020;
- Rainforest Alliance standard for sustainable agriculture requirements for farms;
- Rainforest Alliance standard for sustainable agriculture supply chain requirements;
- Producer register template;
- Rainforest alliance policy: concerning the certification of agricultural operations and the chain of custody for cocoa.

the current versions are available at: <https://www.rainforest-alliance.org/fr/documents-de-certification/>

The certificate holder can also send the completed certification request form directly to Bureau Veritas.

5.1.2 Certification option

This section explains the possible structures that TCs can join to be part of the Rainforest Alliance certification program or through which they can continue to be part of it, called certification options. There are five certification options, the first three of which apply to organizations that have agriculture within their certification scope. The other two apply to the supply chain whose scope does not include agriculture:

Certification options		Applicable column(s) in the standard	Scope Implications
1	<p>Farm group</p> <p>A group of organized farms (group members) that implements a common management system.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group may be organized as an association or cooperative or managed by a farm or by a supply chain actor such as an exporter or other entity. • This type of certification is intended for small farms that cannot afford to be certified individually, but larger farms can be part of a group or form one 	Group certification	Agriculture is included in the scope
2	<p>Single farm (large or small)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A single farm¹⁰ that owns or manages a farm with an independent organizational structure, whereby management and all activities take place in a single physical location. • This type of certification is targeted for single farms that want to be independently certified. The majority will be large farms. However, small farms can also be certified under this certification option. 	Cert. indiv.	Agriculture is included in the scope
3	<p>Multi-farm</p> <p>Two or more farms, owned or leased by one or more entities and whose agricultural operations and practices are centrally managed, regardless of certification. Some management activities may be carried out on different farms, however the same practices must be implemented on all farms and processes and procedures must be managed centrally.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If any of these conditions do not apply, farms cannot be certified as multiple farms and must be certified under the farm group certification option or divided into several individual farms. • Farms that are part of a multiple farm can be certified separately from the multiple farm, in which case they will have a separate account 	Cert. indiv.	Agriculture is included in the scope

	and certification process		
4	Single site • Individual organization that does not have agriculture within its scope of Rainforest Alliance certification and whose management and all activities take place in a single physical location.	Supply chain requirements	Supply chain only
5	Multi-site An organization that does not have agriculture within its scope of Rainforest Alliance certification, but has an identified primary location in which one or more sites are operating.	Supply chain requirements	Supply chain only

Responsibility for the compliance of all actors who are within the certification scope of the TC rests with the central management of the TC. All actors within the certification scope of a TC must be registered on PCRA in the TC certification account. A NC of an actor covered by the scope of application of the certification of a TC (e.g.: agricultural holding, site, subcontractor, service provider, intermediary, etc.) influences the certification status of the TC entire.

5.1.3 .Admissibility

Any request must be subject to an admissibility analysis. Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire asks the certificate holder to send it the list of supporting documents necessary for the admissibility analysis. If the file is deemed complete and the documents making up it are satisfactory, Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire declares it admissible and confirms to the certificate holder that the certification audit can be carried out. However, if the file is considered incomplete, a review of the request is sent to the TC with the list of missing elements.

This analysis aims to ensure that:

- Information regarding the TC and its associated systems is sufficient to plan and carry out the audit/certification activities;
- The scope of the certification and the candidate's activities are clearly defined;
- Bureau Veritas has the skills, capabilities and resources necessary to carry out the activities required for certification.

5.1.4 Certification contract

Based on the information communicated by the certificate holder, Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire establishes a certification contract which complies with the national and international requirements defined by the accreditation bodies concerned and the requirements of the framework. The general certification procedure and the general conditions of service of Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire are attached. a signed copy of the certification is given to certificate holders before any audit takes place.

The certification contract thus established by Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire covers the certification audit and surveillance audits for the certification cycle. The financial proposal does not include surveillance audits and possible follow-up audits that may be necessary if the organization's products or processes do not comply with the certification program.

5.1.5 Triggering the audit

Once the contract is signed between the certificate holder and Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire, the latter ensures that the certificate holder provides or makes available:

- Relevant information on the objectives, scope, criteria and methods of the audit in order to facilitate the composition of the audit team, including possible technical experts;
- Access to relevant information for planning purposes, including information on risks and opportunities identified by the certificate holder and how they are addressed;
- Legal, regulatory and other applicable requirements related to the activities, processes, products and services of the auditee;
- Any requirements for site-specific access, health and safety, security, confidentiality or other special requirements.

It will therefore be necessary to ensure the feasibility of the audit to achieve the audit objectives. The determination of feasibility should consider factors such as the existence of sufficient and appropriate information for planning and carrying out the audit, adequate cooperation from the certificate holder, resources and time required to carry out the audit.

