



# Implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA): Where Are we in Standardisation on the Implementation of the TBT Annex 6 of the Agreement and What Needs to be Done?

Accelerating Fair and Just Trade in Africa under the African Continental Free Trade Area through an African Coherent Regulatory Framework and Harmonised Standards  
31<sup>st</sup> ARSO General Assembly, 23<sup>RD</sup> – 27<sup>TH</sup> June 2025

## The African Day of Standardization Forum

25<sup>th</sup> June, 2025

Zanzibar, United Republic of Tanzania

Reuben Gisore, Technical Director, ARSO



Standardization in Africa



Listed by date on which the AfCFTA instrument of ratification was deposited with the AUC Chairperson

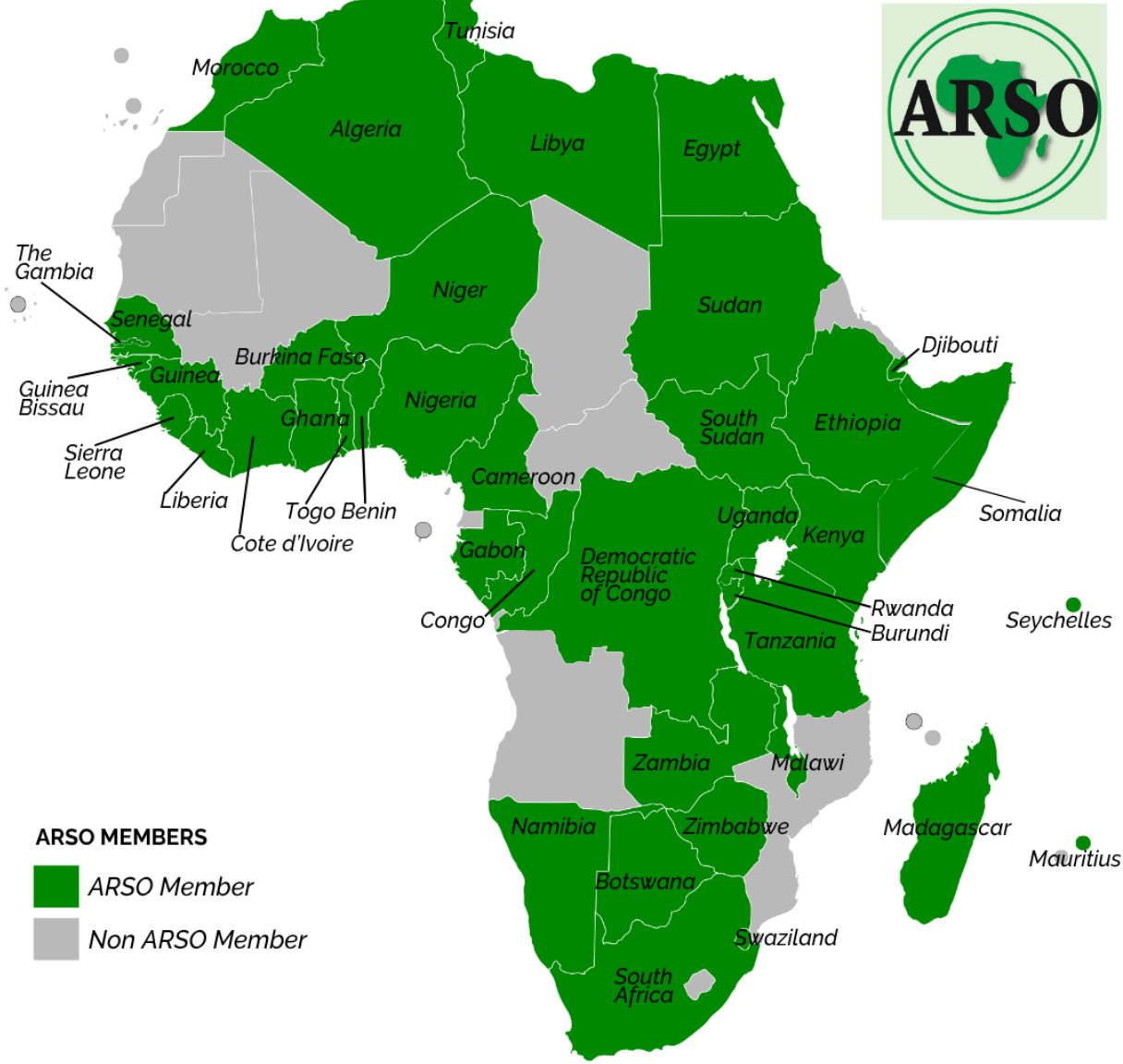
Ghana	10-05-2018
Kenya	10-05-2018
Rwanda	26-05-2018
Niger	19-06-2018
Chad	02-07-2018
Eswatini	02-07-2018
Guinea	16-10-2018
