

---

# RSPO SUPPLY CHAIN CERTIFICATION SYSTEMS

For Accreditation and Certification Bodies

## 2020

---

Endorsed by the RSPO Board of Governors on 1 February 2020

Document Title : RSPO Supply Chain Certification Systems  
Document Code : RSPO-PRO-T05-002 V2 ENG  
Scope : International  
Document Type : Certification Systems  
Endorsement Date : 1 February 2020  
Contact : certification@rspo.org

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF ACRONYMS .....	IV
INTRODUCTION .....	1
DEFINITIONS .....	3
CERTIFICATION STANDARDS .....	8
ACCREDITATION REQUIREMENTS: MODEL FOR APPROVAL AND MONITORING OF THIRD PARTY CERTIFICATION BODIES .....	10
CERTIFICATION PROCESS REQUIREMENTS OF THE RSPO SUPPLY CHAIN CERTIFICATION SYSTEMS .....	13
ANNEX 1: SUPPLY CHAIN AUDIT REPORT .....	22
ANNEX 2: MULTI-SITE CERTIFICATION .....	24
ANNEX 3: GROUP CERTIFICATION .....	27
ANNEX 4: CERTIFICATE - TEMPLATE .....	30
ANNEX 5: BOOK AND CLAIM AUDIT PROCESS REQUIREMENTS .....	32

## LIST OF ACRONYMS

---

<b>AB</b>	Accreditation Body
<b>ACOP</b>	Annual Communication of Progress
<b>ASA</b>	Annual Surveillance Audit
<b>BC</b>	Book and Claim
<b>CB</b>	Certification Body
<b>CPO</b>	Crude Palm Oil
<b>CSPK</b>	Certified Sustainable Palm Kernel
<b>CSPKE</b>	Certified Sustainable Palm Kernel Expeller
<b>CSPKO</b>	Certified Sustainable Palm Kernel Oil
<b>CSPO</b>	Certified Sustainable Palm Oil
<b>FFB</b>	Fresh Fruit Bunches
<b>IAF</b>	International Accreditation Forum
<b>ICS</b>	Internal Control System
<b>IP</b>	Identity preserved
<b>IS</b>	Independent Smallholders
<b>ISEAL</b>	International Social and Environmental Accreditation and Labelling Alliance.
<b>KG</b>	Kilogram
<b>MB</b>	Mass Balance
<b>MLA</b>	Multilateral Recognition Arrangement
<b>MT</b>	Metric tonne
<b>NGO</b>	Non-governmental organisation
<b>P&amp;C</b>	Principles and Criteria
<b>PFAD</b>	Palm fatty acids
<b>PKFAD</b>	Palm kernel fatty acids
<b>PKO</b>	Palm kernel oil
<b>RSPO</b>	Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil
<b>SCCS</b>	Supply Chain Certification Standard
<b>SG</b>	Segregated

## 1. Introduction

---

The Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) is a not-for-profit, international membership organisation that unites stakeholders from the different sectors of the palm oil industry: oil palm producers, processors and traders, consumer goods manufacturers, retailers, banks/investors, and environmental and social non-governmental organisations (NGOs), to develop and implement global standards for sustainable palm oil production.

The methods used by the RSPO to deliver its objective include:

- The development of a standard for certification of sustainable oil palm production and associated models for verification of responsible oil palm production. The RSPO Standard for Sustainable Oil Palm Production is presented as a series of Principles, Criteria, Indicators, and Guidance, and is designed to be used by oil palm producers to implement sustainable production practices, and by certification bodies for field verification.
- The development of an RSPO Supply Chain Certification Standard. This document describes requirements related to the control of RSPO certified oil palm products in the supply chain, including flows of material and associated claims.
- The RSPO Supply Chain Certification Standard is presented as a series of auditable requirements designed to be used by organisations in the palm value chain to demonstrate implemented systems for control of RSPO certified oil palm products. Downstream processors or users of RSPO certified sustainable oil palm products can claim the use of (or support of) RSPO certified oil palm products when they adhere to the requirements of the RSPO Supply Chain Certification Standard and the RSPO Rules on Market Communications and Claims. This is independently verified by an RSPO accredited certification body.

The purpose of this document is:

- To establish the minimum requirements of a consistent methodology for enabling certification against the requirements of the RSPO Supply Chain Certification Standard to enable all certification bodies to operate in a consistent and controlled manner.
- To provide documentation designed to assure long-term continuity and consistency of the delivery of certification against the requirements of the RSPO Supply Chain Certification Standard.
- To ensure that claims of RSPO members relating to the production, procurement, and use of RSPO certified oil palm products are true.

This document is analogous to the RSPO Supply Chain Certification Standard that defines certification standard. This document shall be reviewed at intervals not greater than five (5) years.

### **1.1. Elements of a certification scheme**

Certification schemes are usually made up of three key elements:

- Certification standards. This sets out the requirements that shall be met and against which certification audits are made. The RSPO chain of custody standards are detailed in the RSPO Supply Chain Certification Standard document.
- Accreditation requirements. This is the approval mechanism for ensuring that the organisations that undertake certification audits and surveillance audits are competent and produce credible, consistent results. The RSPO accreditation requirements are detailed in section 4 of this document.
- Certification process requirements. This is the process of establishing whether or not a set of requirements (i.e. the standard) has been met, usually carried out by a certification body. The RSPO Supply Chain Certification process requirements are detailed in section 5 of this document.

### **1.2. Scope**

This document defines requirements for:

- a certification body to be accredited as being a competent body capable of undertaking audits and issuing certificates of conformance against the RSPO Supply Chain Certification Standard (Accreditation requirements).
- certification process against the requirements of the RSPO Supply Chain Certification Standard.

## 2. Definitions

---

<b>Accreditation Body (AB)</b>	Organisation responsible for auditing RSPO certification bodies against the requirements of <i>ISO/IEC Guide 17065</i> . The organisation shall be a signatory to the appropriate International Accreditation Forum (IAF) or Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (MLA), or a full member of the International Social and Environmental Accreditation and Labelling Alliance (ISEAL).
<b>Annual Aggregated Volumes</b>	Estimated volume of palm oil / palm kernel oil content (in separate categories) in the RSPO certified oil palm products. The record shall consist of the aggregated volume purchased (input) and claimed (output) over a period of twelve (12) months.
<b>Annual Surveillance</b>	An annual audit carried out by the accredited certification body to a certified organisation to ensure continuous compliance to the RSPO SC standard is maintained throughout the certification cycle.
<b>Applicant</b>	Organisation seeking for certification.
<b>Audit</b>	Independent evaluation of compliance with the requirements of the RSPO Supply Chain Certification Standard by an RSPO accredited certification body as part of the certification process.
<b>Book and Claim (BC)</b>	Model that supports the production of RSPO certified sustainable oil palm products through the sale of RSPO Credits. One (1) RSPO Credit represents one (1) metric tonne of RSPO certified sustainable oil palm product. For oleochemicals, ratios in the RSPO Rules for Oleochemicals and its Derivatives shall be used (Refer to Annex 6 of Supply Chain Certification Standard)
<b>Buyer</b>	The next commercial entity in the supply chain; the supplier (or seller) is the previous commercial entity in the supply chain.
<b>Certificate</b>	Document issued by an accredited certification body when an organisation complies with the requirements of RSPO Supply Chain Certification Standard. The certificate is valid for five (5) years and it provides a means to request a licence in the RSPO IT Platform on an annual basis upon successful completion of an audit. The certificate is only valid if the licence is active in the RSPO IT platform.
<b>Certification Body (CB)</b>	An independent body that is accredited by an accreditation body for RSPO to conduct certification audits against the requirements of the RSPO Supply Chain Certification Standard.
<b>Claim</b>	Any communication (i.e. on-pack, website, sales documents, product specification documents, and ACOP report) in any format of the presence of certified and support to sustainable oil palm product to any stakeholder group.
<b>Client</b>	Organisation whose system is being audited for certification purposes.