5.1.6 Preliminary examination

A review of the documentation transmitted by the certificate holder is carried out. This preliminary examination aims to:

- collect information necessary to understand the certificate holder's operations and prepare audit activities and audit working papers;
- obtain an overview of the extent of documented information to determine its possible compliance with audit criteria and to detect possible areas of concern, such as gaps, omissions, or conflicts.

5.1.7 Audit plan

Based on the information provided by the certificate holder, the audit team establishes an audit plan which considers the risks of the process audit activities and serves as a basis for agreement between the certificate team, audit and the certificate holder regarding the performance of the audit.

Audit planning should facilitate the scheduling and effective coordination of audit activities to achieve objectives effectively.

The audit plan, included in the certification request form, is communicated to the certificate holder before the start of the audits. If changes related to the performance of the audit take place, the audit team, in agreement with the certificate holder, makes an amendment to the audit plan. The amended audit plan is communicated to Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire.

5.2 AUDIT STAFF

Since Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire uses both subcontractors and salaried workers, it prioritizes the following points:

- confidentiality, ethics and impartiality of stakeholders;
- uniformity of audit or control approach;
- the availability of speakers.

Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire auditors all have extensive experience in agronomic fields and the practice of auditing. They are trained to favor a hands-on, pragmatic approach.

Stakeholders are designated to carry out certification audits based on the following three criteria:

- competence in the field of activity of the certificate holder and/or the repository;
- availability on the dates desired by the certificate holder;
- knowledge of the locality of the certificate holder.

Personnel involved in the audit and certification process (process of carrying out the audit or making certification decisions) are required to declare on their honor any potential or actual conflict of interest by signing a declaration of no -conflict of interest and declaring all its activities related to certification over the last two years.

All Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire staff, including staff who make certification decisions, reviewers, auditors, technical experts, and interpreters engaged for the audit and certification processes, complete a declaration disclosing all potential or existing conflict of interest, including ownership, financial, professional and family ties with the certificate holder or applicant and its personnel. This statement must be updated at least annually and whenever

a potential conflict arises. Where there is a risk of conflict of interest involving certifiers and auditors, the relevant persons should not be involved in the relevant audit or certification decision-making processes.

5.3 AUDIT ACTIVITIES

The certification audit will allow to verify the conformity of the product and the process carried out by the certificate holder with the characteristics of the Rainforest Alliance certification program. For a certification audit to be carried out, it is necessary that the internal audit system is operational and that each site as well as the management system of the certificate holder falling within the certification scope have been audited at least once internally.

In accordance with the requirements of the ISO/IEC 17065 Standard, Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire will ensure that:

- the certificate holder has a system for processing complaints and corrective actions.
- the certificate holder operating plots, not covered by quality certification, has implemented the necessary provisions to avoid any confusion as to the scope of the certificate.
- the certificate holder has put in place the appropriate means to formally identify and apply the national or international regulatory requirements relating to the products it produces.

5.3.1 Audit Types

Certification/re-certification audit

All farm TCs and TCs at Verification Levels B through E must receive a certification audit in order to be part of the Rainforest Alliance certification program. They must receive a certification audit once every 3 years to remain in the Rainforest Alliance certification program.

Surveillance audit

To maintain its Certificate, a TC must undergo an annual surveillance audit. Supply chain TCs may be exempt from the external surveillance audit or all surveillance audits depending on their level of verification.

Follow-up audit

When NCs are identified during the surveillance or (re)certification audit, the CB must carry out a remote or on-site follow-up audit to verify the resolution of the NCs.

Surprise audit

In addition to certification and surveillance audits, the CB must carry out surprise audits on at least 10% of the CHs in its Rainforest Alliance CH portfolio to verify the continuity of compliance of the selected CHs.

The CBs cover the costs of surprise audits complementary to certification and surveillance audits.

Investigative audit

An investigative audit is conducted in response to a specific grievance, reported incident or material information regarding TC compliance and may be carried out by the Rainforest Alliance or the CB.

Expansion audit

In the event of changes to the scope of an already certified TC, an extension audit may be required depending on the extent of the extension (generally additions to the scope). Extension audits will be carried out by the TC CB.

Shadow audit

A shadow audit is an audit carried out by Rainforest Alliance to assess and monitor CB performance by evaluating the performance of an auditor/audit team when conducting a CB audit in the field. A parallel audit costs nothing to the TC.