Côte d'Ivoire	23-11-2018
Mali	01-02-2019
Namibia	01-02-2019
Uganda	09-02-2019
South Africa	10-02-2019
Congo, Rep.	10-02-2019
Djibouti	11-02-2019
Mauritania	11-02-2019
Senegal	02-04-2019
Togo	02-04-2019
Egypt	08-04-2019
Ethiopia	10-04-2019
Gambia	16-04-2019
Sahrawi Arab Democratic Rep.	30-04-2019
Sierra Leone	30-04-2019
Zimbabwe	24-05-2019
Burkina Faso	29-05-2019
São Tomé & Príncipe	27-06-2019
Equatorial Guinea	02-07-2019
Gabon	07-07-2019
Mauritius	07-10-2019
Central African Rep.	22-09-2020
Angola	04-11-2020
Lesotho	27-11-2020
Tunisia	27-11-2020
Cameroon	01-12-2020
Nigeria	05-12-2020
Malawi	15-01-2021
Zambia	05-02-2021
Algeria	23-06-2021
Burundi	26-08-2021
Seychelles	15-09-2021
Tanzania	17-01-2022
Cape Verde	05-02-2022
Democratic Rep. of the Congo	23-02-2022
Morocco	20-04-2022
Guinea-Bissau	27-09-2022
Botswana	19-02-2023
Comoros	19-02-2023
Mozambique	05-07-2023
Liberia	31-07-2024