<b>Crude Palm Oil (CPO)</b>	First stage palm oil product produced from fresh fruit bunches (FFB) at a mill.
<b>Crude Palm Oil Mill (CPO Mill)</b>	A mill with legal relationship to specific plantations. This includes through parent or sister companies.
<b>Dispatch</b>	A physical transfer of a product from one organisation to another.
<b>Distributors</b>	<p>Participants in the supply chain of RSPO certified oil palm products who takes legal ownership, store, and sell products to their customer bases, but do not unpack, repack or relabel those products at any stage. Distributors are allowed to handle products physically without any modification to the end products and therefore, do not need supply chain certification.</p> <p>Distributors not complying with this definition, need to hold a Supply Chain Certification. For example, exporters of bulk palm oil from a port terminal, or other sellers of bulk (unpackaged) palm oil, are required to obtain RSPO SCC certification.</p>
<b>Distributor's Licence</b>	An annual request submitted by the distributor through RSPO IT platform that allows them to trade and/or claim RSPO certified products. When selling RSPO certified products, the licensed distributor must pass on the certificate number of the product manufacturer and the applicable supply chain model.
<b>End Product</b>	Product that will have no further processing and/or repackaging, and/or relabeling prior to sale to the final consumer.
<b>End Product Manufacturer</b>	The manufacturer/processor that uses oil palm products for manufacturing products designed and intended for consumption or end use in any way without further repackaging or processing. For example, retailers when producing own label products in house, consumer goods manufacturers, biofuel producers, or feed product manufacturers. Retailers and distributors of end products, where no further modification occurs, do not need Supply Chain Certification.
<b>Food service company</b>	Facility / facilities that serves any type of meals and/or snacks for immediate consumption onsite or for take away. This category includes full service restaurants, fast food outlets, caterers, cafeterias and other places that prepare, serve and sell food to consumers or public. It also includes retail bakeries, as those located in supermarkets conducting par-baking and food service companies that deliver to institutions.
<b>Fresh Fruit Bunches (FFB)</b>	The bunches of palm fruits harvested from oil palm plantations/farms.
<b>Identity Preserved (IP)</b>	The Identity Preserved (IP) supply chain model assures that the RSPO certified oil palm product delivered to the end user is uniquely identifiable to a single RSPO certified mill and its certified supply base.
<b>Independent Mill</b>	A mill operating independently of and with no legal relationship to any specific plantation. This includes through parent or sister companies.



<b>Initial certification audit</b>	The first certification activity carried out by an accredited certification body for an organisation to determine the conformance to the RSPO supply chain standard requirements.
<b>Internal Audit</b>	A systematic, independent and documented process carried out by the organisation to ensure that the management system has been properly implemented and to determine the effectiveness of the implemented management system.
<b>Internal Control System (ICS)</b>	A documented set of procedures and processes that defines how a supply chain certification system works for multi-sites or group certification. The ICS is responsible for and centrally controls the SCC system.
<b>Legal Owner</b>	Person or entity that holds legal ownership of the physical products containing oil palm or derivatives thereof.
<b>Mass Balance (MB)</b>	Supply chain model that allows certified claims to be transferred from one oil palm product to another either through physical blending or administratively as described in Module C of the RSPO Supply Chain Certification Standard.
<b>Micro Users</b>	Organisations that use low volume of oil palm products, of less than 1000 kg of oil palm products per annum.
<b>Multi-site Certification</b>	A certification option for a group of sites that have a legal or contractual link with a defined Central Office, who acts as ICS. Such sites must include a minimum of two (2) participating sites and may consist of group of refineries, kernel crushers, or processing facilities, etc. that are administered by an ICS (Central Office).
<b>Non-certified Mills</b>	Mills that have not been certified by an RSPO accredited certification body.
<b>Oil Palm Products</b>	Products produced from the oil palm, including its fruits and kernels. Depending on the context, the phrase 'oil palm products' in this document can also refer to products such as (crude) palm oil, shells, palm kernels, palm kernel expeller, palm kernel oil (PKO) or products derived thereof, palm fatty acids (PFAD), palm kernel fatty acids (PKFAD), olein, stearin or other products that are derived from fractionation of palm oil and palm kernel oil.
<b>On-site Audit</b>	Physical visit to organisation by representative(s) of an accredited certification body.
<b>Owner</b>	Person or entity that holds physical ownership of goods/plant/building, etc.
<b>Palm Kernel Oil (PKO)</b>	Oil palm product produced from the crushing of the palm kernel.
<b>Palm Kernel</b>	Oil palm product that is the seed of the palm fruit.
<b>Physical Handling</b>	Activities which may include receipt, storage, and dispatch or where a product undergoes physical transformation or repacking or relabelling.

<b>Processing Aids</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Substances that are added to a product during the processing of product but removed from the product prior to packaging.</li> <li>b) Substances that are added to a product during processing, are converted into constituents normally present in the product, and do not significantly increase the amount of the constituents naturally found in the product.</li> <li>c) Substances that are added to a product for their technical or functional effect in the processing but are present in the finished product at insignificant levels and do not have any technical or functional effect in that product.</li> </ul>
<b>Receiving</b>	Receipt of RSPO certified product at a site under the control of the organisation (includes outsourced contractors).
<b>Recertification audit</b>	An extended surveillance audit carried out once in every five (5) years prior to the expiry of the certification.
<b>Refinery</b>	A production site that processes fats and oils into higher value fats and oils.
<b>Relabel</b>	Any changes to the original label on the RSPO certified material.
<b>Remote Audit</b>	Auditing process by which accredited CBs gather information without the need to be physically present.
<b>Retailer</b>	A business or person that sells end consumer products to the consumer, as opposed to a wholesaler or supplier, who normally sell their products to another business. Retailers of end products, where no further modification occurs, do not need Supply Chain Certification.
<b>Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (or RSPO)</b>	A not-for-profit international membership organisation working to improve the sustainability of global palm oil production and use.
<b>RSPO Certified Sustainable Palm Oil (or RSPO CSPO)</b>	Palm oil produced by a mill (including independent mill) if the FFB/palm fruit are sourced from plantations/estates that have been certified against the RSPO Principles and Criteria (P&C).
<b>RSPO Rules on Market Communications and Claims</b>	Rules for use of communications and claims related to the use or support of RSPO certified oil palm products.
<b>RSPO IT Platform</b>	<p>Online trading platform where the license of the certified company/site and distributor/trader license are submitted and approved by the RSPO Secretariat. The system is used for tracing RSPO certified palm oil, palm kernel oil, fractions and palm fatty acids (PFAD), palm kernel fatty acids (PKFAD), and palm kernel expeller, throughout the supply chain from mill to refineries, under the supply chain models of Mass Balance, Segregated, and/or Identity Preserved.</p> <p>This IT Platform also allows the trading of RSPO Credits under the Book and Claim model.</p>
<b>Scope of Certification</b>	The activities covered by the organisation's supply chain certification.

