
**Conformity assessment — Part 2: Specific requirements for the
certification systems and standards design**



Table of contents

1	Scope	1
2	Normative references	1
2.1	Standards.....	1
2.2	ACAP Normative Documents	1
3	Terms and definitions	2
4	The ARSO certification schemes	4
5	Basic requirements for standards in ACAP certification schemes	6
5.1	General	6
5.2	Scope.....	6
5.3	Objectives	6
5.4	Specified requirements	6
5.5	References for specified requirements.....	6
5.6	Compliance criteria	7
5.7	Ambiguous use of terms	7
5.8	Sampling	7
5.9	Subcontractors and outsourcing.....	8
	Annex A (informative) Scheme A: Primary production (crops, livestock, aquaculture, apiculture).....	9
	Annex B (informative) Scheme B: Processing and handling / packing of food and fresh produce	18
	Annex C (informative) Scheme C: Traceability of AGAP certified products in the food supply chain	23
	Annex D (informative) Scheme D: Sustainability certification programme	27
	Annex E (informative) Scheme E: Sustainable harvesting of wild botanical species for African traditional medicine	46
	Annex F (informative) Scheme F: Sustainable wild catch fisheries and aquaculture of marine and freshwater species	54
	Annex G (informative) Scheme G: Good financial grant practice certification.....	71
	Annex H (informative) Scheme H: Cosmetology and wellness certification	73
	Annex J (informative) Scheme J: Sustainable mining certification	74
	Annex K (informative) Scheme K: Ecological organic agriculture certification	76
	Annex L (informative) Scheme L: Made in Africa certification	86

Foreword

The African Regional Organisation for Standardisation (ARSO) is an African Intergovernmental organization made of Member States of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the African Union (AU). One of the fundamental mandates of ARSO is the establishment of a conformity assessment system to promote the quality of African goods and services as a means of facilitating intra-African trade as well as accessing global markets.

The ARSO Conformity Assessment Programme (ACAP) is supported by a coherent set of documents which are developed under the auspices of the ARSO Conformity Assessment Committee (ARSO CACO) which comprises experts from Member States. Member States participate in the committee on a voluntary basis and the documents developed follow the principles and procedures for the development of African Standards outlined in the African Standards Harmonization Model (ASHAM) with the exception of the stages and voting thresholds. Being conformity assessment instruments, ACAP documents are subject to dynamic adaptations which must timeously respond to changes in the conformity assessment fields.

ACAP documents will be revised on a flexible basis to fit in with changes in global conformity assessment systems.

© African Organisation for Standardisation 2023 — All rights reserved*

ARSO Central Secretariat
International House 3rd Floor
P. O. Box 57363 — 00200 City Square
NAIROBI, KENYA

Tel. +254-20-2224561, +254-20-3311641, +254-20-3311608

E-mail: arso@arso-oran.org

Web: www.arso-oran.org

* © 2023 ARSO — All rights of exploitation reserved worldwide for African Member States' NSBs.

Copyright notice

This ARSO document is copyright-protected by ARSO. While the reproduction of this document by participants in the ARSO standards development process is permitted without prior permission from ARSO, neither this document nor any extract from it may be reproduced, stored or transmitted in any form for any other purpose without prior written permission from ARSO.

Requests for permission to reproduce this document for the purpose of selling it should be addressed as shown below or to ARSO's member body in the country of the requester:

© African Organisation for Standardisation 2023 — All rights reserved

ARSO Central Secretariat
International House 3rd Floor
P.O. Box 57363 — 00200 City Square
NAIROBI, KENYA

Tel: +254-20-2224561, +254-20-3311641, +254-20-3311608

E-mail: arso@arso-oran.org
Web: www.arso-oran.org

Reproduction for sales purposes may be subject to royalty payments or a licensing agreement. Violators may be prosecuted.

Introduction

This document describes additional certification rules for any party seeking certification within the framework of the African Conformity Assessment Programme (ACAP).

These specific requirements shall be used in combination with requirements in ACAP 1-1 that define the certification rules that apply for all ARSO Certification Schemes.

The term “shall” is used throughout this document to indicate those provisions which are mandatory for the different certification schemes.

Conformity assessment — Part 2: Specific requirements for the certification systems and standards design

1 Scope

More specific rules for certification schemes implementation and design of African Standards are specified in this normative document.

2 Normative references

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

2.1 Standards

ASHAM P01, *African Standards Harmonization Procedures Manual*

IAF MD 25¹, *Criteria for Evaluation of Conformity Assessment Schemes*

IAF PL 3, *Policies and Procedures on the IAF MLA Structure and for Expansion of the Scope of the IAF MLA*

ISO/IEC 17000, *Conformity assessment — Vocabulary and general principles*

ISO/IEC 17007, *Conformity assessment — Guidance for drafting normative documents suitable for use for conformity assessment*

ISO /IEC 17021-1, *Conformity assessment — Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems — Part 1: Requirement*

ISO/IEC 17025, *General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories*

ISO/IEC 17030, *Conformity assessment — General requirements for third-party marks of conformity*

ISO/IEC 17065, *Conformity assessment — Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services*

ISO/IEC 17067, *Conformity assessment — Fundamentals of product certification and guidelines for product certification schemes*

2.2 ACAP Normative Documents

ACAP 1-1, *Conformity assessment — Part 1: General requirements for the certification systems*

ACAP 1-3, *Conformity assessment — Part 3: Requirements for approval of certification bodies*

ACAP 1-4, *Conformity assessment — Part 4: Requirements for approval of testing and calibration laboratories*

ACAP 2, *Sustainable agriculture — Assessment and certification*

ACAP 3, *Sustainable capture fisheries — Assessment and certification*

¹ IAF MD 25:2023 Issue 1 Version 2, *Criteria for Evaluation of Conformity Assessment Schemes issued 13-06-2023*

ACAP 1-2:2023

ACAP 4, *Cosmetology and wellness certification framework*

ACAP 5-1, *Certification scheme for medicinal plant produce — Part 5-1: General requirements*

ACAP 5-2, *Certification scheme for medicinal plant produce — Part 5-2: Good collection practices (GCP) for medicinal plant produce*

ACAP 5-3, *Certification scheme for medicinal plant produce — Part 5-3: Good agricultural practices (GAP) for medicinal plant produce*

ACAP 5-4, *Certification scheme for medicinal plant produce — Part 5-4: Good manufacturing practices (GMP) for herbal medicines*

ACAP 5-5, *Certification scheme for medicinal plant produce — Part 5-5: Minimum requirements for registration of traditional medicines*

3 Terms and definitions

3.1 For the purpose of this document the terms and definitions in ISO/IEC 17000 and the following apply.

3.1.1

certification system

conformity assessment system

rules, procedures and management for carrying out certification or conformity assessment

NOTE Conformity assessment systems may be operated at international, regional, national or sub-national level.
[ISO/IEC 17000:2004, 2.7]

3.1.2

certification scheme

certification system related to specified products, to which the same specified requirements, specific rules and procedures apply

NOTE The rules, procedures and management for implementing product, process and service certification are stipulated by the certification scheme.
[ISO/IEC 17065:2012, 3.9, modified]

3.1.3

conformity assessment scheme (CAS)

conformity assessment programme

conformity assessment system related to specified objects of conformity assessment, to which the same specified requirements, specific rules and procedures apply

NOTE Conformity assessment schemes may be operated at international, regional, national or sub-national level.
[ISO/IEC 17000:2004, 2.8]

3.1.4

object of conformity assessment

particular material, product (including services), installation, process, system, person or body to which conformity assessment is applied

NOTE Adapted from ISO/IEC 17000:2004, 2.1, Note 2.

3.1.5

Scheme Owner (SO)

Organization(s) responsible for developing and maintaining a CAS. The following are illustrative examples of SOs:

- (a) Standardization bodies;
- (b) CABs;

- (c) Organizations that use services provided by CABs;
- (d) Organizations that buy or sell products subject to conformity assessment activities;
- (e) Manufacturers and their associations that have established their own CAS;
- (f) Organizations set up specifically for that purpose; and
- (g) Governmental Authorities including regulators and other governmental bodies.
[IAF MD 25]

3.1.6

SO Authorization of a CAB

SO authorization means that the SO accepts certificates, reports, statements or attestations issued by a CAB for the purposes of confirming that the object of the conformity assessment meets the requirements of its CAS.