■ Instrument of ratification deposited  
■ AfCFTA Agreement signed  
■ AfCFTA Agreement not signed

Last updated: August 2024

**AfCFTA**  
**54 Countries signed and**  
**48 Ratification**



**ARSO MEMBERS**  
■ ARSO Member  
■ Non ARSO Member

**43 Member States**  
**12 Non-Member States**  
**1 Observer Member**





## Harmonized System (HS) Codes: History

- HS codes originated in 1988 when the World Customs Organization (WCO) adopted a new universal tariff classification system called the Harmonized System (HS)
- The main use of HS codes is to determine import duties, collect international trade statistics, identify rules of origin and free trade agreements, comply with customs requirements, collect government revenue, monitor prohibited & restricted goods.
  - According to the WCO, over 98% of the merchandise in international trade is classified using this HS code system in a collective effort to simplify international trade.
- HS categorises goods into over 200,000 product types, divided into 5,000-7,000 commodity groups, which are then sub-divided into 99 chapters.
- Each of these 99 chapters (for example 'pharmaceutical products' or 'iron and steel') are given a specific number. Chapters are then divided into sections (for example 'wadding, gauze or bandages' under 'pharmaceutical products') and under those sections there are sub-sections for more details.





## Universal (6-digit) codes

- At the international level, the Harmonized System (HS) for classifying goods is a six-digit code system. The HS comprises approximately 5,300 article/product descriptions that appear as headings and subheadings, arranged in 99 chapters, grouped in 21 sections.
- The six digits can be broken down into three parts:
  - The first two digits (HS-2) identify the chapter the goods are classified in, e.g. 09 = Coffee, Tea, Maté and Spices
  - The next two digits (HS-4) identify headings within that chapter, e.g. 09.02 = Tea, whether or not flavoured
  - The next two digits (HS-6) are specific subheadings, e.g. 09.02.10 Green tea (not fermented)
- Up to the HS-6 digit level, all countries classify products in the same way
- These codes are supported by well-defined rules of interpretation in order to achieve uniform classification across the world.
- The titles of product standards at all levels must always be aligned with HS descriptions or not deviate so much as to be incapable of being assigned to the right HS Code.
- In the example given above, the international standard, **ARS/ISO 11287:2011, Green tea – Definition and basic requirements** would sufficiently address the requirements for trading in green tea



## SECTION I: LIVE ANIMALS; ANIMAL PRODUCTS

- 1 Live animals.
- 2 Meat and edible meat offal.
- 3 Fish and crustaceans, molluscs and other aquatic invertebrates.
- 4 Dairy produce; birds' eggs; natural honey; edible products of animal origin, not elsewhere specified or included.
- 5 Products of animal origin, not elsewhere specified or included.

## SECTION II: VEGETABLE PRODUCTS

Section Note.

- 6 Live trees and other plants; bulbs, roots and the like; cut flowers and ornamental foliage.
- 7 Edible vegetables and certain roots and tubers.
- 8 Edible fruit and nuts; peel of citrus fruit or melons.
- 9 Coffee, tea, maté and spices.
- 10 Cereals.
- 11 Products of the milling industry; malt; starches; inulin; wheat gluten.
- 12 Oil seeds and oleaginous fruits; miscellaneous grains, seeds and fruit; industrial or medicinal plants; straw and fodder.
- 13 Lac; gums, resins and other vegetable saps and extracts.
- 14 Vegetable plaiting materials; vegetable products not elsewhere specified or included.

USA	India	Pakistan
0102 Live bovine animals:	0102 Live bovine animals	01.02 Live bovine animals
0102.10 Purebred breeding animals: Dairy:	0102.10 Pure-bred breeding animals:	Pure-bred breeding animals
0102.10.0010 Male	0102.10.10 Bulls, adult	0102.2110 Bulls
0102.10.0020 Female	0102.10.20 Cows, adult	0102.2120 Cows.
Other:		
0102.10.0030 Male	0102.10.30 Buffaloes, adult and calves	Buffalos 0102.3100 Pure-bred breeding animals
0102.10.0050 Female		0102.3900 Other
0102.90.0000 Other	0102.10.90 Other	
<b>0105 Live poultry of the following kinds: chickens, ducks, geese, turkeys and guineas: Weighing not more than 185 g (6.53 oz.) each:</b>		
0105.11 Chickens:	Fowls of the species <i>Gallus domesticus</i>	Fowls of the species <i>Gallus domesticus</i> (chicken)
Breeding stock, whether or not purebred:		
0105.11.0010 Layer-type (egg-type)		
0105.11.0020 Broiler-type (meat-type)		
0105.11.0040 Other		

HS Code	Standard	ICS
0105.11.10, Breeding stock, whether or not purebred. Day-old chicks	ARS 1220:2024, <i>Day-old chicks – Basic requirements</i>	ICS 65.020.30
0102.10, Other live bovine (cattle)	ARS 1356:2024, <i>Live grading for slaughter cattle</i>	ICS 65.020.30
0104.20, Live goats	ARS 1845:2024, <i>Live grading for slaughter goats</i>	ICS 65.020.30
0104.10, Live sheep	ARS 1846:2024, <i>Live grading for slaughter sheep</i>	ICS 65.020.30
0106.1300, Other live animals. Live camels	ARS 1847:2024, <i>Live grading for slaughter camels</i>	ICS 65.020.30
0103.92, Live swine weighing more than 50 kg	ARS 1848:2024, <i>Live grading for slaughter hogs</i>	ICS 65.020.30