<b>Segregated (SG)</b>	The Segregated (SG) supply chain model assures that RSPO certified oil palm products delivered to the end user come only from RSPO certified sources (a mixture of IP products).
<b>Site</b>	Location with geographical boundaries where defined activities under the control of an organisation may be carried out
<b>Supplier (or seller)</b>	The previous commercial entity in the supply chain; the buyer (or customer) is the next commercial entity in the supply chain.
<b>Supply Chain</b>	The series of processes/steps through which agricultural raw materials pass from the primary producer through to the end product manufacturer (i.e. oil palm growing, palm oil milling, storage, transport, refining, manufacture, end product, etc).
<b>Supply Chain Certification Systems</b>	Document that defines the minimum requirements of a consistent methodology for enabling certification against the requirements of the SCC Standard to enable all Certification Bodies to operate in a consistent and controlled manner
<b>Supply Chain Group Certification</b>	An option for groups of independent organisations acting as separate legal entities in the palm supply chain who have agreed to adhere to the rules of a Group structure under the guidance of a Group management entity and under the direction of a Group manager, in accordance with an Internal Control System (ICS).
<b>Supply Chain Licence</b>	An annual request submitted by an accredited CB in RSPO IT Platform when a certificate holder successfully completes an audit within the five years certificate validity. Upon approval from RSPO Secretariat, the supply chain licence allows certificate holder to carry out trading and record transactions. A supply chain licence is valid for a year and needs to be renewed after completion of every audit. RSPO products cannot be traded as RSPO certified without a valid supply chain licence.
<b>Trader</b>	<p>Participant in the supply chain of RSPO certified oil palm products that takes legal ownership of oil palm products, derivatives, and/or purchases and sells futures without physically handling the oil palm products. When selling RSPO certified products, the Trader must pass on the certificate number of the product manufacturer and the applicable supply chain model.</p> <p>Traders not complying with this definition, need to hold a Supply Chain Certification.</p>
<b>Trader's Licence</b>	<p>An annual request submitted by the trader through RSPO IT platform that allows them to trade and/or claim RSPO certified products. When selling RSPO certified products, a licensed trader must pass on the certificate number of the product manufacturer and the applicable supply chain model.</p> <p>See Trader Licence Guidelines on RSPO Website:  <a href="https://www.rspo.org">https://www.rspo.org</a></p>
<b>Unit of Certification</b>	All operators who take legal ownership and physically handle (including receipt into storage tanks) RSPO certified oil palm products need to be RSPO supply chain certified. This requirement applies up to and including the end product manufacturer.

### 3. Certification Standards

---

The RSPO certification standards are as follows:

#### 3.1. Sustainable production of oil palm products

- 3.1.1 Production of sustainable oil palm products is comprised of legal, economically viable, environmentally appropriate, and socially beneficial management and operations. This is delivered through the application of the RSPO Principles and Criteria for Sustainable Palm Oil Production and the accompanying indicators and guidance, as set out in the document *RSPO Principles and Criteria for Sustainable Palm Oil Production including indicators and guidance* (available at [www.rspo.org](http://www.rspo.org)), (referred to collectively in this document as the 'RSPO Principles and Criteria' or 'RSPO P&C').

All of the RSPO Principles and Criteria apply to the management of oil palm. All relevant RSPO Principles and Criteria also apply to oil palm plantations and associated mills. Independent mills shall be certified against the requirements of the RSPO Supply Chain Certification Standard.

- 3.1.2 Where available, national interpretations of the international indicators and guidance shall be followed. In order to keep overall control of the quality of any set of national indicators and guidance claiming to be official interpretations, especially in the local legal context, national interpretations shall be endorsed or recognised by RSPO Board of Governors (BoG).

#### 3.2. Supply chain requirements for sustainable oil palm products

- 3.2.1 The oil palm products may go through many production and logistical stages between oil palm plantations and the end product. Any individual batch of oil palm products can be traded through one of four supply chain models as defined in the RSPO Supply Chain Standard. The models include:

- Identity Preserved (IP)
- Segregated (SG)
- Mass Balance (MB)
- Book and Claim (BC).

3.2.2 For the first three of these, Identity Preserved, Segregated and Mass Balance, supply chain controls from the mill through to the end product are required.

All users of the RSPO Book and Claim model, who are not producers and claim more than 500 RSPO Credits for a period of twelve (12) months, need to show compliance with the rules for use of the RSPO Book and Claim model, which are covered in Annex 6 on Book and Claim Audit Process Requirements of this document.

This document sets out certification requirements for assessment against the RSPO Supply Chain Certification Standard.

## 4. Accreditation Requirements: Model for Approval and Monitoring of Third Party Certification Bodies

---

### 4.1. Accreditation overview

- 4.1.1 Any certification body (CB) that wishes to offer a service of certification audits against the RSPO Supply Chain Certification Standard shall be accredited by an accreditation body (AB) that is operating on behalf of the RSPO. Individuals cannot be accredited as a CB.
- 4.1.2 CB Accreditation for RSPO SCC shall refer to RSPO Supply Chain Certification Systems Document.
- 4.1.3 RSPO has made a provision that all CBs accredited for certification against the RSPO Principles and Criteria can also undertake supply chain audits against the requirements of the RSPO Supply Chain Standard only for CPO mills, provided that one of the audit team members has successfully completed an SCC lead auditor training course.

This does not apply to independent mills that do not have a fixed supply base and therefore are not included as part of a P&C assessment. Independent mills shall be audited against the Supply Chain Standard and a supply chain certificate is needed; in these cases, a CB accredited for certification against the SCC Standard shall undertake the supply chain audit. Independent and integrated palm kernel crushers cannot be part of a P&C certification unit and shall require a separate SSC Standard certification, by an SCC accredited CB. A palm kernel crushing plant cannot be part of a P&C certification and shall need a separate Supply Chain audit and certificate, by an SCC accredited CB.

- 4.1.4 The RSPO Secretariat and the AB, both publish a list of accredited certification bodies on their website.

## 4.2. Accreditation Body (AB) requirements

- 4.2.1 Any accreditation body shall be operating in accordance with the requirements of the most recent revision of *ISO/IEC 17011 Conformity assessment – General Requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies*. This shall be demonstrated either as a signatory to the appropriate International Accreditation Forum (IAF), Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (MLA) or through full membership of the International Social and Environmental Accreditation and Labelling Alliance (ISEAL).
- 4.2.2 The AB shall be responsible for decisions on the accreditation status of a CB, including application, approval, suspension, withdrawal or termination, as well as expanding and reducing the scope of accreditation.
- 4.2.3 The AB's documented systems and procedures shall include annual monitoring and reviews of CBs' competence and implementation of all RSPO specific requirements.
- 4.2.4 The AB is required to implement its accreditation processes in accordance with documented systems and procedures. These systems and procedures shall be designed to ensure that accredited RSPO CBs are operating in a manner consistent with the intent and requirements of *ISO/IEC 17065 Conformity Assessment - Requirements for Bodies Certifying Products, Processes and Services*, together with the specific RSPO requirements detailed in section 5 of this document.
- 4.2.5 The AB's documented systems and procedures shall include requirements relating to the transfer of the certification of an organisation from one accredited CB to another, consistent with the requirements of *IAF MD2:2017 IAF Mandatory Document for the Transfer of Accredited Certification of Management Systems* and as specified in section 5.4 of this document.
- 4.2.6 Assessments of the performance of the AB in relation to its defined systems and procedures, and any additional RSPO requirements, are conducted by the RSPO Secretariat biannually.
- 4.2.7 The accreditation body shall maintain and implement a written policy and procedures for avoidance of conflicts of interest.
- 4.2.8 The AB has a Dispute Management that primarily deals with the performance and decision-making of the certification bodies (CBs).
- 4.2.9 RSPO requires the AB to notify RSPO Secretariat if a complaint about the CB is received from any RSPO stakeholders concerning their competency or process or the outcome of an accreditation audit or implementation. The AB shall handle complaints in accordance with the most recent revision of *ISO/IEC 17011*. Should the accreditation body fail to resolve a complaint within the given timeframe, it shall inform the RSPO Secretariat.