A shadow audit normally has no consequences for the TC. However, Rainforest Alliance reserves the right to suspend, cancel or not grant a license and to require the CB to suspend, cancel or not grant certification in the following cases:

- the TC fails to fulfill its obligations as described in the TC Obligations section during any audit.
- Rainforest Alliance identifies any non-compliance with Rainforest Alliance standards and assurance requirements for TC that jeopardizes the credibility of the Rainforest Alliance certification program.

Rainforest Alliance reserves the right to require the CB to follow up on non-conformities identified in the TC.

Revision audit

A review audit is an audit carried out by Rainforest Alliance to evaluate and monitor the performance of the CB by conducting an audit of a CH after an audit of the CB and comparing the results of the auditor's audit / Rainforest Alliance CB and auditor audit team.

A revision audit normally has no consequences for the TC. However, Rainforest Alliance reserves the right to suspend, cancel or not grant a license and to require the CB to suspend, cancel or not grant certification in the following cases:

- the TC does not fulfill its obligations as described in the TC Obligations section during an audit.
- Rainforest Alliance identifies any non-compliance with the Rainforest Alliance standard and assurance requirements for TC, which jeopardizes the credibility of the Rainforest Alliance certification program.

Rainforest Alliance reserves the right to require the CB to follow up on non-conformities identified within the TC

Combined audits

Audit carried out with audit and certification procedures for the standards of several programs consecutively or in parallel, using the standard, checklists, tools and guidelines specific to each program. For this type of audit, Rainforest Alliance authorization is required.

The Sustainability Program carries out combined audits in accordance with the rules for audits and certification 2020.

All these types start with an opening meeting and end with a closing meeting.

5.3.2 Opening meeting

The audit begins with a meeting during which the head of the audit team confirms the scope of the certification, presents the progress of the audit, responsibilities, including those of interpreters, observers and/or technical experts, if applicable, and presents the audit plan in order to take into account the latest modifications that the certificate holder may wish to make if these significantly impact the schedule initially established.

In addition to the audit team, the opening meeting must include at least the participation of the following key people from the organization:

- the management representative;
- worker representatives including union representative(s) if applicable;
- HR staff/responsible for payment of salaries;
- personnel responsible for health and safety;
- all other committees, such as the Complaints and Appeals Committee and the Women's Committee.
- the representative of the Evaluation and Resolution committee;
- the gender committee representative;
- the representative of the complaints committee;
- the person responsible for managing the processing facilities.
- ETC.

The audit team will not disclose the selected sample details more than one day before the actual visit.

5.3.3 Conduct of the Audit

The on-site audit is carried out through interviews and documentation verification with staff and members of the certificate holder. During the audit, the team of auditors (senior auditor and junior auditor) assesses whether the measures defined in the certification framework are implemented at all levels of the certificate holder. To do this, it verifies that practices comply with the requirements of the framework and that, where necessary, procedures have been put in place to describe these activities and that the corresponding records are correctly kept.

5.3.4 Discrepancies

During the audit, the particularities of the system, the malfunctions and non-conformities encountered are commented on with the representative of the certificate holder or the personnel concerned who can then provide additional elements that may allow them to be reviewed in a more global context.

If the deviation is maintained, it is then formalized in a non-compliance report (FL-CIV-ITD_CCD 02) the original of which is left with the certificate holder. The originals of these FL-CIV-ITD_CCD 02 are signed by the representative of the certificate holder.

Non-conformities thus formalized always meet the following three criteria:

- be objective and motivated by non-compliance with a characteristic or requirement of the standard or a provision provided for by the certificate holder.
- be based on evidence and in no case on presumptions.
- be understood and accepted by the certificate holder.

From this moment, the certificate holder must initiate corrective actions to resolve the discrepancies using the corrective action sheet.

5.3.5 Closing meeting

The audit team holds a closing meeting at the end of the audit. It brings together, as far as possible, the same people as those who were present during the opening meeting. This meeting allows the main results and all non-conformities identified to be examined.

During the closing meeting the senior auditor:

- presents any non-conformities issued.
- verifies the information that will appear on the certificate.

If there is participation of a consultant as an observer during the closing meeting, this person must be a silent observer who must not represent the certificate holder in this meeting. The audit team should consider the use of interpreter(s) during the closeout meeting if necessary.

Any differences of opinion between the audit team and the certificate holder should be noted.

The draft audit report must be provided no later than 3 weeks after the last day of the audit to the TC.

5.3.6 Audit interruption

An audit may be prematurely terminated in the following cases: catastrophic natural events, access denied to TC workers, members of the group, member farms, its personnel, documents and infrastructure, serious accidents, concerns about audit team security, power outages, bribery attempts, non-cooperation during an audit, unexpected changes in audit scope due to non-disclosure information from the TC during the audit preparation/application process, evidence of fraud activity, attempts to conceal or alter any evidence/information observed by the audit team.