NOTE SOs may use different wording to denote/state/describe authorization, such as approval, licensing, listing, recognition, designation, etc.

3.1.7

Scheme Specific Requirements for CABs

This refers to specific requirements for the CAB prescribed by the SO for operating under its CAS, in addition to the AB's rules and the applicable IAF Level 3, International Standard.

NOTE The structure of the IAF MLA is detailed in IAF PL 3, *Policies and Procedures on the IAF MLA Structure and for Expansion of the Scope of the IAF MLA*.

3.1.8

Scheme Specific Requirements for ABs

This refers to specific requirements for the ABs prescribed by the SO for undertaking accreditation activity related to the CAS in addition to, but not excluding, any IAF/Region's rules nor ISO/IEC 17011 requirements.

3.1.9

surveillance

systematic iteration of conformity assessment activities as a basis for maintaining the validity of the statement of conformity

[ISO/IEC 17000:2004, 6.1]

3.2 For purposes of this document, the following abbreviations apply:

AB	Accreditation Body
ACAP	African Conformity Assessment Programme
AFSEC	African Electrotechnical Standards Commission
AFRAC	African Accreditation Cooperation
AG	Audit Group
AGL	Audit Group Leader
AU	Auditor
ECOMARK	African Eco-Labeling Mark
ARS	African Standard
ARSO	African Organisation for Standardisation
ASHAM	African Standards Harmonization Model Standards
ASM	Artisanal and small-scale mining
CA	Corrective action
CACO	Conformity Assessment Committee
CAR	Corrective action report
CB	Certification body
CoC	Chain of Custody
EMA	EcoMark Africa
EOA	Ecological Organic Agriculture
GAP	Good agricultural practices
GCP	Good Collection Practices

ACAP 1-2:2023

GFGP	Good Financial Grant Practice
GMP	Good Manufacturing Practices
IAF	International Accreditation Forum
ILAC	International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation
ISO	International Organisation for Standardisation
LSM	Large scale mining
MS	Management system
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NC	Non-conformity
QMS	Quality Management System
SO	Scheme Owner
SQRT	Square root
TC	Technical committee

4 The ARSO certification schemes

Certification schemes in ACAP use defined rules, procedures and management, which are unique to the scheme while others define certification systems applicable to a number of schemes. Figure 1 illustrates the general relationship between a product certification scheme and a product certification system as utilized in ACAP. The general structure of ACAP certification schemes as described in ACAP 1-1, is summarized in Figure 2 and their details are given in Annex A to Annex L.

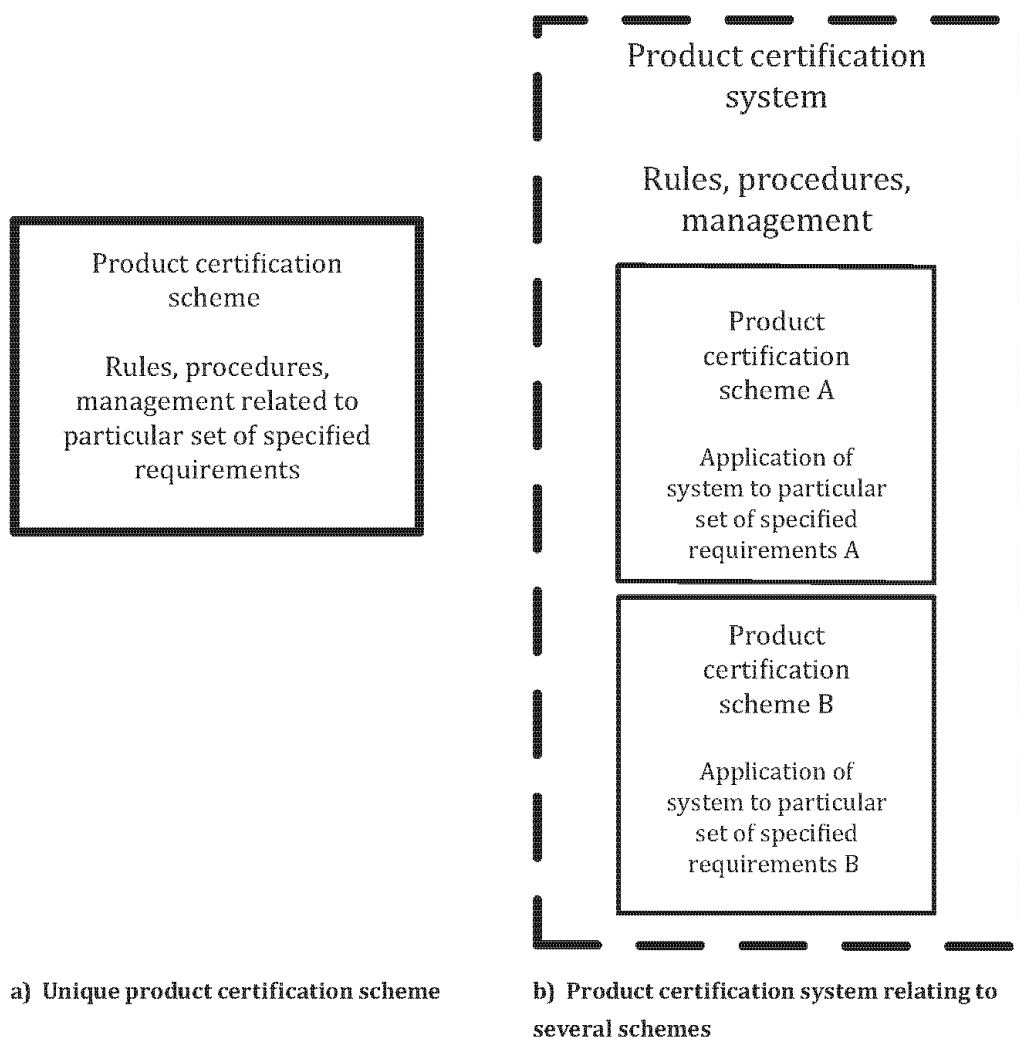


Figure 1: Relationship between product certification scheme and product certification system (ISO/IEC 17067)

African Conformity Assessment Programme (ACAP): Certification Schemes			
Scheme name	Subject area	Scheme scope/Sub-scheme	Sample standards applicable
ACAP Certification Scheme A: Primary production (crops, livestock, aquaculture, apiculture)	Agricultural Crops	ACAP Certification Scheme A1: Single Farmers	ARS 461:2013 ARS 886:2018 ARS 1100:2018 ARS 1101:2018 ARS 1102:2018 ARS 1103:2018 ARS 1104:2018 ARS 1105:2018 ARS 1106:2018 ARS 1107:2018 ARS 1108:2018 ARS 1109:2018 ARS 1401:2018 ARS 1403:2018 ARS 1419:2018
	Livestock and dairy		
	Aquaculture		
	Apiculture		
	Agricultural crops	ACAP Certification Scheme A2: Groups of Farmers	
	Livestock and dairy		
	Aquaculture		
	Apiculture		
ACAP Certification Scheme B: Food processing	Processing and handling/ packing of food and fresh produce		ARSO approved certification standards for food handling and processing
ACAP Certification Scheme C: Chain of custody	Traceability of ARSO certified products in the food supply chain		ARSO approved certification standard for chain of custody
ACAP Certification Scheme D: Sustainability and eco-labelling	ACAP Certification Scheme D1: Single legal entity		ARS/AES 1:2014 ARS/AES 3:2014 ARS/AES 5:2018 ARS/AES 6:2018
	ACAP Certification Scheme D2: Groups or multisite operation		
ACAP Certification Scheme E: African Traditional Medicine	Scheme E1: Good agricultural practices for medicinal plants		ARS 952:2016, <i>Guidelines on good agricultural and collection practices (GACP) for medicinal plants</i> ARS 951, <i>GMP for herbal medicines</i>
	Scheme E2: Sustainable wild harvesting of medicinal plants		
	Scheme E3: Good manufacturing practices for herbal medicines		
ACAP Scheme F: Sustainable capture fisheries	Sustainable wild catch of sea fish and freshwater fish	ARS/AES 2:2014, <i>Fisheries — Sustainability and eco-labelling — Requirements</i>	
ACAP Certification Scheme G: GFGP	Four-tier certification system for grantees of various capabilities		ARS 1651, <i>Good financial grant practice — Requirements</i>
ACAP Certification Scheme H: Cosmetology and wellness	(1) Scheme H1: Barbering; (2) Scheme H2: Haircare; (3) Scheme H3: Skin care; (4) Scheme H4: Nail care; (5) Scheme H5: Massage therapy; (6) Scheme H6: Reflexology; (7) Scheme H7: Aromatherapy; (8) Scheme H8: Spa therapies; (9) Scheme H9: Hair removal techniques; (10) Scheme H10: Body art and body piercing		ACAP 4, <i>Cosmetology and wellness certification framework</i>
ACAP Certification Scheme J: Sustainable mining	Sustainable mining certification is based on a set of African standards which specify objectives and leading performance requirements for economically, environmentally and socially responsible practices		<i>Mining — Sustainability and Ecolabelling — Requirements</i>
Scheme K: EOA	Ecological Organic Agriculture Certification Scheme		ARS 751
Scheme L: MiA	Made in Africa Certification Scheme		MiA:2022