**ICS 65.020.30, *Animal husbandry and breeding including sanitary inspection***

HS Code	Standard	ICS
02.01 Meat of bovine animals, fresh or chilled	ARS 1245 2023, <i>Bovine (beef) meat – Carcasses and cuts – Specification</i>	ICS 67.120.10
0201.1000 Carcasses and half- carcasses		
0201.2000 Other cuts with bone in		
0201.3000 Boneless		
02.02 Meat of bovine animals, frozen.	ARS 1246 2023, <i>Bovine (veal) meat – Carcasses and cuts – Specification</i>	ICS 67.120.10
0202.1000 Carcasses and half- carcasses		
02.03 Meat of swine, fresh, chilled or frozen	ARS 1249:2024, <i>Porcine (pig) meat – Carcasses and cuts</i>	ICS 67.120.10
0203.1100 Carcasses and half-carcasses		
0203.1200 Hams, shoulders and cuts thereof, with bone in		
0203.1900 Other		
02.04 Meat of sheep or goats, fresh, chilled or frozen.	ARS 1248:2023, <i>Ovine (sheep) meat – Carcasses and cuts – Specification</i>	ICS 67.120.10
0204.1000 Carcasses and half carcasses of lamb, fresh or chilled		
Other meat of sheep, fresh or chilled:		
0204.2100 Carcasses and half-carcasses		
0204.50.00 Meat of goats	ARS 1247 2023, <i>Caprine (goat) meat – Carcasses and cuts – Specification</i>	ICS 67.120.10

## 100 Technical Bodies

- (1) 92 Technical Committees (TCs)
- (2) 5 Project Committees (PCs)
- (3) 2 Specialized Working Groups (SWGs)
- (4) 1 ARSO/AFSEC Joint Technical Committee 01,  
*Renewable energy*
  - 291 Harmonized Standards approved (including revisions)
  - Over 1500 active standards work items under consideration
  - Plans to accelerate harmonization to cover 4,500 standards in next 5 years

	ARSO Technical Committees	ARS	Prd	Serv	Test	Code
1)	ARSO/TC 03, <i>Fish, fisheries and aquaculture</i>	56	38	9	1	8
2)	ARSO/TC 04, <i>Milk and milk products</i>	17	17	0	0	0
3)	ARSO/TC 05, <i>Horticulture</i>	42	[8]23	0	7	4
4)	ARSO/TC 06, <i>Coffee, cocoa, tea and related products</i>	17	14	0	0	3
5)	ARSO/TC 07, <i>Meat, poultry, eggs and related products</i>	16	12	4	0	0
6)	ARSO/TC 14, <i>Food packaging and labelling</i>	3	3	0	0	0
7)	ARSO/TC 17, <i>Animal feeding, feeds and feeding stuffs</i>	6	4	2	0	0
8)	ARSO/TC 83, <i>Organic agriculture and biotechnology</i>	21	0	6	9	6
9)	ARSO/TC 53, <i>Textiles, textile products and accessories</i>	1	1	0	0	0
10)	ARSO/TC 54, <i>Leather, leather products and accessories</i>	11	4	5	0	2
11)	ARSO/TC 55, <i>Footwear and accessories</i>	4	4	0	0	0
12)	ARSO/TC 61, <i>Eco-labelling, sustainability and resilient systems</i>	19	19	0	0	0
13)	ARSO/TC 74, <i>Healthcare services</i>	6	0	3	0	3
14)	ARSO/TC 78, <i>Medical devices and equipment</i>	8	8	0	0	0
15)	ARSO/TC 80, <i>Pharmaceuticals and medicinal products</i>	19	0	6	7	6
16)	ARSO/TC 82, <i>African traditional medicine</i>	[2]	0	1	0	1
17)	ARSO/PC 01, <i>Research management</i>	1	0	1	0	0
18)	ARSO/PC 02, <i>Cassava value chain products</i>	27	[12]6	2	7	0
19)	ARSO/PC 03, <i>Insects for food, feeds and derived products</i>	15	5	7	0	3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>291</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>36</b>