The audit team must not carry out any part of an audit that has a likelihood of endangering the health and safety of the audit team or those involved in the audit process, such as interviewees. In these cases, Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire will inform Rainforest Alliance and justify the omissions.

When a situation leads to the interruption of an audit, the following actions are taken:

- The audit team immediately informs the back office by call and email of the situation;
- Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire will give the audit team the authority to leave the premises immediately if there are concrete risks to their security. The audit team may immediately decide to leave the premises before informing Bureau Veritas if it realizes that its security is threatened.
- Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire will document the situation with a level of detail that will enable it or the Rainforest Alliance to investigate and resolve this issue, for example non-cooperation, attempted corruption and security issues. These files must be kept up to date by Bureau Veritas.
- Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire will immediately inform Rainforest Alliance in writing and prepare a report that covers the steps that were completed, and the results identified. This report will be uploaded to PCRA within 2 weeks of the issue date and updated once the case has been resolved.
- Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire will suspend or cancel the certificate, depending on the nature and seriousness of the problem identified. Such a decision must be made no later than 2 weeks after the date of the problem.
- If applicable, Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire will ask Rainforest Alliance not to authorize the certification of the TC involved for a defined or indefinite period.

If an audit cannot be carried out within the authorized time frame defined in this document, or is completed for a cause attributable to the TC:

- the TC will make payment of the amount due as invoiced by Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire.
- A new audit is planned collaboratively by both parties if the TC still wishes to pursue certification with Bureau Veritas, and Bureau Veritas still accepts the TC's certification request.

If an audit cannot be carried out within the allotted time or is interrupted for a cause attributable to Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire:

- Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire will immediately inform Rainforest Alliance, explaining the discrepancies in detail;
- Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire will not invoice the TC for costs incurred which did not result in the expected result.
- A new audit is scheduled in collaboration by both parties if the TC still wishes to pursue certification with Bureau Veritas Ivory Coast.

All cases of termination shall be recorded in RACP with details to the extent that they are sufficient for the reader to understand the reason(s) and the background of such case.

Rainforest Alliance reserves the right not to authorize a certificate transfer if there is a valid reason for termination of the audit with the current CB.

Cases of inaccessibility of certain areas: when the audit team is faced with a problem of inaccessibility (insecurity in an area, blocked road, customary practices, etc.) which would prevent the considering of certain risk subjects in the sample or any other incident which would impact the proper functioning of the audit, it must (audit team):

- Immediately report the incident to Bureau Veritas by call and email;
- Follow Bureau Veritas' instructions regarding whether or not to continue (by redirecting the sample) the audit;
- Report the incident in the audit report when Bureau Veritas agrees to continue the audit or interrupt the audit.

When submitting the license application Bureau Veritas will also notify RA of this.

In the event of an interruption of the audit, Bureau Veritas will follow the procedure described above.

5.3.7 Review of the audit report

After the draft audit report has been completed, the report will be reviewed by Bureau Veritas through its internal quality management system.

The quality review must ensure at least the following in accordance with the requirements of the Rainforest Alliance assurance system:

- Correct interpretation of the requirements of the standard for the scope of application;
- Attribution of non-conformities to the correct requirements of the standard;
- Examination of technical concepts relevant to the production system as part of the assessment of the requirements of the standard;
- Verification that the report does not contain the names of the people interviewed;
- Verification that evidence relating to all applicable requirements, both for conformances and non-conformities, is described in a clear, concise, objective and verifiable manner and that it expresses the nature, extent and technical basis correct (non)conformities with the standard;
- Verification that the conclusions of the report are consistent with the non-conformities reported;
- Verification that the audit team has verified the information and data relating to the TC indicated in this document, for example geographical data, worker data and other relevant audit evidence;
- Verification that samples have been correctly determined and implemented, for example samples of farms, workers, worker files, documents, labor suppliers;
- Verification that the number and distribution of interviews are correct;
- Correct spelling and grammar, without excessive use of jargon or colloquialisms;
- compliance with the submission deadlines set out in this document;

- the adequacy and effectiveness of submitted corrective actions, including appropriate root cause analysis.

If the quality control reveals new NCs, Bureau Veritas will inform the TC. The TC will then have to resolve these NCs before the certification decision is taken.

The revised audit report will contain details of the modifications made to the initial audit report (Indication that the non-compliance is removed, the reasons for the removal, including, if necessary, the summary of the clarification exchanges with the auditor, date etc.) to ensure the traceability of the review. Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire must provide a description of non-compliances on the PCRA using the Rainforest Alliance checklist.