### **4.3. Suspension, withdrawal and termination of accreditation**

- 4.3.1 The AB shall have a documented procedure in place for the suspension, withdrawal or termination of the accreditation of CBs.
- 4.3.2 The AB shall notify the RSPO Secretariat of the suspension, withdrawal or termination of accreditation for any CB within 24 hours. The RSPO Secretariat will inform RSPO members of such developments in two (2) days through announcements on the RSPO website. A suspended CB is only allowed to conduct limited type of audits depending on recommendations by the AB. The CB shall inform all of its RSPO clients of its suspension status. If the suspension is not lifted within the agreeable time frame, the CB accreditation shall be terminated. From the termination date, the terminated CB is not allowed to do any RSPO scheme audits.
- 4.3.3 Where a CB's accreditation is suspended, withdrawn, or terminated, all certificates issued by that CB remain valid until the next surveillance date. In case a CB's accreditation is being withdrawn, suspended, or terminated within four (4) months of the company's next surveillance date, the company shall be given 3-month extension from the expiry date of the certificate by RSPO. The CB shall inform all of its RSPO certificate holders within 14 days of this change in status, and shall comply with the AB's and RSPO's requirements for transfer of certification to other accredited CBs. If an audit is being performed before the withdrawal, termination, or suspension date, but the certification process has not been completed, the RSPO Secretariat together with the AB will decide about the continuation of the process.

### **4.4. Accreditation requirements for certification bodies**

- 4.4.1 CBs are required to demonstrate that all aspects of their organisation, systems, and procedures for conducting certification against the intent and requirements of the RSPO Supply Chain Certification Systems are included in documented management systems, and conform to the provisions of RSPO's specific requirements detailed in section 5 of this document.
- 4.4.2 CBs are required to demonstrate that all aspects of their organisation, systems, and procedures for conducting certification against the intent and requirements of the RSPO Supply Chain Certification Systems conform to the relevant provisions of the most recent revision of ISO/IEC 17065.
- 4.4.3 The CB shall comply with the accreditation body's requirements pertaining to accreditation decisions.



## 5. Certification Process Requirements of the RSPO Supply Chain Certification Systems

---

This section prescribes the process that a certification body (CB) shall follow in carrying out an audit of a site that is seeking certification to the requirements of the RSPO Supply Chain Certification Standard.

### 5.1. Specific competencies of audit teams

- 5.1.1 The accredited CB shall implement all provisions, including legal arrangements, to ensure that any and all persons, subcontractors or other entities (e.g. permanently employed and freelance auditors, experts, consultants, etc.) engaged on its behalf in auditing against the requirements of the RSPO Supply Chain Certification Standard, are knowledgeable about the applicable processes, procedures, and documents, and comply with the requirements of the RSPO Supply Chain Certification Systems as a whole.
- 5.1.2 Audit procedures for certification audits against the requirements of the RSPO Supply Chain Certification Standard shall require that CBs demonstrably include sufficient supply chain expertise to address all of the requirements of the RSPO Supply Chain Certification Standard.
- 5.1.3 All of the audit team members auditing the Supply Chain Standard shall be of a lead auditor status. The lead auditors shall demonstrate, the following:
  - a) Possess a minimum of three (3) years field working experience in similar supply chains, or equivalent related to and as necessary for the certification process. Field working experience refers to direct working experience or practical experience in auditing the palm oil sector;
  - b) Successful completion of internationally recognised ISO 9001 lead auditor course;
  - c) Successful completion of an RSPO-endorsed Supply Chain Lead Auditor's course and a refresher course every three (3) years;
  - d) Possess language skills suitable for verbal and written communication with the client and the client's relevant stakeholder groups. This can be supplemented by a translator;
  - e) Successful completion of the trainee lead auditor requirements in 5.1.4 and evaluated as a qualified lead auditor by the CB's management
- 5.1.4 The CB's Lead Auditor qualification process shall include the requirement for the trainee Lead Auditor to participate in 3 different types of RSPO SC audits (i.e. a combination of Initial Certification and Surveillance audit or Initial certification and Recertification audits) at different organisations, under the direction and guidance of a qualified Lead Auditor. The performance of the trainee lead auditor shall be evaluated on-site. The trainee lead auditor shall not be considered in the auditor days.

- 5.1.5 The CB shall register all of its approved Lead Auditor (including freelance) with the AB, including details of qualifications and competencies.
- 5.1.6 The CB shall evaluate the performance of each Lead Auditors in witness assessment at least once every three (3) years.
- 5.1.7 The lead auditor shall be impartial and shall not show favourable treatment to any organisation.

## **5.2. Unit of certification**

- 5.2.1 The General Chain of Custody requirements of the RSPO Supply Chain Standard shall apply to any organisation in the supply chain that takes legal ownership and physically handles RSPO Certified Sustainable oil palm products at a location under the control of the organisation including outsourced contractors. After the end product manufacturer, there is no further requirement for certification.
- 5.2.2 Any site that is looking for certification shall be operational at least three (3) months before an initial certification audit can be conducted.
- 5.2.3 The Supply Chain Certification shall take place at site level. Multi-site certification (Annex 2) or group certification (Annex 3) is possible under specific requirements.
- 5.2.4 Outsourced contractors shall be considered high risk if physically transforming products or if there is a risk of uncontrolled, non-deliberate or accidental cross-contamination resulting in mixing of certified and non-certified products.

## **5.3. Audit process requirements**

### **Client application and contract**

- 5.3.1 The CB shall ensure that any organisation seeking or holding certification against the requirements of the RSPO is provided with necessary information concerning the RSPO Supply Chain Certification and the RSPO Rules on Market Communication and Claims. If potential clients have any further questions concerning the RSPO these shall be directed to the RSPO Secretariat.
- 5.3.2 The CB shall enter into a contractual agreement for certification services with the organisation seeking or holding certification against the RSPO Supply Chain Standard and maintain all the records of all agreements before providing any services.
- 5.3.3 The contractual documents shall specify the following:
  - a. scope of audit, duration of audit, and costs related to the audit;

- b. the CB's and client's contractual rights and obligations including the following:
  - i. the client's right to appeal in relation to the CB's assessment process including decision making;
  - ii. the right of CB's and AB's representatives to access the certificate holders' premises, as well as documents and records deemed necessary by the CB's or its AB's;
  - iii. the right of the CB's to conduct unannounced audit (due to a complaint);
  - iv. the right of the AB to conduct witness assessment, compliance assessment, unannounced assessment, or any other special short notice assessment.

Note : The term "unannounced audit/assessment" is an additional audit carried out in response to, for example, a complaint against or identified potential risk linked to the integrity of the certificate issued to the certified organisation, for which CB or AB does not announce the date of the audit to the certified organisation.