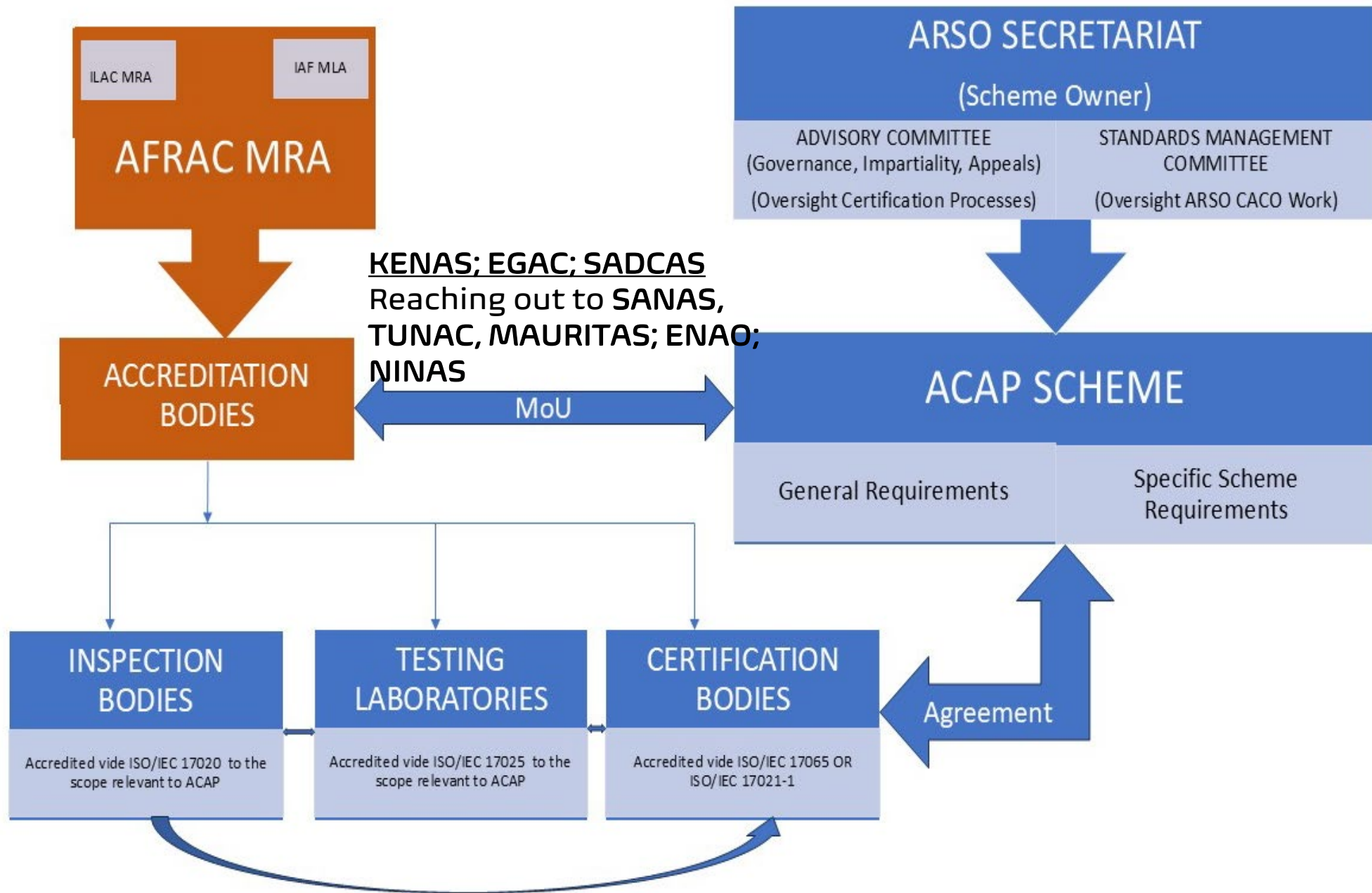
Technical Harmonization Sectors	No. of standards	Products (Goods)	Services	Tests, sampling	Codes, gloss, units
<b>THS 01, Basic and General Standards</b>	145	65	5	28	47
<b>THS 02, Agriculture and Food Products</b>	629	318	60	137	124
<b>THS 03, Building and Civil Engineering</b>	294	88	6	174	26
<b>THS 04, Mechanical Engineering and Metallurgy</b>	109	68	0	35	6
<b>THS 05, Chemistry and Chemical Engineering</b>	107	39	0	52	16
<b>THS 06, Electrotechnology</b>	60	30	0	7	23
<b>THS 07, Leather and Textile Products</b>	260	124	9	97	30
<b>THS 08, Transport and Communications</b>	161	106	23	20	12
<b>THS 09, Environmental Management</b>	59	31	2	7	19
<b>THS 10, Energy and Natural Resources</b>	0	0	0	0	0
<b>THS 11, Quality Management</b>	6	0	0	0	6
<b>THS 12, Services</b>	112	1	87	0	24
<b>THS 13, Traditional and Complementary Medicine</b>	20	14	0	1	5[2]
<b>THS 14, Healthcare Technology</b>	393	178	27	85	111
<b>THS 15, Household Goods and Services</b>	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Conformity Assessment Committee</b>	68	0	0	0	68
<b>Consumer Committee</b>	16	0	0	0	16
<b>Specialized Working Groups</b>	1	0	1	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>2440</b>	<b>1062</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>643</b>	<b>528</b>