Figure 2 — African Conformity Assessment Programme (ACAP) Certification Schemes (ACAP 1-1)

ACAP 1-2:2023

5 Basic requirements for standards in ACAP certification schemes

5.1 General

This clause contextualizes the requirements of ISO/IEC 17007 and ISO/IEC 17067 with respect to the development of the ACAP certification schemes and the normative that specify requirements for objects of conformity assessment.

5.2 Scope

A clear specification and description of the object of the conformity assessment (ex: products name, variety, status of final product, etc.) shall be included in each scheme.

5.3 Objectives

A description of the objectives of the schemes, including elements to explain the added value given to the product by achieving compliance to requirements.

5.4 Specified requirements

- (a) Specified requirements relating to the characteristics of the object of conformity assessment shall be stated in the clauses that form the normative parts of the Standard's document.
- (b) Specified requirements shall be written in such a way that they are clear, direct and precise and will result in accurate and uniform interpretation, so that parties making use of the normative document are able to derive from the contents of the normative document a common understanding of its meaning and intent.
- (c) objects of conformity assessment shall focus only on the criteria or performance characteristics of the object.
- (d) test methods for determining that the criteria or characteristics have been met shall be clearly specified and identified for their original source and review. Possible benchmarked methods shall also be indicated, where available. They should be expressed in such a way that any interested party may carry out the testing.
- (e) It shall be left to the users of the normative document (ex: producer, CBs, Laboratory) to decide what activity will be utilized to comply with the requirements of the Standard.
- (f) Specified requirements shall be written in terms of results or outcomes, together with metric Units to be used, limiting values and tolerances, where pertinent, and the methods of determination, such as test methods or inspection, in order to verify the specified characteristics.
- (g) Specified requirements shall be written in such a way that they facilitate the development of technology. In general, this is accomplished by:
 - specifying requirements in terms of performance, rather than design or descriptive characteristics;
 - specifying requirements related to the object, and not to the production process for the object.

5.5 References for specified requirements

- (a) If a set of specified requirements incorporates requirements stated in another normative document, (legislation, code of practices, sector guidelines, etc.), the incorporation shall be by specific reference and clearly indicate the referenced version, usually by the date (year) of publication.

- (b) If the version of the referenced document is not specified, the conventional understanding is that the latest version of the document applies, including all amendments and revisions. The use of the term “latest issue” in conjunction with an undated reference shall be avoided.
- (c) If the referenced document is not dated, it is possible that the format and content of the referenced requirements could change over time. The consequences of changes to the referenced requirements should be considered.

5.6 Compliance criteria

- (a) Each requirement expressed in the ACAP Standard shall be auditable and criteria for the evaluation of compliance must be clearly identified and explained.
- (b) Specified requirements may contain more than one category, type, class or grade within the same
- (c) normative documents, or in separate documents, if necessary, where multiple types, classes, grades, etc. are permitted, the document should specify how these are to be identified to the user.
- (d) All measurement values shall be expressed in SI units (International System of Units).
- (e) Specified requirements shall be stated unambiguously using wording that is objective, logical, valid and specific.

5.7 Ambiguous use of terms

- (a) terms such as “adequate”, “adversely affected”, “sufficiently strong” and “extreme conditions” are subjective and should be avoided;
- (b) qualitative nouns and adjectives that could be taken as absolute, e.g. “waterproof”, “unbreakable”, “flat”, and “safe”, should not be used unless defined by specific limits or indicators;
- (c) qualitative nouns and adjectives that describe a measurable property, e.g. “high”, “strong”, “transparent” and “accurate”, should not be used unless defined by specific limits or indicators;
- (d) the term “unless otherwise specified” should not be used, except when the “other specification” is clearly identified in the requirements.

5.8 Sampling

5.8.1 In the development of the Standard, specified test methods and related sampling requirements may be selected for use in conformity assessment activities.

5.8.2 The methodology to be applied for sampling and testing is specified among the requirements of the different Certification Schemes and Standard. As a minimum the following criteria shall be included:

- (a) quantity of sample
- (b) moment and location of sampling
- (c) criteria to be applied for sampling
- (d) Traceability of samples
- (e) Transportation, storage of samples.

ACAP 1-2:2023

- (f) Sampling report contents
- (g) Parameters to be tested by the laboratory.
- (h) Methods to be used for testing

5.8.3 Criteria for test methods

Reporting criteria for testing, to gain consistent and reproducible results, sampling methods should be based, whenever possible, on statistical methods, provided in International Standards. Testing methods

- (a) As far as practicable, testing methods should describe clearly how the test is to be performed:
 - (i) the choice and preparation of samples
 - (ii) the testing equipment to be use
 - (iii) the data to be recorded,
 - (iv) the acceptance criteria,
 - (v) the limits to be used for accepting or rejecting the result,
 - (vi) (where relevant) what is acceptable in terms of uncertainty of measurement, accuracy, reproducibility and repeatability.
- (b) Test methods shall focus on the specified requirements of the object of conformity assessment and should avoid stating requirements not directly related to the object's performance.
- (c) Test methods shall be selected bearing in mind their effectiveness, economy and practical application.
- (d) Non-destructive test methods should be chosen whenever they provide the same level of confidence as destructive test methods.
- (e) The ACAP standard shall specify the sequence of tests when the sequence can influence the results
- (f) Where possible, alternative test methods or test equipment shall be included in the normative document. The equivalence or any advantage or disadvantage when compared with the primary test method should be explained.
- (g) If equivalent tests are provided, it shall be specified which one will be used in case of dispute.

5.9 Subcontractors and outsourcing

When introducing requirements of the object of conformity assessment that is new for ACAP testing system, it is good practice to investigate whether Subcontractors and Processes in Outsourcing are involved

All ACAP standards shall consider the possible involvement of sub-contractors and outsourcing in the production processes.

Specific Requirements for management and control of sub-contractors and outsourced processes must be included in the ACAP Standard to control that the related testing methods are feasible, in terms of availability of equipment to qualified labs, cost/benefit ratio and accuracy of the results.

Annex A
(informative)

Scheme A: Primary production (crops, livestock, aquaculture, apiculture)

A.1 Registration data

In addition to the requirements in ACAP 1-1, some specific information are required for Certification Schemes A1 and A2.

A.1.1 Detail of certified production

A.1.1.1 Crops

- (a) Name of crops (species)
- (b) Area of production (ha)
- (c) Expected quantity of certified production (tons)
- (d) Number and identification of production sites (map of sites and sites location information)
- (e) On-farm postharvest activities and address of postharvest unit.