5.4 CORRECTIONS AND CORRECTIVE ACTIONS

If, at the end of the audit, deviations from the certification program are detected, a non-compliance report is established. This report is signed by Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire and the certificate holder. The corrective action sheet (IMP-CIV-ITD_CCD 02) is also left with the certificate holder who must complete it and return it to Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire with its proposed corrections and corrective actions for the review.

Two levels of verification of corrections and corrective actions exist:

- corrections and corrective actions that concern document modifications. In this case, an additional visit is not necessary if the FL-CIV-ITD_CCD 02 can be resolved by examining the documents sent to Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire.
- corrections and corrective actions whose implementation must be observed on site. An on-site follow-up audit is organized by Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire.

The follow-up audit, proposed to the certificate holder and organized by Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire, is the responsibility of the certificate holder. The arrangements made for resolving discrepancies are verified in the field by the audit team before closing non-conformities. Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire reserves the right to define non-conformities or situations requiring follow-up audits. Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire agrees with the certificate holder on the terms of the on-site follow-up audit. The timetable for resolving non-conformities is defined by the certificate holder and Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire considering the maximum 10 weeks given to the TC after the last day of the audit to provide proof of resolution and the 12 maximum weeks given to Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire to make the certification decision. When no NC was detected during the audit, Bureau Veritas has 4 weeks to make the certification decision.

5.5 CERTIFICATION DECISION

Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire's certification decisions are taken with complete impartiality. Where there is a risk of conflict of interest involving certifiers and auditors, the persons concerned are not involved in the relevant audit or certification decision-making processes. Also, certifiers do not make decisions regarding the same certificate holders for whom they participated in the most recent audit (any type of audit) or when they conducted technical assistance activities or provided services, consultancy, or have worked in the last two years for a certificate holder, one of its subsidiaries or a company of the same parent group.

5.5.1 Granting certification

Once all non-conformities have been closed and the audit report closed or if no non-conformity is found during the audit, Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire takes the favorable certification decision and submits a request for certification license to Rainforest Alliance via PCRA no later than one week after the favorable certification decision is made. In this case, Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire issues the PCRA certificate. Once the license has been approved by the Rainforest Alliance, the certificate is published on the PCRA for Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire to download.

The certificate specifies but is not limited to:

- the company name of the organization;
- the applicable framework;
- the scope of certified activities;
- the essential characteristics defined in each framework;
- the site(s) concerned with their address;
- the original certification date is the date of the first certification decision.

The certificate has a duration of 3 years from the date of notification of certification.

When the license application is approved, Bureau Veritas immediately informs the TC by email, sending him the final documents.

5.5.2 Decision of non-certification or cancellation

Bureau Veritas or Rainforest Alliance may decide to immediately cancel the current CH certificate and/or not to certify a TC for any of the reasons set out below in the requirements, or for any other reason if necessary to protect the credibility of the Rainforest Alliance certification program.

In this case, Bureau Veritas may ask Rainforest Alliance to prohibit the certification of the TC for an indefinite period, based on the conclusions of the audit:

- **Corrective actions were not implemented satisfactorily** within the deadlines described in the certification process.
- **Evidence of fraud, inaction, or concealment.** It may be for example
 - When there is evidence that a conventional volume is intentionally claimed as certified by the Rainforest Alliance.
 - Where there is evidence that the sustainability differential is not being used for its intended purpose.
- **Corruption/intimidation/harassment of the auditor.** If an auditor is subjected to any form of intimidation and/or harassment and/or is offered any type of bribe and/or pressure from the TC, the auditor must immediately suspend the audit and recommend to the certifier to refuse certification. Rainforest Alliance wants to protect the integrity and safety of auditors who work within its assurance system. Therefore, the auditor can suspend the audit in such cases without having physical evidence of pressure or bribes.
- **Systemic problems linked to irreversible non-compliant practices** which cannot be corrected, for example (but not limited to):
 - Use of a product on the Rainforest Alliance's list of prohibited pesticides for the production of a crop that is (must be) certified and cannot be removed from the volume to be sold as still certified;
 - Loss of traceability of the product which is (must be) certified;
 - Conversion of forests or other natural ecosystems to agricultural production or other land uses after January 1, 2014. For more information;
 - For groups: if an irreversible non-compliant practice has occurred in more than 5% (of the entire group, after extrapolation, see appendix AR6) and/or in at least 5 of the small farms audited, this is considered a systemic problem, not an isolated case, and will therefore result in non-certification and/or cancellation.
 - Any operation where an irreversible NC has been identified must not be certified (certification of a single operation) or must be removed from the certification scope of a TC (certification of several operations or a group);
- Systemic failure of the internal management system of the TC. This is a situation in which the management of a TC is not able to guarantee the compliance of the members of its group, or any other actor under the responsibility of the TC, with the requirements of the standard Rainforest Alliance. A NC is considered a systemic failure if it is not identified by the IMS of the CH and/or if it is not treated by the CH;
- **Serious human rights cases.** The case has not been corrected and the severity test (using the Rainforest Alliance severity test, determines that the identified and confirmed problem is serious or that the case is not being effectively corrected according to the action plan). corrective action accepted by Bureau Veritas during the previous audit;
- **Violations of applicable national, regional, local or sectoral legislation** or collective agreements relating to the requirements of the standard which apply to the TC;
- Bureau Veritas may decide to cancel the certification of the TC by withdrawing its certificate or by issuing a non-certification for the reasons mentioned above. Cancellation or non-certification cannot be waived. To obtain a new certification, the CH must undergo a new certification audit;
- **Systematic lack of evidence** or large-scale data or misrepresentation or falsification of data and evidence.

If Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire terminates the certification process or if the certificate holder receives a suspension or refusal of certification due to failure to comply with the certificate holder's obligations during the audit, the certificate holder must likewise cover all costs involved, including the cost of required subsequent audits.

If a TC receives a decision of non-certification and/or cancellation or is removed from the certification scope of a multi-farm or group, the farm will not be certified for the harvest for which it was audited. The TC may submit a

new application for certification at the earliest for the next first harvest beginning at least 6 months after the start date of the harvest for which it received non-certification or 6 months after the cancellation date, the the latest date being retained. In case of continuous harvest, the earliest possible certificate start date must be at least 6 months after the date of non-certification or cancellation.

TCs which have been the subject of several consecutive cancellations and/or non-certifications must wait at least two harvest periods after the date of the cancellation or non-certification, whichever is later.

5.6 MAINTENANCE AND RENEWAL OF THE CERTIFICATE

When a certificate is awarded to an organization, it ensures that its certificate is maintained during its validity period (3 years) by verifying that its certified system still complies with the requirements of the Rainforest Alliance program.

A surveillance audit is also carried out annually to always ensure the certificate holder's compliance. Supply chain certificate holders may be exempt from this or all external surveillance audits depending on their level of verification.

For re-certification, at the end of a cycle, an audit will be carried out (a certification contract will be offered to the certificate holder at this deadline). The (re-)certification audit must take place between 3 months before and 3 months after the start date of the harvest of the main crop to be certified.

The renewal process is the same as the initial audit.

5.7 CERTIFICATION MARKS AND COMMUNICATION

The procedures for using the Rainforest Alliance logo (Rainforest Alliance certification program for which Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire issues certificates) are described in the document "rainforest alliance labeling & trademarks policy use and approval of the rainforest alliance marks".

Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire communicates to the certificate holder the necessary instructions on the use of certification marks in accordance with the Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire Communication Guide.

Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire controls the use of logos and certificates during surveillance audits by checking in particular that the certification marks:

- are reproduced in their entirety in accordance with the applicable graphic charters;
- are used in accordance with the instructions of Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire and the regulations in force;
- are used in such a way as not to mislead about the purpose of the certification.

The customer undertakes to:

- only claim certification in accordance with its certification scope;
- not use the certification of its products in a way that harms Bureau Veritas.

5.8 CHANGES RELATING TO THE CERTIFIED SYSTEM

During the validity period of the certification, any change relating to the certified system which could affect the conformity of the certificate holder with the applicable standards or compliance with the applicable law (specifications, applicable standards, change of owner or structure, etc.) must be reported to Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire in writing within 48 hours so that it can ensure that the system still meets the requirements of the certification framework. These modifications may be evaluated during surveillance audits.

5.9 EXTENSION OF THE CERTIFICATION SCOPE

At any time, the certificate holder can choose to extend its certification scope to new products, new processes, new sites, etc. It must make a written request to Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire which then indicates, depending on the case, the procedure to follow if a valid contract exists between Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire and the certificate holder.

The extension is generally carried out as part of re-certification audits in order to minimize the additional costs it could generate. If circumstances require, Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire may trigger an extension audit in accordance with the 2020 rules for audits and certification in order to validate the extension of certification.

If the certificate holder does not provide sufficient evidence to justify the extension, Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire reserves the right to refuse the extension request. In this case, Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire informs Rainforest Alliance and the certificate holder of the decision, indicating the reasons for the decision.