Project stage	Associated document	Timeframe (indigenous/REC) Max	Timeframe IS	Timeframe (Emergencies)
0: Preliminary stage	Preliminary Work Item (PWI)	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
1: Proposal stage	New Work Item Proposal (NWIP)	3 to 5 months (3 months for circulation and balloting and 2 months to review ballot results and approval by SMC)	1 Months	21 days
2: Preparatory stage	Working Draft (WD)	2 months	0	0
3: Committee stage	Committee Draft (CD)	6 months	0	15 days
4: Enquiry stage	Draft African Standard (DARS)	4 months (2 months' for public review) (2 months to resolve comments)	2 Months	30 days
5: Ballot stage	Final Draft African Standards (FDARS)	1 month	1	6 days
6: Approval stage	African Standards (ARS)	3 months	3 months	15 days
7: Publication stage	African Standards (ARS)	Immediately upon approval	Immediately upon approval	Immediately upon approval
<b>Maximum duration</b>		<b>21 months</b>	<b>7 months</b>	<b>3 months</b>

\* 1 Month means 30 days



# African Conformity Assessment Programme: Structure



KENAS; EGAC; SADCAS  
Reaching out to SANAS, TUNAC, MAURITAS; ENAO; NINAS





## Current Certification Schemes

- **ACAP Scheme A:** Primary Production (Crops, Livestock, Aquaculture)
  - **Scheme A1:** Primary Production for Single Farmers
  - **Scheme A2:** Primary Production for Group of Farmers.
- **ACAP Scheme B:** Food Safety Management Systems Certification
- **ACAP Scheme C:** Chain of Custody
- **ACAP Scheme D: African Eco Mark - Sustainability and eco-labelling**
  - **Scheme D1:** Single site farms/companies
  - **Scheme D2:** Group of farmers or multisite production operations
- **ACAP Scheme E:** African Traditional Medicine
- **ACAP Scheme F:** Sustainable capture fisheries
- **ACAP Scheme G:** Good Finance Grant Practice
- **ACAP Scheme H:** Cosmetology and wellness
- **ACAP Scheme J:** Sustainable mining
- **ACAP Scheme K:** Ecological Organic Agriculture Certification Scheme
- **ACAP Scheme L:** Made in Africa Certification Scheme





# Thank you!

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