A.1.1.2 Livestock

- (a) Name of species and breed
- (b) Kind of production (ex: milk, meat, eggs, etc.)
- (c) Number of individuals
- (d) Expected quantity of certified production (tons)
- (e) Number and identification of production sites (map of sites and sites location information)
- (f) On-farm slaughtering or processing unit information

A.1.1.3 Aquaculture

- (a) Name of species
- (b) Kind of production (ex: ova, seedlings, grown fish)
- (c) Estimated number of individuals
- (d) Expected quantity of certified production (tons, in case of grown fish)
- (e) Number and identification of production sites (map of sites and sites location information)
- (f) On-farm slaughtering or processing unit information

A.1.1.4 Apiculture

- (a) Name of species
- (b) Kind of production

ACAP 1-2:2023

- (c) Estimated number of individuals
- (d) Expected quantity of certified production (kg)
- (f) Number and identification of production sites (map of sites and sites location information)

A.1.1.5 Additional information for groups of farmers

- (a) Name of crops/species grown by each farmer of the group, according to scope (A.1.1.1 to A.1.1.4)
- (b) Area/ number of individuals
- (c) Expected quantity of certified production (
- (d) Number and identification of production sites (map of sites and site location information)

A.2 ACAP Certification Scheme A: Scopes of certification

A.2.1 Products

Products included in the Scheme A come from primary production and, according to the nature of the farming activity can have different origin:

- (a) Vegetable crops productions (ex: fruit, vegetables, herbs, roots, plants for medical use, flowers, etc.)
- (b) Livestock production coming from different animal species (ex: meat, milk, wool, eggs)
- (c) Aquaculture production coming from different aquaculture species (ex: fish for consumption, brood stock for reproduction, ova and seedlings for reproduction, ova for consumption, etc.)
- (d) Apiculture products (ex: honey, beeswax, royal jelly, pollen, propolis, bee venom, etc.). The Nature and number of products certifiable in the ACAP system depend of the availability of specific standards for certification, designed and approved by ACAP. The certification scope may have different focus for different products, according to the scope and focus of the standard of reference.

A.2.2 Processes

A.2.2.1 Production cycle

- (a) As a general concept, the ACAP Certification Scheme A requires that all the life/production cycle of the products (vegetal or animal) is carried out on-farm following the certification rules.
- (b) Exceptions can be clarified in the specific standards for certification, also according to the phase of certification (initial, surveillance or re-certification) and to the duration of life/ production cycle of the plant of animal.
- (c) All production processes carried out during the cycle of certification shall be carried out in agreement with the ACAP applicable certification rules, for the selected standard.

A.2.2.2 Harvesting process

- (a) If harvest, slaughtering, collection of animal products is carried out by the same producer, the harvesting process shall be included in the scope of certification
- (b) If harvest, slaughtering, collection of animal products is carried out under the responsibility of the buyer of the product (the producer does not own the product), the harvesting process shall be excluded from the scope of certification

- (c) In case of exclusion of harvest, in order to be able to use the ARSO Mark along the supply chain, the buyer of the product shall be ARSO ACAP Certified according to one of the ACAP certification schemes applicable for the product.

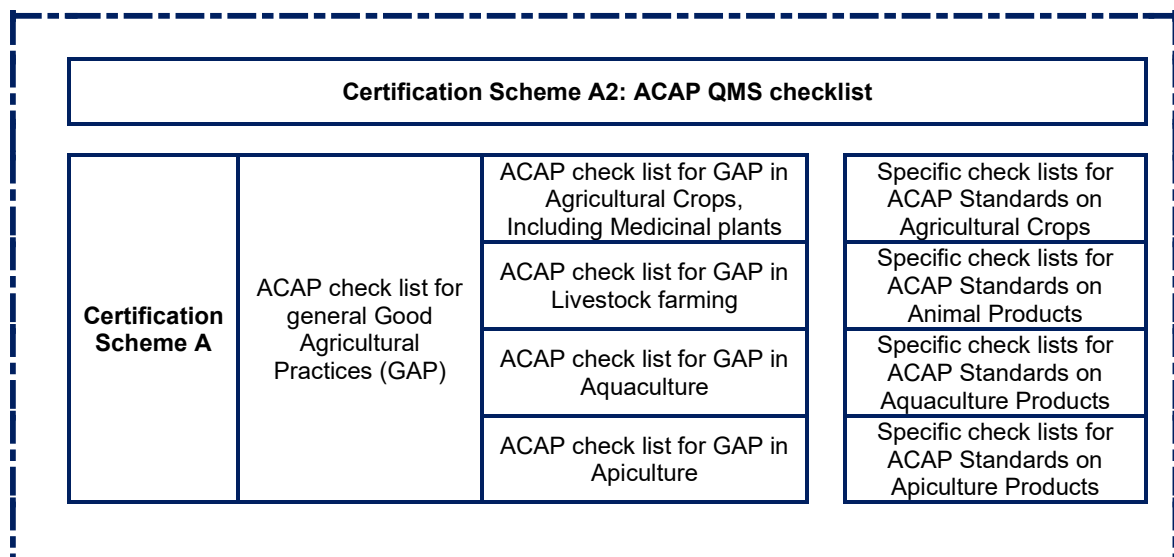
Example: the buyer is a food manufacturer that buys apples to make apple juice. In this case he/she shall be certified according to the ACAP Certification Scheme B.

A.2.2.3 Post-harvest produce handling

- (a) Produce handling includes any type of post-harvest handling of products that is still under the legal responsibility of the same producer. (ex: storage, chemical treatment, trimming, washing, bleeding, degutting, slicing or any other handling where the product may have physical contact with other materials or substances but does but change its main aspect and nature.
- (b) Food processing is not considered a post-harvest activity and it is covered under Certification Scheme B.
- (c) Produce handling, including description of processes done, shall be declared during registration and indicated on the certificate.
- (d) Produce handling shall always be included as long as the product belongs to the producer during handling (by the producer or subcontractor), if the ARSO Mark in order to receive a licence for the ARSO Mark.

A.2.2.4 Sub-contractors and Process outsourcing

- (a) Outsourcing of certified processes is under the responsibility of the certified producers. It is allowed and regulated in different ways for different ACAP Standards
- (c) Details on sub-contractors and outsourcing management will be specified in the different standards.



A.3 ACAP Certification Scheme A specific Normative Documents

The Normative documents presented in this chapter (and any additional document or integration that will be identified as "Normative for certification scheme A") are specific for certification scheme A and relevant to all Parties involved in the ACAP certification process.

The specific documents are represented by:

ACAP 1-2:2023

- (a) ACAP Standards, technical normative documents to be certified within Scheme A
- (b) ACAP check list for general Good Agricultural Practices (GAP)
- (c) ACAP check lists for GAP, specific for each sub-scope of scheme A (Crops, Livestock, Aquaculture, Apiculture)
- (d) ACAP check lists that extrapolate the requirements in the ACAP Standards
- (e) ACAP QMS check list for group or farmers in scheme A2

A.4 Quality management system for Scheme A2

The QMS designed for the ARSO ACAP certification schemes contains elements specific for the scope of the ACAP certification.

The requirements, as well as the criteria for compliance, for the QMS are described in the ACAP QMS check list for group or farmers

A.5 Assessment Process

In addition to ACAP 1-1, the following rules apply for the certification of the ARSO Certification schemes A1 and A2.

A.5.1 Self-assessment and Internal Audit and verification

A.5.1.1 Self-assessment

It is required for ARSO certification Scheme A1.

During self-assessment, all deviations and not applicable requirements must be recorded and corrective actions implemented.

No specific requirements are in place for the qualification of the assessor.

A.5.1.2 Internal audit and verification.

It is required for ARSO certification Scheme A2.

There are 2 different requirements of qualification for self-verification of the QMS and verification of the activity on farm, according to the specific African Standard.

- (a) **Internal Auditor.** The internal auditor is qualified for both verification of QMS of a group of Producers and for the technical verification of the farm on-site.

The following requirements shall be complied for qualification of the Internal Auditor:

- (i) Post-High school education including courses pertinent with the major scope of certification (crops, livestock, aquaculture, apiculture)
- (ii) Documented official training on auditing techniques according to ISO 19011 with focus on ISO 9001 auditing standard of minimum 16 hours.
- (iii) Demonstrated competence in the use of chemical treatments on the products (ex: pesticides on crops, drugs and medications on livestock, fish and bees). This competence can be from education, courses or demonstrated practical experience of minimum 2 years.