The RSPO recognizes there might be legal and logistical challenges in the implementation of unannounced audits. Hence, subject to practical arrangements required relating to legal or logistic challenges the CB or AB shall inform the certified organisation about the audit at least 3 working days in advance.

The audit team conducting the audit shall be different from the audit team that conducted the previous certification.

- c. provisions on confidentiality and declarations of interest.

### **Audit planning**

- 5.3.4 The CB shall plan the on-site audit, consistent with the guidelines defined in the most recent revision of ISO/IEC 17065.
- 5.3.5 The CB may synchronise and combine RSPO Supply Chain audits with other on-site audits (such as food safety, quality, etc.) where possible and appropriate.
- 5.3.6 Certification bodies shall recognise certificates previously issued under RSPO Supply Chain Certification Systems by other RSPO accredited CBs.
- 5.3.7 For audit of a single food service company, the audit shall involve onsite audits for initial certification, surveillance, and recertification audits. In the case where the food service company uses less than 1000kg of oil palm products annually, then a remote audit by the CB is allowed for surveillance audits. For audit of multisite and group certification of the food service companies refer to Annex 2 and Annex 3 of this document.

## Certification audit

5.3.8 The audit shall start with an opening meeting during which the CB shall inform the certification applicant about the certification process, agree logistics for the audit, confirm access to all relevant documents, field sites and personnel, explain confidentiality and conflicts of interest, and agree on the timing of the closing meeting.

5.3.9 The CB shall review the management documentation of the applicant to ensure that all elements fully meet the requirements of the RSPO Supply Chain Certification Standard. The certification body shall clarify any issues or areas of concern with the organisation seeking or holding certification.

5.3.10 The certification audit shall review whether the organisational systems, the management systems and the operational systems, including any documented policies and procedures of the organisation seeking or holding certification, are sufficient and adequately implemented to meet the intent and requirements of the RSPO Supply Chain Certification Standard.

In cases where an organisation seeking certification outsources activities to independent third parties, a risk assessment shall be done by the CB to determine whether an audit of the sub-contractor is required. If the outsourced contractor holds RSPO Supply Chain certification, then it does not require an additional audit.

5.3.11 The CB shall verify compliance of all outsourced activities (as specified in the RSPO SCC Standard) conducted by subcontractors engaged by an organisation seeking or holding certification with the intent and requirements of the RSPO Supply Chain Certification Standard.

5.3.12 The certification audit shall review pertinent RSPO Supply Chain records relating to the receipt, processing, and supply of certified oil palm products. The CB shall define its sampling method to verify the records of transaction since last audit.

5.3.13 At the conclusion of the certification audit, the CB shall conduct a closing meeting with the client's representative(s). During the closing meeting the CB shall ensure that:

- a. The client is informed that until they receive written confirmation of their RSPO Supply Chain certification and is awarded with the Certificate, and an active licence, they are not certified and cannot make any claims concerning certification.
- b. The client is made aware of the findings of the audit team including any non-conformances that may result in a negative certification decision, or which requires further actions to be completed before a certification decision can be taken.
- c. Non-conformance issued for RSPO Supply Chain certification shall be graded as major.
- d. The following records shall be compiled after the closing meeting and kept in the client's file:
  - i. a list of the attendees in the opening and closing meeting;
  - ii. documents or information supplied to the organisation seeking or holding certification;

- iii. a written record of the findings of the audit team that are acknowledged by the senior management representative of the organisation seeking or holding certification; and
  - iv. written record of decision making by the duly designated representatives of the CB.
- e. No additional findings shall be issued by the CB after the closing meeting.

### **Multi-site and group certifications**

- 5.3.14 Multi-site and group certifications are permitted under certain circumstances. If a multi-site certification audit is conducted all rules in Annex 2 apply. If a group certification audit is conducted all rules in Annex 3 apply.
- 5.3.15 When a multi-site or group certification audit is conducted, the CB(s) shall determine that the client's management system is adequate to ensure all sites under its control meet the RSPO Supply Chain Certification Standard and the intent thereof. A multi-site or group certification shall only be awarded if:
- a. The client's management system demonstrates it ensures compliance with the RSPO Supply Chain Certification Standard for all sites under its management; and
  - b. Compliance with the RSPO Supply Chain Certification Standard is established in all sites included in the audit sample.

### **Results**

- 5.3.16 The CB or auditor shall prepare an audit report on the certification process against the requirements of the RSPO Supply Chain Certification Standard (see Annex 1 for minimum report content requirements).
- 5.3.17 All non-conformances shall be addressed to the satisfaction of the CB by the organisation before certification is granted by the CB. If non-conformances are not satisfactorily addressed within three (3) months of the initial certification audit, a full re-audit shall be required. The CB shall assess the effectiveness of the corrective and/or preventive actions taken before closing out the non-conformances.
- 5.3.18 Where objective evidence indicates that there has been a demonstrable breakdown in the supply chain caused by the certified client's actions or inactions, and that oil palm products have been or are about to be shipped, which are falsely identified as RSPO certified product, then immediate action shall be taken by the CB, and the RSPO Supply Chain certification shall be suspended until such time that the situation has been addressed. It is a requirement that the CB informs RSPO Secretariat within 24 hours of the decision to suspend certification.
- 5.3.19 If no non-conformances are observed at an audit or when the corrective action plan has satisfactorily addressed the raised non-conformance(s), the client shall be recommended for (re-) certification.

- 5.3.20 If certification is suspended or terminated, for example on the basis of lack of effective or non-satisfactory corrective actions, the site shall cease from making any certified product claim from the termination or suspension date and inform their supply chain clients within three (3) business days.
- 5.3.21 The CB shall forward the audit report to RSPO Secretariat within 14 days of closure of the last non-conformance or for audit without non-conformance within 14 days of the closing meeting.

#### **Certification awarded**

- 5.3.22 The CB shall prepare the Supply Chain Certificate according to the Certificate Template (Annex 4 of this document) and develop a Supply Chain Audit Report according to Annex 1 of this document.
- 5.3.23 The certificate shall be issued to site that has successfully completed the audit.
- 5.3.24 Upon granting certification to the organisation, the CB shall send a copy of the Supply Chain Certificate and the Supply Chain Audit Report to the RSPO Secretariat by uploading the documents and requesting for a licence in the RSPO IT platform.
- 5.3.25 RSPO Secretariat will ensure the Supply Chain Certificate is available on the RSPO website. See RSPO website [www.rspo.org](http://www.rspo.org).
- 5.3.26 The validity of Supply Chain Certificate shall be five (5) years with annual surveillance. The certificate shall only be valid upon activation of the supply chain licence in the RSPO IT platform.

#### **Surveillance / Recertification audits**

- 5.3.27 The CB shall undertake the first annual surveillance audit within twelve (12) months of the certificate issue date, but not earlier than eight (8) months after the certificate issue date. The subsequent annual surveillance audits shall be undertaken within twelve (12) months of the licence expiration dates, but not earlier than eight (8) months after the expiration date.
- 5.3.28 A request for time extension of up to a maximum of three (3) months may be approved by the RSPO Secretariat. The request shall be made prior to expiration of the licence. If a surveillance audit is not conducted within the licence period, unless due to the actions of the CB itself, the CB shall notify the organisation and the RSPO Secretariat that the certificate is suspended, until the surveillance audit has been undertaken and the certification decision has been approved by the RSPO Secretariat. The surveillance audit shall then be undertaken within six (6) months of the suspension date, otherwise an initial certification audit shall be carried out.
- 5.3.29 The surveillance audit shall review whether the organisational systems, the management systems and the operational systems, including any documented policies and procedures of the organisation holding certification, are sufficient and adequately implemented to meet the intent and requirements of the RSPO Supply Chain Certification Standard.