5.10 CHANGE AFFECTING CERTIFICATION

In accordance with the ISO/IEC 17065 standard and the requirements of the Rainforest Alliance Certification Program, Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire undertakes to communicate in advance to certificate holders, its staff and stakeholders any modification or change affecting the certification.

In the case of a normative evolution and the Rainforest Alliance Certification Program, Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire communicates the terms of implementation of these changes or modifications including the entry into force deadlines prescribed by the Rainforest certification program Alliance.

When changes affecting certificate holders, Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire staff and stakeholders occur in the Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire management system, Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire communicates the implementation arrangements of these changes or modifications including the deadlines for entry into force.

All changes affecting certification are discussed during the management review.

5.11 TERMINATION, SUSPENSION OR WITHDRAWAL OF A CERTIFICATION

In accordance with instruction IT-CIV-ITD_CCD 05 "Termination, suspension or withdrawal of a certification" the certificate holder may decide to terminate all or part of his certification.

Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire reserves the right to suspend, withdraw or cancel certificates, or to declare non-certification at any time during their validity period, following an audit of re-certification, surveillance, monitoring, and investigation in accordance with the rules for audits and certification 2020.

Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire will make every effort to enable the certificate holder to remedy in time the anomalies which led to a suspension of the certificate issued. If it fails within a reasonable time, the certificate will ultimately be revoked.

5.12 APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS

The certificate holder may appeal the decision of Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire in the following cases:

- any decision to refuse, suspend or cancel certification;
- refusal to accept a request;
- refusal to carry out an assessment;
- delay in the certification decision.

Calls and complaints are processed as complaints and can be made on the BVCi website

(<https://www.bureauveritas.ci/appeals-and-claims-sustainable-development-program>) or directly to any person responsible for it.

After confirmation from the caller or complainant, the call or complaint is processed in accordance with procedure PL-CIV-ITD_CCD 11 COMPLAINTS MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE".

These procedures are available on the BVCi website (<https://www.bureauveritas.ci/sdp-sustainable-development-program>) and made available to the complainant or appellant upon request.

Appeals and complaints are analyzed by at least two people who did not participate in the audit or decision-making process related to the certification, who have no conflict of interest related to the certificate holder, and whose A must have a lead auditor level for the specific certification scope.

Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire responds within 10 calendar days to those submitting complaints to acknowledge receipt of their submissions and provide them with information on the next steps in the process and when they can expect an outcome. Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire keeps these individuals informed of key findings and provides them with a summary of the results of the process when there is a final decision or outcome. If the submission did not include contact details to respond, then Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire completes the process and records the information in the PCRA. Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire has 30 calendar days to resolve a grievance (including making a certification decision in the event an investigative audit is conducted). If Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire requires more time, it will inform Rainforest Alliance in a timely manner.

When Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire receives an anonymous complaint, it assesses the risk associated with this anonymous complaint and reserves the right not to investigate the complaint if there is insufficient evidence or preliminary information. Complaints submitted on behalf of a group, such as a community or labor organization, must have at least one viable contact person to handle communications and requests for further information. The certificate holder must follow the Bureau Veritas procedure for processing and managing calls and complaints. If this does not resolve, the TC may submit a complaint via the Rainforest Alliance Complaint Procedure.

5.13 TRANSFERS OF CERTIFICATES FROM ONE CB TO ANOTHER

Certificates can only be transferred from one CB to another for a new certification cycle (therefore, they can only be transferred once every 3 years).

Rainforest Alliance has the right to intervene in any certificate transfer process, including suspending or terminating the process and reversing any existing transfer within 2 weeks, if Rainforest Alliance concludes that the transfers may compromise the integrity of the certificate. certification process, the program assurance system process, and their results.

Certificates should only be transferred to CBs approved for the geographic scope of the TC. Certificates cannot be transferred to CBs with suspended or canceled scopes, or to CBs that have requested scopes that have not yet been approved.

Requests for transfers or certification to new CBs must not be accepted for TCs which:

- have received a certification refusal and/or had their certification canceled during the previous year of the certification cycle;
- requested more than one transfer in the previous year;
- looking for an extension of the scope;
- have had their certification suspended or;
- have an investigative or follow-up audit in progress.

Requests for certificate transfers must be made on the PCRA by the TC requesting the transfer.

Upon transfer request, the TC accepts that Rainforest Alliance shares with the new CB any relevant information on previous audits.

The current CB must confirm receipt of the transfer request sent by the organization and inform the new CB within one week. The current CB must advise the TC if there are any outstanding financial obligations that need to be settled before the transfer can take place. If there are no pending financial obligations, then the new CB can accept the application and is free to contact the TC to begin the application and certification process.