- (iv) Demonstrated competence in nutrition sector (ex: fertilizers in crops, feed on livestock and fish). This competence can be from education, courses or demonstrated practical experience of minimum 2 years.
- (v) Documented qualified Course in food hygiene and good agricultural practices.
- (b) **Internal verifier:** Can carry out only the internal technical on-site verification of production sites according to the requirements related to production. Can work in team with the internal Auditor for verification of the producers of a group.
 - (i) High school education including courses pertinent with the major scope of certification (crops, livestock, aquaculture, apiculture)
 - (ii) Demonstrated competence in the use of chemical treatments on the products (ex: pesticides on crops, drugs and medications on livestock, fish and bees). This competence can be from education, courses or demonstrated practical experience of minimum 2 years.
 - (iii) Demonstrated competence in nutrition sector (ex: fertilizers in crops feed on livestock and fish). This competence can be from education, courses or demonstrated practical experience of minimum 2 years.
 - (iv) Documented qualified course in food hygiene and good agricultural practices.
 - (v) 1 verification as observer and 1 verification as verifier witnessed by a qualified Auditor

A.5.2 Independent external verification

A.5.2.1 Certification Body

For the certification of the ACAP Certification Scheme A, the certification Body must be approved for the scope A1 or for single Producers certification or the all scope A for single and groups of producers. Approved CBs are listed in the ARSO website

A.5.2.2 Laboratory

For testing and analytical verification of compliance for the ACAP Certification Scheme A, the Laboratory shall be approved for the specific tests and methodologies required by the specific standards (technical specification) to be certified. Approved Laboratories, with the detail of the approved tests and methods are listed in the ARSO website.

A.5.2.3 Qualification of assessors

Also for external verifications, two different kind of assessors are identified:

A.5.2.3.1 Verifier for scope A

- (a) **Task**
 - (i) Can only carry out the technical on-site verification of production sites according to the requirements related to production
 - (ii) Can work in team with the Auditor for verification of the producers of a group.
- (b) **Qualification:** The following requirements shall be complied for qualification of the Verifier:
 - (i) Post high school education including courses pertinent with the major scope of certification (crops, livestock, aquaculture, apiculture)

ACAP 1-2:2023

- (ii) Documented official training on auditing techniques according to ISO 19011 with focus on ISO 9001 auditing standard of minimum 16 hours.
- (iii) Demonstrated competence in the use of chemical treatments on the products (ex: pesticides on crops, drugs and medications on livestock, fish and bees). This competence can be from education, courses or demonstrated practical experience of minimum 2 years.
- (iv) Demonstrated competence in nutrition sector (ex: fertilizers in crops, feed on livestock and fish). This competence can be from education, courses or demonstrated practical experience of minimum 2 years.
- (v) Documented qualified Course in food hygiene and good agricultural practices of minimum 2 days duration.
- (vi) 1 verification as observer and 2 verification as verifier witnessed by a qualified Auditor or Verifier

A.5.2.3.2 Auditor for scope A

(a) Task

- (i) Can carry out Audits of the QMS and on-farm post-harvest activity (ex: packing of crops, slaughtering of first processing of animals and fish, handling of Apiculture products)
- (ii) Can carry out the technical on-site verification of production sites according to the requirements related to production
- (iii) In team, covers the task of team leader and/or lead auditor.

(b) **Qualification:** The following requirements shall be complied for qualification of the Auditor:

- (i) Post-High school degree including courses pertinent with the major scope of certification (crops, livestock, aquaculture, apiculture)
- (ii) Documented official training on auditing techniques according to ISO 19011 with focus on ISO 9001 auditing standard of minimum 36 hours.
- (iii) Demonstrated competence in the use of chemical treatments on the products (ex: pesticides on crops, drugs and medications on livestock, fish and bees). This competence can be from education, courses or demonstrated practical experience of minimum 2 years.
- (iv) Demonstrated competence in nutrition sector (ex: fertilizers in crops, feed on livestock and fish). This competence can be from education, courses or demonstrated practical experience of minimum 2 years.
- (v) Documented qualified Course on HACCP of minimum 2 days duration
- (vi) Documented qualified Course in food hygiene and good agricultural practices of minimum 2 days duration.
- (vii) For QMS audits, the technical competence on production can be complementary covered by a sector expert, working in together with the auditor.
- (viii) 1 verification as observer and 2 verification as auditor on a complete audit (QMS plus Production), witnessed by a qualified Auditor

A.5.2.4 Initial certification

The initial certification is carried out once, at the first ACAP certification for the specific scheme of certification. The change of certification Body does not require a new initial certification. The initial Certification is composed by 2 phases:

A.5.2.4.1 Documental review

This phase is applicable only for Certification scheme A2 and regards the desk audits of the QMS documentation

A.5.2.4.2 Initial audits

It represents the audits carried out by the CB for final certification. It is carried out on-site. In case of scheme A2, this audits shall follow the documental review. It can be consecutive or carried out with a maximum timeframe of 3 months from the documental review. In case of exceedance of the timeframe, the review must be repeated.

A.5.2.5 Periodical Surveillance Audits

According to the duration of 3 years of the certification cycle, there are 2 surveillance audits in one certification cycle.

A.5.2.6 Re-certification audits

The re-certification audit is carried out at the end of the third cycle of certification.

A.5.2.7 Verification timing: Initial certification audits

The verification shall be planned when the production cycle is completed and evidences can be collected from both visual and documental audits:

(a) Crops

Cultivation cycle is completed and harvest is in place the day of audits.

In case of group of farmers, at least 25% of the sample must be harvesting the day of the audits.

Harvest can be assessed on at least one crop representative of the following groups: fruit perennials, open field vegetables, green-house vegetables, multiple harvest crops.

If post-harvest activity is included in the scope of certification, it must be in place the day of.

(b) Livestock and fish

Life/ production cycle is completed.

The final steps of production are completed (ex: slaughtering, milking, eggs picking, etc.)

In case of group of farmers, at least 25% of the sample must have completed one cycle the day of the verification

Complete cycle can be assessed on at least one specie representative of a similar group of species.

(c) Apiculture

Life/ production cycle is completed.

The final steps of production are completed and shall be assessed.

In case of group of farmers, at least 25% of the sample must have completed one cycle the day of the verification

A.5.2.8 Sampling of farmers and production sites

In case of certification scheme A2, group of producers, a sample of the producers registered in the producers group will be verified. The sample is taken with regard to the following principles.

ACAP 1-2:2023

A.5.2.8.1 Initial audits

- (a) The Square root of the total number of farmers, approximated by the higher value, shall be sampled and assessed for first certification
- (b) The sample shall be representative of all the products included in the scope of certification and the number of samples for each product must be equally balanced.
- (c) All the products must be present on-site and at least half of the products must be in harvest (end of production cycle) at the moment of the verification.
- (d) In case of small groups of producers, at least one sample for each product in the scope of certification must be verified, even if the final sample is larger than the SQR of the group.
- (e) The same Producer can be sampled for more than one product

A.5.2.8.2 Surveillance audits

- (a) The Square root of the total number of farmers multiplied by 0.6, approximated by the higher value, shall be sampled and assessed for surveillance verification
- (b) At least one of the products included in the scope of certification shall be in harvest or at end of cycle. If more products are on-site, the number of samples for each product must be equally balanced.
- (c) The products not in harvest or not present at the moment of the surveillance audit must be verified for compliance by evaluating evidences and records from the previous certified cycle.
- (d) The same Producer can be sampled for more than one product.

A.5.2.8.3 Re-certification/ transfer of CB Audits

- (a) The Square root of the total number of farmers, approximated by the higher value, shall be sampled and assessed for first certification and re-certification
- (b) The sample shall be representative of all the products present the day of the audits and included in the scope of certification. The number of samples for each product must be equally balanced.
- (c) At least 1 of the products present on-site must be in harvest (end of production cycle) at the moment of the audits.
- (d) In case of small groups of producers, at least one sample for each product on-site must be verified, even if the final sample is larger than the SQR of the group.
- (e) The same Producer can be sampled for more than one product.