In cases where an organisation seeking certification outsources activities to independent third parties, a risk assessment shall be done by the CB to determine whether an audit of the sub-contractor is required. If the outsourced contractor holds RSPO Supply Chain certification, then it does not require an additional audit.

- 5.3.30 The surveillance audit shall review pertinent RSPO Supply Chain records relating to the receipt, processing, and supply of certified oil palm products. These records shall be reviewed retrospectively to the date of the previous audit.
- 5.3.31 Non-conformances raised during surveillance audit against a certified organisation are serious and the integrity of the RSPO Supply Chain Certification is at risk. A maximum of one (1) month is to be given to the certified organisation to address the non-conformance. The CB shall assess the effectiveness of the corrective and/or preventive actions taken within 14 days after submission of the proposed corrective actions. Should the non-conformance not be satisfactorily addressed within the one (1) month plus 14 days timeframe, the certificate shall be suspended and subsequently terminated if the non-conformance is not addressed within an agreed timeframe as set by CB and client, not longer than three (3) months from the last day of the audit. A recertification audit shall then be necessary.
- 5.3.32 In order to maintain continuity of Supply Chain Certification, a recertification audit shall take place in the fifth year of the certification. The handling of NC shall be in accordance with 5.3.31. If the non-conformance is not addressed within an agreed timeframe or the certificate has expired, then recertification shall not be recommended. Following the expiration of certification, the CB can restore certification within 6 months provided that a re-audit (recertification ) is carried out and the previous NC is closed. The effective date on the certificate shall be on or after the recertification decision and the expiry shall be based on prior certification cycle.
- 5.3.33 At every audit the CB shall verify the company's annual aggregated volume to determine whether the organisation is under the correct RSPO membership category and that no overselling have taken place.
- 5.3.34 Only for audits involving mills (including independent mill), the CB shall assess whether an interim visit is required to confirm quantities if a site has informed them of a projected overproduction.
- 5.3.35 Only for audits involving mills (including independent mill), if the higher production volume is confirmed to be correct the CB shall provide the information to RSPO Secretariat through RSPO IT platform.
- 5.3.36 Only for audits involving mills (including independent mill), if there is underproduction, the CB shall provide the information to the RSPO Secretariat and the mill shall compensate the excess volume sold, should there be any, through buy-back of RSPO Credits.
- 5.3.37 Palm oil 'micro users' (organisations that use a very low volume of oil palm products, i.e. less than 1000kg of oil palm products per annum) shall undergo a remote audit by the CB instead of undergoing surveillance audits. Initial certification audits and recertification audits shall take place as normal, see Annex 3 of the RSPO Supply Chain Certification Standard.

#### **5.4. Transfer of certification body**

- 5.4.1 The new CB shall officially communicate with the previous CB, and the previous CB shall communicate in a timely with the new CB.
- 5.4.2 The new CB shall be provided with the previous audit report, including details of any non-conformances.
- 5.4.3 Transfer of CB shall not be permitted until all non-conformances are closed or all financial obligations have been met.
- 5.4.4 After reviewing the documentation, a new certificate shall be issued to the organisation by the new CB maintaining the previous certification expiry date. Upon issuance of the new certificate, the CB shall inform RSPO Secretariat by uploading the new certificate to the RSPO IT Platform.

#### **5.5. Public availability of documentation**

- 5.5.1 The following documents shall be made publicly available by the CB and/or the RSPO Secretariat upon request (and made available on the applicable website), as indicated:
  - a. RSPO Supply Chain Certificate;
  - b. For Independent mill, the RSPO audit report;
  - c. Procedures of the Certification Body for complaints and grievances and appeals, including resolution mechanisms (CB);
  - d. The list of certified organisations, which includes details of the scope of each certificate, i.e. which sites and/or processes are approved (RSPO Secretariat).

#### **5.6. Conflict of interest**

- 5.6.1 Procedures for identifying and managing conflicts of interest shall include provision for a specific independent committee, set up by the CB. The independent committee shall consist of at least three (3) external members, and shall meet at least annually with managers of the CB to formally review the CB's performance in this respect.
- 5.6.2 CBs and members of audit teams shall maintain independence from the company or family of companies, associations or any other organisations related to the company to be audited, for a minimum of three (3) years to be considered not to have a conflict of interest. Independence in this context means neither having any family/personal relationships with people within the organisation, nor having been employed in or by the organisation being assessed, nor undertaking any consultancy activities, or providing advisory and guidance services activities or other service provision except for certification or verification activities.
- 5.6.3. The CB shall not use the same Lead Auditor for more than three (3) consecutive audits to the same organisation, including if the lead auditor changes CB.



- 5.6.4 The CB shall not offer certification audits or surveillance audits for any organisation to which it has provided management advice or inhouse training, conducting internal audit or consultancy services related to the scope of RSPO certification, or with whom it has any relationship that creates a threat to impartiality. This excludes the provision of RSPO-endorsed training.
- 5.6.5 Records of the conflict of interest committee's discussions, recommendations, and consequent corrective actions shall be maintained for at least five (5) years.
- 5.6.6 Any person or entity engaged by the CB or the CB itself shall:
- Declare any and all interests that may potentially affect the certification process and/or could possibly constitute a conflict of interest, in advance of engaging in a certification process against the requirements of the RSPO Supply Chain Certification Standard.
  - Report any circumstances or pressure that may influence its independence or confidentiality immediately to the executive management of the CB. The executive management of the CB shall notify the RSPO Secretariat and its chosen accreditation body of any such report and ensure that any such report is included in the certification report of the certification process and in the file of the client.
  - Only engage in services for a client if the CB can demonstrate that it has not provided any consultancy services of the same client other than certification services. Doubtful cases shall be discussed with RSPO Secretariat, prior to engaging with the client.
- 5.6.7 The CB procedures shall include the contractual obligation for all personnel including subcontracted personnel contributing to certification decisions to disclose in writing to the CB all possible and actual conflicts of interest, at the time that the conflict or possibility of conflict becomes evident. Note: a relationship that threatens the impartiality of the CB can be based on ownership, governance, management, personnel, shared resources, finances, contracts, supplier - customer relationship, marketing and payment of a sales commission, or any other inducement for the referral of new clients, etc.

## **5.7. Mechanisms for complaints and grievances**

- 5.7.1. Procedures shall include a mechanism for complaints, grievances, and appeals concerning certified organisations that is open to any interested party in accordance with the most recent revision of ISO/IEC 17065.

## **5.8. Control of claims**

- 5.8.1. Certification audit, surveillance procedures, and Book and Claim audits shall include provision for ensuring compliance with RSPO requirements for the control of claims, as detailed in RSPO Rules on Market Communication and Claims. If multiple Supply Chain models are used in parallel, a sample of claims relating to the use of RSPO Certified Sustainable oil palm products shall be checked.