The new CB must review the TC profile before the transfer and before accepting the transfer request. This examination must include:

- confirmation that the certificate is in force and valid for the scope described;
- identification of the reason for the transfer;
- confirmation that the scope of application of the certification corresponds to the scope of application of the new CB;
- confirmation that all complaints submitted have been resolved;
- review of the TC's audit history;
- confirmation of the current stage of the audit cycle.

The new CB may request that the previous CB provide audit reports, checklists, risk assessment data, geolocation data, a register of group members, pending NCs and evidence sent by the TC to resolve open NCs and similar documents. The previous CB must provide these documents subject to written approval to the TC carrying out the transfer.

If the authorization or scope of a CB is cancelled, the TC may transfer it to another CB authorized for the respective scope. If there are no authorized CBs for the respective scope, Rainforest Alliance will assign a CB until the next certification audit, after which the TC will be authorized to choose another CB.

In the event of disagreement between two CBs involved in the transfer of a TC certificate, Rainforest Alliance will analyze the case and make a final decision.

5.14 STAKEHOLDER CONTRIBUTIONS

Interested parties can, via the Bureau Veritas website (<https://www.bureauveritas.ci/form/stakeholders-s-access-contact-fo>), provide information on the performance of Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire certificate holders, certifiers and auditors.

5.15 CONFIDENTIALITY

Bureau Veritas administrative staff and auditors undertake to treat as strictly confidential any information or documents of the certificate holder obtained from the certificate holder or any other interested party that they become aware of during an audit.

This confidentiality may be lifted in the following cases:

- Legal recourse.
- Appeal from a supervisory body
- Written agreement given by the certificate holder.

Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire informs the certificate holder in advance of any information it intends to place in the public domain.

5.16 PARTICIPATION OF OBSERVERS IN AUDITS

Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire may be required to involve observers in its Certification audits.

These observers can be:

- internal auditors from Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire (as part of the internal audit activities of our organization and our international network);
- observers/auditors from Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire as part of their qualification process as auditors;
- auditors of Accreditation bodies (audit of Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire as part of accreditation programs)
- auditors from label-holding organizations (Rainforest Alliance, audit as part of a pilot project for the implementation of new standards or new versions of standards, etc.)

The certificate holder is required to accept the presence of the representative of an accreditation body during Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire audits. In other cases, the presence of the observer is subject to the agreement of the certificate holder.

5.17 COMMUNICATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS

- Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire must provide all information and data from the certification processes to the Rainforest Alliance as requested in the Rainforest Alliance Assurance Platform or any other official communication channel as part of the assurance processes and as stipulated in these regulations and the rules of the related insurance system.
- **Communication with RA**

Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire must immediately report to Rainforest Alliance any violation of non-disclosure agreements and any intentional or unintentional disclosure or dissemination of confidential certification data and information. In the event of a data breach involving personal data, it must comply with all applicable personal data protection regulations. Unreported incidents may be subject to non-compliance or other sanctions imposed by the Rainforest Alliance.

If corruption or coercion of an auditor or member of an independent committee is suspected, Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire must report this situation to Rainforest Alliance.

Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire must implement a rigorous sanction policy for cases of corruption detected with its staff, its consultants and its certificate holders or potential certificate holders. It immediately notifies Rainforest Alliance when fraud or corruption is detected or investigated.

Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire must resolve and communicate the outcome of any appeal within 30 calendar days. It should record the appeal date and, optionally, its results in MultiTrace and update the status as an appeal process. Rainforest Alliance reserves the right to design a single conflict of interest management mechanism and make it binding for all certification bodies.

■ **Communication with other stakeholders**

All information, updates, official standards, rules, policies and other certification documents of the Rainforest Alliance 2020 Certification Program are disseminated to stakeholders, for each as it relates, within 2 business days from the date of publication. date communication from Rainforest Alliance. All information, updates, official communications, procedures, rules, policies and other documents internal and external to Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire are disseminated to the stakeholders, for each as far as it is concerned, within the required/reasonable time frames. All questions from certificate holders, staff and other stakeholders of Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire are collected via the <https://www.bureauveritas.ci/form/stakeholders-s-access-contact-fo>. Bureau Veritas Côte d'Ivoire reserves the right to respond within five working days according to the steps below:

- ✓ any form completed on the BVCI website is sent directly (by email) to the Marketing & Sales Manager;
- ✓ upon receipt of the email, the Marketing & Sales Manager takes note of the need expressed by the BVCI stakeholder and identifies the Business Unit concerned.
- ✓ once the Business Unit has been identified, the need expressed by the stakeholder is transmitted to the activity manager who must first acknowledge receipt of the expressed need and then provide a response to the stakeholder.