A.6 Sampling and testing of products (where applicable)

The laboratory can be selected by both the CB and the Producer, among the ARSO qualified laboratory list, according to criteria such as kind of testing required, location, etc.

A.6.1 Sampling and testing

- (a) The analytical tests to be carried out on the products to be certified or any testing required to confirm compliance, are specific for the different ACAP Standards and they related to product-specific requirements.
- (b) Sampling and testing methodology are specifically indicated of the ARSO Standard in relation to the purposes of the sampling and the testing
- (c) Sampling may be carried out on-farm, before the product is put on the market, or taken from the market, according to specific Standards requirements.

- (d) The list of the parameters and also contaminant to be searched by the laboratory shall be prepared taking into consideration the Specific requests from the Standard of certification.
- (e) Some additional criteria shall be considered, where appropriate:
 - (i) Chemicals known to be used on the products during the production period (ex: pesticides, antibiotics. Medicine). Records of the treatment shall be kept (ex: spray records; veterinary logs, etc.)
 - (ii) Chemicals not directly used on the products but with a potential of cross contamination with the product (ex: spray drift, heavy metals from heavy traffic, pollution coming from industry,
 - (iii) Industrial or different neighbouring farming that may have an influence on the safety of products

A.7 Verification results and evaluation of compliance

The classification of findings raised during the verification and related management is explained in ACAP 1-1 # 15.5

With regard to scheme A, the following criteria are applied for the final evaluation of compliance.

A.7.1 Major Non-Conformance

- (a) Initial (First certification) verification.

All Major NC must be closed with effective corrective actions before the release of the certificate

- (b) Surveillance and Re-certification verifications

All Major NC must be closed with effective corrective actions before the release of the certificate

A.7.2 Minor Non-conformance

- (a) Initial (First certification) verification.

It is allowed for the 20% of the Minor NC raised during Initial audit to be closed within the next surveillance audit, upon presentation and approval of a corrective action plan.

The remaining 80% of the Minor NC raised shall be closed within the given time

- (b) Surveillance and Re-certification verifications

It is allowed for the 10% of the Minor NC raised during Initial audit to be closed within the next surveillance audit, upon presentation and approval of a corrective action plan.

- (c) The remaining 90% of the Minor NC raised shall be closed within the given time

Annex B (informative)

Scheme B: Processing and handling / packing of food and fresh produce

B.1 Registration data

In addition to the requirements in ACAP 1-1, some specific details are required for Certification Scheme B.

B.1.1 Detail of certified production

B.1.1.1 Production site

- (a) Name of production site
- (b) Address of production site
- (c) Area of production (m²)
- (d) Expected quantity of certified production (tons)
- (e) Number of employees
- (f) Detailed description of products
- (g) Detailed description of production processes

B.2 ACAP Certification Scheme B scopes of certification

B.2.1 Products

- (a) Selected and packed fresh fruit and vegetables
- (b) Selected and packed fresh animal products
- (c) Processed food from different origin and composition.

In order to meet the requirements of the ACAP supply chain, the ACAP products in Scheme B shall be made with raw materials certified according to an ACAP certification scheme, with exception of scheme C, chain of custody, that is focused only on assuring the traceability of the certified products along the supply chain.

If it is not possible to use all raw materials coming from ACAP certification, at least one of the main ingredients shall be certified. The certified ingredients shall be clearly identified and indicated in the label of the product, in the list of the ingredients and claims shall be made about the Percentage of ACAP certified ingredient present in the product.

The use of the ACAP mark shall be authorized on case-by-case bases upon decision of the ARSO Secretariat.

B.2.2 Processes

B.2.2.1 Production cycle

- (a) As a general concept, the ACAP Certification Scheme A requires that all the production cycle of the products is carried out on-site following the ACAP certification rules.

- (b) In case of processes or part of processes are carried out by external sub-contractors, the Produce shall carry out a supplier on-site assessment, using the ACAP Certification Scheme B check list for the requirements that are applicable to the processes subcontracted.
- (c) In case the sub-contractor is already certified for ACAP Certification Scheme B, the assessment is not required but copy of a valid certificate shall be available.
- (d) In case of doubts, the CB has the right to carry out verification at the sub-contractor site, upon previous agreement and planning of the activity.

B.2.2.2 Sub-contractors and process outsourcing

- (a) Outsourcing of certified processes is under the responsibility of the certified producers. It is allowed and regulated in different ways for different ARS/AES Standards
- (d) Details on sub-contractors and outsourcing management will be specified in the different standards.

B.3 ACAP Certification Scheme B: Specific normative documents

The Normative documents presented in this chapter (and any additional document or integration that will be identified as "Normative for certification scheme B") are specific for certification scheme B and relevant to all Parties involved in the ACAP certification process.

The specific documents are represented by:

- (a) ACAP Standards, technical normative documents to be certified within Scheme B
- (b) ACAP check list for Food Safety Management System
- (c) ACAP check lists for PRPs
- (d) ACAP check lists elaborating the requirements in the African Standards included in Scheme B

Certification Scheme B - ACAP FSMS checklist			
Certification Scheme B	ACAP check list for food processing PRPs	Fresh/ perishable fruit and vegetables products	Specific check lists for ACAP Standards on fresh F&V products
		Fresh /perishable animal products	Specific check lists for ACAP Standards on fresh perishable Animal Products
		Ambient stable food products	Specific check lists for ACAP Standards on ambient stable Products
		Ready to eat simple and mix products	Specific check lists for ACAP Standards on ready to eat Products

B.4 Food safety management system for Scheme B

The FSMS designed for the ACAP certification schemes contains elements specific for the scope of management of food safety.

The requirements, as well as the criteria for compliance, for the FSMS are described in the ACAP FSMA check list for food processing.

ACAP 1-2:2023

B.5 Assessment process

In addition to ACAP 1-1, the following rules apply for the certification of the ACAP Certification Scheme B.

B.5.1 Self-assessment and internal audit and verification

B.5.1.1 Internal audit and verification

It is required for ARSO certification Scheme B

Internal auditor. The internal auditor is qualified for both verification of FSMS and for the technical verification of the food production on-site.

The following requirements shall be complied for qualification of the Internal Auditor:

- (i) Post-high school degree including courses pertinent with the major scope of certification
- (ii) Documented official training on auditing techniques according to ISO 19011 with focus on ISO 9001 auditing standard of minimum 16 hours.
- (iii) Demonstrated competence in food industry production. This competence can be from education, courses or demonstrated practical experience of minimum 2 years.
- (iv) Documented qualified course in HACCP, food hygiene and good manufacturing practices.

B.5.2 Independent external verification

B.5.2.1 Certification Body

For the certification of the ACAP Certification Scheme B, the certification body must be approved for the Scope B. Approved CBs are listed in the ARSO website

B.5.2.2 Laboratory

For testing and analytical verification of compliance for the ACAP Certification Scheme B, the Laboratory shall be approved for the specific tests and methodologies required by the specific standards (technical specification) to be certified. Approved Laboratories, with the detail of the approved tests and methods are listed in the ARSO website.

B.5.2.3 Qualification of assessors

Also for external verifications, two different kind of assessors are identified:

Auditor for scope B

- (a) **Task:** Can carry out Audits of the FSMS and technical on-site verification of production sites according to the requirements related to production
- (b) **Qualification:** The following requirements shall be complied for qualification of the verifier:
 - (i) Post-high school degree including courses pertinent with the major scope of certification
 - (ii) Documented official training on auditing techniques according to ISO 19011 with focus on ISO 9001 auditing standard of minimum 36 hours.

- (iii) Demonstrated competence in the Food Industry: demonstrated practical experience of minimum 2 years.
- (iv) Demonstrated competence in FSMS management. This competence can be from education, courses or demonstrated practical experience of minimum 2 years.
- (v) Documented qualified Course on HACCP of minimum 2 days duration
- (vi) Documented qualified Course in food hygiene and good agricultural practices of minimum 2 days duration.
- (vii) 1 verification as observer and 2 verification as auditor on a complete audit, witnessed by a qualified Auditor

B.5.2.4 Initial certification

The initial certification is carried out once, at the first ARSO Certification for the specific Scheme of certification. The change of certification Body does not require a new initial certification. The initial Certification is composed by 2 phases:

(a) Documental review

This phase regards the desk verification of the FSMS documentation

(b) Initial Verification

It represents the verification carried out by the CB for final certification. It is carried out on-site. This verification shall follow the documental review. It can be consecutive or carried out with a maximum timeframe of 3 months from the documental review. In case of exceedance of the timeframe, the review must be repeated.