## Annex 1: Supply Chain Audit Report

### A.1.1 Content requirements

The audit report may be a compilation of several documents. The CB shall include the following minimum content requirements when preparing a supply chain certification report, which shall not be made public, with the exception of independent mill audit report:

<b><i>Certified company details</i></b>	<p>Name, RSPO member number, and address of the organisation certified and all relevant sites of organisation(s) seeking or holding certification including contact details of the management representative responsible for overseeing the certification process and parent company if any.</p> <p>For multi-site and group certification to include information about central office performing the ICS function and other participating sites and group members.</p>
<b><i>Certification body details</i></b>	CB certificate number, date of accreditation.
<b><i>Summary</i></b>	A summary of the report, including non-conformances, corrective actions, and the date of closure of NCs.
<b><i>Certificate details</i></b>	Certificate number, validity of certification (start and end date), and date of first certification.
<b><i>Background to the report</i></b>	<p>a) Auditor (s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The name(s) of the auditor(s)</li><li>• The name(s) of the management representatives of the CB involved in making the certification decision.</li></ul> <p>b) Previous audits (if applicable):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Summary of previous certification audits and conclusion, with recommendations or non-conformances.</li></ul> <p>c) On-site audit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Itinerary with dates</li><li>• The main items and sites or group members inspected</li><li>• Names and affiliations of people consulted.</li></ul>

<b>Scope</b>	A clear description of the scope of the audit including the supply chain model(s) used.
<b>Description of operation's management system</b>	A clear description of the organisational systems, management systems and operational systems to ensure compliance with the RSPO Supply Chain Certification Systems.
<b>Certified quantity purchased and claimed</b>	<p>Company's confirmed estimated volume of palm oil / palm kernel oil content (in separate categories) used in the RSPO certified oil palm products aggregated over a period of twelve (12) months. The record shall consist of aggregated volume purchased (input) and actual or estimated claimed (output) over a period of twelve (12) months, except for the period prior to Annual Surveillance Audit 1<sup>1</sup> (ASA1).</p> <p>For organisations using the RSPO IT Platform, the trading records have to be verified.</p>

#### A.1.2 Information requirements for independent mills

The audit report of the independent mill shall contain the following in table format:

- Mill capacity (in terms of processing FFB)
- Records of certified Fresh Fruit Bunches (FFB) processed during the last licence year
- Last licence year's certified volume CSPO and CSPK
- Last licence year's actual sold volume CSPO and CSPK
- Last licence year's actual sold volume PO and PK under other schemes
- Last licence year's actual sold volume PO and PK as conventional
- Last licence year's actual sold CSPO credits (where applicable)
- New licence year's certified volume CSPO and CSPK
- Model of certification (IP and/or MB)

<sup>1</sup> As ASA1 shall be conducted between 8 to 12 months of the Certificate issued date, the period will be less than 12 months.

### A.2.1 Criteria for eligibility

- i. All facilities included in the multi-site certification shall be represented by a Central Office.
- ii. The Central Office shall document and implement clear rules regarding eligibility for the participation of sites in the certificate.
- iii. All participating sites shall have a legal and/or contractual relationship with the Central Office.
- iv. Multi-site certification is not restricted to a single country and can be performed across borders.

### A.2.2 Criteria for operation

- i. A common centrally administered and documented internal control system (ICS) shall be used and monitored by the Central Office.
- ii. The Central Office shall appoint a management representative with overall responsibility for ensuring that all participating sites comply with the RSPO Supply Chain Certification Standard. Internal audits of all participating sites shall be carried out on an annual basis and shall be reviewed and recorded at the Central Office.
- iii. Different operations within the multi-site certification shall be grouped by sets. The main sets shall operate a common management system and may be classified as follows:
  - Refining and blending
  - Kernel Crushing Plants
  - Storage and distribution
  - Processing (including secondary processing after the refinery)
  - Production (final manufacture of end product)
- iv. At least one (1) site from each set shall be included in an audit sample.
- v. Central Office functions shall be audited annually.

### A.2.3 Certificates

- i. Certificates of compliance shall be awarded to organisations who have been audited by the certification body (CB) and who have demonstrated full compliance.

- ii. The certificate shall be issued in the name of the Central Office that performed the ICS function and listing all other participating sites.
- iii. The supply chain model and/or scope of certification of the participating sites if it differs from the central office.
- iv. Certificates shall be valid for a period of five (5) years and subject to annual surveillance audits.

#### **A.2.4 Sample audit formula**

- i. Certification audit  
Square root of the total number of participating sites, rounded up to the next whole number, plus Central Office.
- ii. Surveillance audit  
Square root of the total number of participating sites, multiplied by a coefficient of 0.6 rounded up to the next whole number, plus Central Office.
- iii. Recertification audit  
Square root of the total number of participating sites, multiplied by a coefficient of 0.8 rounded up to the next whole number, plus Central Office.
- iv. The CB shall ensure that all sites are to be audited within the 5-year cycle.

#### **A.2.5 Scope extension**

To add a site into an existing multisite certification:

- a. Square root of number of participating sites to be added, rounded up to the next whole number, plus Central Office functions.
- b. Internal audits of the sites that are to be added shall be completed prior to adding to the multisite certification.
- c. If the multisite scope extension is combined with the existing surveillance audits then this shall be in addition to existing audit requirements (i.e. additional audits shall be needed to account for these additions)
- d. If a certified single site is joined the multisite certification, the audit of this single site is not required until the next ASA of the multisite certification.

#### **A.2.6 Auditing multisite food service companies**

- i. The audit shall include on-site audit to the Central Office and all purchasing facilities for initial certification, surveillance audits, and recertification. In the case where all the purchases are controlled through strict protocol centrally by the Central Office, then only the Central Office shall be audited through a site visit, with the regional purchasing office audited remotely, if deemed necessary.
- ii. Sample audit formula mentioned in A.2.4 above, which includes onsite audits of the sampled participating sites are not required for this multisite food service companies. However, during surveillance audits, the sample audit formula shall be used to carry out remote audit sampling of participating sites' documentation during the site visit audit at the Central Office.
- iii. The CB shall determine which participating sites documentation to be reviewed during the remote audit every year. The Central Office is then required to provide relevant information and documentation of the sampled participating sites to the auditor.

#### **A.2.7 Suspension/removal**

- i. If there is a non-conformance at one (1) participating site this can lead to suspension of the whole multisite certificate. The Central Office has the option to voluntarily remove that participating site from the multisite certificate.
- ii. To add the site back in, scope extension rules apply (see section A.2.5 on Scope extension, above).

## Annex 3: Group Certification

---

### A.3.1 Criteria for eligibility

- i. All members included in the group certification shall be represented by a Group manager.
- ii. The Group manager shall document and implement clear rules regarding eligibility for members' participation in the certificate.
- iii. All group members shall have a legal and/or contractual relationship with the Group Manager.
- iv. Group certification is not restricted to a single country and can be performed across borders.
- v. Group members shall be:
  - Separate legal entities
  - Use up to 500 MT of oil palm products per year
- vi. Micro users can be a part of group membership.
- vii. Palm oil mills cannot join a group, with the exception of independent palm oil mills without their own supply base and producing up to 5000 MT palm oil products per year)

### A.3.2 Criteria for operation

The RSPO Supply Chain Certification system shall be operated by a Group Manager.

- i. A common centrally administered and documented internal control system (ICS) shall be used and monitored by the Group Manager.
- ii. The Group entity shall appoint a Group Manager who is appointed management representative with overall responsibility for ensuring that all group members comply with the RSPO Supply Chain Certification Standard requirements. Internal audits of group members shall be carried out on an annual basis and shall be reviewed and recorded by the Group Manager.
- iii. Different operations within the Group certification shall be grouped by sets. The main sets shall operate a common management system and may be classified as follows:
  - Refining and blending
  - Transport and distribution
  - Processing (including secondary processing after the refinery)
  - Production (final manufacture of end product)
- iv. At least one (1) site from each set shall be included in an audit sample.
- v. The Group Manager shall be audited annually.