B.5.2.5 Periodical Surveillance Verification

According to the duration of 3 years of the certification cycle, there are 2 surveillance verifications in one certification cycle.

B.5.2.6 Re-certification verification

The re-certification verification is carried out at the end of the third cycle of certification.

B.5.2.7 Verification timing: Initial certification verification

The verification shall be planned when the production process is in place at the moment of the verification and evidences can be collected from both visual and documental verification.

B.5.2.8 Sampling of sites

In case of a food factory with a multisite operation, each site will receive a complete verification and no sampling of sites is allowed.

B.6 Sampling and testing of products (where applicable)

The laboratory can be selected by both the CB and the Producer, among the ARSO qualified laboratory list, according to criteria such as kind of testing required, location, etc.

B.6.1 Sampling and testing

- (a) The analytical tests to be carried out on the products to be certified or any testing required to confirm compliance, are specific for the different ACAP Standards and they related to product-specific requirements.

ACAP 1-2:2023

- (b) Sampling and testing methodology are specifically indicated of the ARSO Standard in relation to the purposes of the sampling and the testing
- (c) Sampling may be carried out on-site, during verification or from the point of sales, according to rules of the different ACAP Standards.
- (d) The list of the parameters and also contaminant to be searched by the laboratory shall be prepared taking into consideration the Specific requests from the Standard of certification.
- (e) Some additional criteria shall be considered, where appropriate:
 - Additional legal parameters mandatory for the product in the country of production or export and not included in the ACAP standard.

B.7 Verification results and evaluation of compliance

The classification of findings rose during the verification and related management is explained in ACAP 1-1.

With regard to scheme B, the following criteria are applied for the final evaluation of compliance.

B.7.1 Major Non-Conformance

- (a) Initial (First certification) verification: All Major NC must be closed with effective corrective actions before the release of the certificate
- (b) Surveillance and Re-certification verifications: All Major NC must be closed with effective corrective actions before the release of the certificate

B.7.2 Minor Non-conformance

- (a) Initial (First certification) verification: All the Minor NC rose during Initial audit to be closed within the given time, before release of the certificate
- (b) Surveillance and Re-certification verifications: It is allowed for the 10% of the Minor NC raised during Initial audit to be closed within the next surveillance audit, upon presentation and approval of a corrective action plan.
- (c) The remaining 90% of the Minor NC raised shall be closed within the given time

Annex C
(informative)**Scheme C: Traceability of AGAP certified products in the food supply chain****C.1 Registration data**

In addition to the requirements in ACAP 1-1, some specific details are required for ACAP Certification Scheme C.

C.1.1 Detail of certified production**C.1.1.1 Production site**

- (a) Name of production site
- (b) Address of production site
- (c) Expected quantity of certified production (tons)
- (d) Detailed description of ACAP products object of traceability
- (e) Description of smallest traceable unit

C.2 ACAP Certification Scheme C scopes of certification

This ACAP certification scheme is applicable in all the steps in the supply chain where product is handled, stored, transported, packed, labelled that cannot be included in primary production, produce handling and food manufacturing but where a loss of identity or loss of traceability of the certified product is possible.

In order to meet the requirements of the ACAP supply chain, the materials certified according to an ACAP certification scheme shall be clearly identified and segregated and must be traceable from raw material to final products, including intermediate products and re-work. The scope is to assure the identification and traceability of the certified products along the supply chain.

If it is not possible to use all raw materials coming from ACAP certification, at least one of the main ingredients shall be identified for traceability.

The certified ingredients shall be clearly identified and indicated in the label of the product, in the list of the ingredients and claims shall be made about product containing XXX ingredient ACAP certified.

C.2.1 Processes**C.2.1.1 Traceability and segregation**

- (a) As a general concept, the ACAP Certification Scheme C requires that all the production cycle of the products is carried out and documented in a way that all ACAP certified products are traceable from incoming of raw materials to final products.
- (b) The ACAP certified materials and products must be clearly identified and segregated from not certified products. Visual identification and documented traceability is guaranteed during all production cycle.
- (c) In case of processes or part of processes are carried out by external sub-contractors, the sub-contractor must be ACAP Certification Scheme C chain of custody, certified for the same product.

ACAP 1-2:2023

C.3 ACAP Certification Scheme C specific normative documents

The Normative documents presented in this chapter (and any additional document or integration that will be identified as "Normative for certification scheme C") are specific for certification scheme C and relevant to all Parties involved in the ACAP certification process.

The specific documents are represented by:

- (a) ACAP Chain of Custody Standard, technical normative document to be certified within Scheme C.
- (b) ACAP check lists that extrapolate the requirements in the ACAP scheme C Chain of Custody Standard



C.4 Food hygiene practices

The Chain of custody standard includes requirements on food hygiene good practices, to be verified together with the traceability system.

C.5 Assessment process

In addition to ACAP 1-1, the following rules apply for the certification of the ACAP Certification Scheme C.

C.5.1 Self-assessment and Internal Audit and verification

C.5.1.1 Internal audit and verification

It is required for ACAP Certification Scheme C

Internal Auditor. The internal auditor is qualified for both verification of PRPs and for the verification of traceability system.

The following requirements shall be complied for qualification of the Internal Auditor:

- (i) Documented qualified Course in HACCP, food hygiene and good manufacturing practices.
- (ii) Demonstrated competence in GMP related to the specific industry including traceability system. This competence can be from education, courses or demonstrated practical working experience of minimum 2 years.

C.5.2 Independent external verification

C.5.2.1 Certification Body

For the certification of the ACAP Certification Scheme C, the certification body must be approved for the scope C. Approved CBs are listed in the ARSO website

C.5.2.2 Laboratory

For testing and analytical verification of compliance for the ACAP Certification Scheme B, the Laboratory shall be approved for the specific tests and methodologies required by the specific standards

(technical specification) to be certified. Approved Laboratories, with the detail of the approved tests and methods are listed in the ARSO website.

C.5.2.3 Qualification of assessors

Also for external verifications, two different kind of assessors are identified:

Auditor for Scope C

- (a) **Task:** Can carry out Audits of the traceability system and on-site verification of production sites according to the requirements related to food hygiene and GMP related to the specific activity of the company.
- (b) **Qualification:** The following requirements shall be complied for qualification of the Verifier:
 - (i) Post-High school degree.
 - (ii) Documented official training on auditing techniques according to ISO 19011 with focus on ISO 9001 auditing standard of minimum 36 hours.
 - (iii) Demonstrated competence in the Agricultural or Food Industry: demonstrated practical experience of minimum 2 years.
 - (iv) Documented qualified Course on HACCP of minimum 2 days duration
 - (v) Documented qualified Course in food hygiene and good agricultural practices of minimum 2 days duration.
 - (vi) 1 verification as observer and 2 verification as auditor on a complete audit, witnessed by a qualified Auditor

C.5.2.4 Initial Certification

The initial certification is carried out once, at the first ARSO Certification for the specific Scheme of certification. The change of certification Body does not require a new initial certification.

C.5.2.5 Initial Verification

It represents the verification carried out by the CB for certification. It is carried out on-site.

C.5.2.6 Periodical Surveillance Verification

According to the duration of 3 years of the certification cycle, there are 2 surveillance verifications in one certification cycle.

C.5.2.7 Re-certification Verification

The re-certification verification is carried out at the end of the third cycle of certification.

C.5.2.8 Verification timing

The verification shall be planned when the production process is in place at the moment of the verification and evidences can be collected from both visual and documental verification.

C.5.2.9 Sampling of sites

In case of a food factory with a multisite operation, each site will receive a complete verification and no sampling of sites is allowed.