### **A.3.3 Certification**

- i. A certificate of compliance shall be awarded to Group entity who have been audited by the CB and who have demonstrated full compliance.
- ii. The certificate shall be issued in the name of the Group entity listing all other Group members.
- iii. Certificates shall be valid for a period of five (5) years and subject to annual surveillance audits.

### **A.3.4 Audit formula**

#### **Initial Group manager audit**

- i. Upon application, the Group Manager shall be audited to ensure he/she can effectively manage a Group scheme and a maximum growth rate for the Group scheme for the first year is established between the CB and the Group Manager.
- ii. During the first year, the Group Manager conducts internal audits on its group members and submits these to the CB who then adds the new members to the certificate up to the agreed maximum.

#### **Group member initial audit**

- i. After twelve (12) months, the CB shall calculate the audit requirements for the Group scheme as follows;
- ii. The square root of the total number of members, rounded up to the next whole number plus Group Manager audit.

### **A.3.5 Surveillance audits**

- i. After the first year, a group is allowed to grow by a maximum of double the number of members at the start of the year. At the end of the second year, or when the maximum growth is achieved, the audit sample is established for the following twelve (12) months, as follows.
- ii. Square root of number of existing members multiplied by 0.6 (or 0.8 in the fifth year the group has held certification and therefore recertification is required) rounded up to the next whole number plus square root of number of new members rounded up to the next whole number, plus Group Manager audit.
- iii. This process is repeated every year the scheme grows. If in any year the scheme does not grow or has negative growth then only one sample calculation is required.
- iv. To add a new member into an existing Group certification:
  - Square root of number of group members to be added together with Group Manager to



be audited.

- Internal audits of the sites that are to be added shall be completed prior to adding to the Group certification.
  - The Group manager has to show evidence of an internal audit of the new site.
- v. If the Group scope extension is combined with the existing surveillance audits then this shall be in addition to the existing audit requirements.

#### **A.3.6 Suspension / removal**

- a. If there is a non-conformance by a group member this can lead to suspension of the whole Group certificate. The Group Manager has the option to voluntarily remove that group member from the Group certificate.
- b. To add the member back in, scope extension rules apply (see section A.3.5 on scope extension).

#### **A.3.7 Group certification of food service companies**

- i. The audit shall include on-site audit of the Group Manager during initial certification, surveillance audits, and recertification.
- ii. Sample audit formula mentioned in A.3.4 above, which includes on-site audits of the sampled group members' sites, are not required for this group certification food service companies. However, the sample audit formula shall be used to carry out remote audit of the group members during surveillance audits.
- iii. The CB shall determine which group members' documentation to be reviewed during the remote audit every year.

## Annex 4: Certificate - template

---

The following template shall be used. Important information shall be located in the centre of the certificate or with clear visibility so it can be easily read. The area around it may be used for the specific logo, colour scheme and further information that the CB wishes to include on the certificate.

Based on an audit according to the requirements stated in the RSPO Supply Chain Certification Systems, version [month, year], and a signed contract, [Name CB] herewith certifies that the site(s) listed below are found to be in compliance with the RSPO Supply Chain Certification Standard, version [month, year]. This guarantees that the criteria for processing RSPO certified oil palm products through one (1) or more of the supply chain models as stated in the RSPO Supply Chain Certification Systems have been met.

For the independent mill, the certificate shall include the certified volume of CSPO and CSPK.

<b>Name of certified company</b>	ABCDEF Sdn. Bhd. For multi-site and group certification name of Central Office performing the ICS function.
<b>Address of certified company</b>	The address of certified site. For multi-site and group certification address of the Central Office performing the ICS function
<b>Other sites certified (see second page)</b>	YES / NO For multi-site and group certification to list other participating sites and group members
<b>RSPO registered parent company (if applicable)</b>	KLMNOP Sdn. Bhd.
<b>RSPO Membership number</b>	12-3456-000-00

**Scope of Certification:**

Purchase of RSPO certified palm oil and palm kernel oil, processing into derivatives and sales into the market

<b>Certificate start date</b>	DD-MM-YYYY
<b>Certificate expiration date</b>	DD-MM-YYYY
<b>Date of first certification</b>	DD-MM-YYYY

<b>Certificate number</b>	XYZ-123-456-789
<b>Supply chain model</b>	Identity Preserved (IP) <input type="checkbox"/> Segregated (SG) <input type="checkbox"/> Mass Balance (MB) <input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Issued by</b>	Certification Body
<b>Authorised signatory name</b>	NAME
<b>Authorised signature</b>	x x x x

[Name CB] was accredited to provide RSPO Supply Chain Certification on x x x x

This certificate remains the property of [Name CB] and can be withdrawn in case of terminations as mentioned in the contract or in case of changes or deviations of the above-mentioned data. The licensee is obliged to inform [Name CB] immediately of any changes in the above-mentioned data. Only an original and signed certificate is valid. This certificate can only be issued by [name CB]

## Annex 5: Book and Claim Audit Process Requirements

---

- A.5.1 Book and Claim audits shall be conducted once the qualifying level of 500 RSPO Credits have been claimed for a specific calendar year by an organisation. Where the claim is transferred, the qualifying level of 500 RSPO Credits applies to the organisation to which the claim is transferred.
- A.5.2 Once the qualifying level of 500 RSPO Credits have been claimed, organisations who have not completed the audit shall not be able to participate in the Book and Claim supply chain model.
- A.5.3 The Book and Claim audits shall either be conducted as a remote audit or combined with RSPO Supply Chain audits or other on-site audits (such as food safety, quality, etc.) where possible and appropriate.
- A.5.4 Book and Claim audits shall review the volume of oil palm products used by the organisation, volumes claimed under the Book and Claim supply chain model and claims made by the organisation. The audit shall be under taken within twelve months (12) of the claim made.
- A.5.5 The CB or auditor shall prepare an audit report on the outcomes of the audit.
- A.5.6 If non-conformances are found, a maximum of one (1) month is to be given to the organisation to address the non-conformance. The CB shall assess the effectiveness of the corrective and/or preventive actions taken within 14 days after submission of the proposed corrective actions. Should the non-conformance not satisfactorily addressed within the one (1) month plus 14 days timeframe, the organisation shall not be able to participate in the Book and Claim supply chain model.
- A.5.7 If no non-conformances are observed at an audit or when the corrective action plan has satisfactorily addressed the raised non-conformance(s), the client shall be licensed to participate in the Book and Claim supply chain model.
- A.5.8 The CB shall forward the audit checklist to RSPO Secretariat within 14 days of closure of any non-conformance or for audit without non-conformance within 14 days of the last day of audit to the RSPO Secretariat via email to [certification@rspo.org](mailto:certification@rspo.org)

The RSPO is an international non-profit organisation formed in 2004 with the objective to promote the growth and use of sustainable oil palm products through credible global standards and engagement of stakeholders.

[www.rspo.org](http://www.rspo.org)



**Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil**

Unit A-37-1, Level 37, Tower A  
Menara UOA Bangsar  
No.5 Jalan Bangsar Utama 1  
59000 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia  
**T** +603 2302 1500  
**F** +603 2302 1543

**Other Offices:**

Jakarta, Indonesia  
London, United Kingdom  
Beijing, China  
Bogota, Colombia  
New York, USA  
Zoetermeer, Netherlands

 [rspo@rspo.org](mailto:rspo@rspo.org)