ACAP 1-2:2023

C.6 Verification Results and evaluation of Compliance

The classification of findings rose during the verification and related management is explained in ACAP 1-1.

With regard to ACAP Certification Scheme C, the following criteria are applied for the final evaluation of compliance.

C.6.1 Major Non-Conformance

- (a) Initial (First certification) verification: All Major NC must be closed with effective corrective actions before the release of the certificate
- (b) Surveillance and re-certification verifications: All Major NC must be closed with effective corrective actions before the release of the certificate

C.6.2 Minor Non-conformance

- (a) Initial (First certification) verification: All the Minor NC rose during Initial audit to be closed within the given time, before release of the certificate
- (b) Surveillance and Re-certification verifications: It is allowed for the 10% of the Minor NC raised during these audits to be closed within the next surveillance audit, upon presentation and approval of a corrective action plan.
- (c) The remaining 90% of the Minor NC raised shall be closed within the given time

Annex D (informative)

Scheme D: Sustainability certification programme

The Standards included in Scheme D provide requirements for the sustainable production, processing and trading of products. The standard applies to all production, processing and trading within the operator's sphere of influence.

These standards are flexible enough to be useful for operators of various sizes, processes, systems, products and countries of operation. In adhering to this standard, the operator shall deal only with those elements that are relevant to the operator's activities. If certain specific sustainability aspects are considered not relevant to the process, the operator shall justify how its operations do not contribute to the impact of the aspects concerned.

Local circumstances shall be considered when assessing the environmental, social or economic situation.

D.1 ACAP AES Certification Scheme D-Specific Normative Documents

The Normative documents presented in this chapter (and any additional document or integration that will be identified as "Normative for certification scheme D") are specific for certification scheme D and relevant to all Parties involved in the ACAP AES certification process.

African Standards suitable for ACAP AES certification include the following:

ARS/AES 1:2014, *Agriculture — Sustainability and eco-labelling — Requirements*

ARS/AES 2:2014, *Fisheries — Sustainability and eco-labelling — Requirements*

ARS/AES 3:2014, *Forestry — Sustainability and eco-labelling — Requirements*

ARS/AES 4:2014, *Tourism — Sustainability and eco-labelling — Requirements*

ARS/AES 5:2018, *Aquaculture — African Catfish — Sustainability and eco-labelling — Requirements*

ARS/AES 6:2018, *Aquaculture — Tilapia — Sustainability and eco-labelling — Requirements*

ARS 952:2016, *African Traditional Medicine — Guidelines on good agricultural and collection practices (GACP) for medicinal plants*

ARS 1100:2018, *Production and handling of food crops — Good agricultural practices*

ARS 1101:2018, *Production and handling of maize (corn) grains — Good agricultural practices*

ARS 1102:2018, *Production and handling of rice — Good agricultural practices*

ARS 1103:2018, *Production and handling of cassava — Good agricultural practices*

ARS 1104:2018, *Dairy production farms — Good agricultural practices*

ARS 1105:2018, *Poultry production farms — Good agricultural practices*

ARS 1106:2018, *Tilapia production aquaculture farms — Good aquacultural practices*

ARS 1107:2018, *Freshwater aquatic animal production farms — Good aquaculture practices*

ARS 1108:2018, *Beef cattle production farms — Good agricultural practices*

ACAP 1-2:2023

ARS 1109:2018, *Production and handling of fruits and vegetables — Good agricultural practices*

D.2 Registration data

In addition to the requirements in ACAP 1-1, some specific information is required for Certification Schemes D1 and D2.

D.2.1 Detail of certified production

This information gives more detail on the product(s) to be certified. This information must be updated if there are any changes detected during the external inspections.

D.2.1.1 Crops

- (a) Name of crops (species)
- (b) Area of production (ha)
- (c) Expected quantity of certified production (tons)
- (d) Number and identification of production sites (map of sites and sites location information)
- (e) On-farm postharvest activities and address of postharvest unit.

D.2.1.1.1 Additional information for farmers registered in groups of farmers

The same information is required for each farmer included in the group

D.2.1.2 Livestock/ Aquaculture

- (a) Name of species and breed
- (b) Kind of production (example: livestock: milk, meat, eggs, etc. ex. Aquaculture: adult fish, ova, seedlings, etc.)
- (c) Number of individuals (estimated where appropriate)
- (d) Expected quantity of certified production (tons)
- (e) Number and identification of production sites (map of sites and sites location information)
- (f) On-farm slaughtering or processing unit information

D.2.1.2.1 Additional information for aqua farmers registered in groups of farmers

The same information is required for each aqua farmer included in the group

D.2.1.3 Capture fishery (wild catch)

- (a) Name of fishery
- (b) Name of target species
- (c) Fishery type
- (d) Bycatch type
- (e) Location and extent of fishery

- (f) methods used for the fishery operations

D.2.1.4 Forestry

- (a) Name of production/ activity carried out in the forest
- (b) extension of the area
- (c) Identification of production sites
- (d) Additional information as specified in the application form

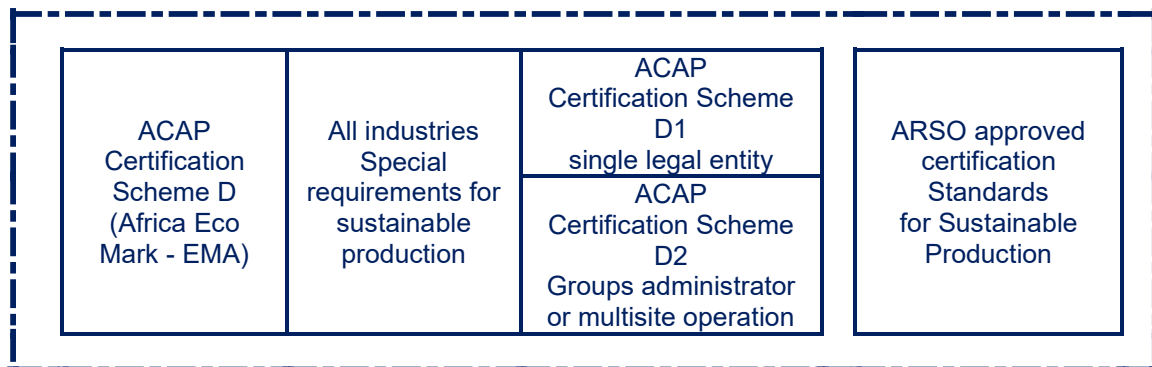
D.2.1.5 Tourism

- (a) Kind of activity/ service
- (b) Details of location
- (c) Additional information as specified in the application form

D.2.1.6 Other industries

- (a) Name of products/services produces
- (b) Production processes
- (c) Identification of production sites

D.3 ACAP AES Certification Scheme D scopes of certification



D.3.1 Products

Products included in the scheme D may come from primary production of other food related activity and, according to the nature of the activity can have different kind pf productions:

- (a) Vegetable Crops productions (ex: fruit, vegetables, herbs, roots, plants for medical use, flowers, etc.)
- (b) Livestock production coming from different animal species (ex: meat, milk, wool, eggs)
- (c) Aquaculture production coming from different aquaculture species (ex: fish for consumption, brood stock for reproduction, ova and seedlings for reproduction, ova for consumption, etc.)
- (d) Fishery (wild catch).
- (e) Food and food related products and services

ACAP 1-2:2023

- (f) Forest products
- (g) Tourism

The nature and number of products certifiable in the ACAP AES scheme depend of the availability of specific standards for certification, designed and approved by ARSO CACO. The certification scope may have different focus for different products, according to the scope and focus of the Standard of reference.

D.3.2 Processes

D.3.2.1 Production cycle

- (a) As a general concept, the ACAP AES certification Scheme D requires that all the life/production cycle of the products is carried out on-site following the certification rules.
- (b) Exceptions can be clarified in the specific Standards for certification, also according to the phase of certification (initial, surveillance or re-certification) and to the duration of life/production cycle of the plant of animal.
- (c) All production processes carried out during the cycle of certification shall be carried out in agreement with the ACAP Eco-Mark applicable certification rules, for the selected Standard.
- (d) For fishery, the entire fishing cycle shall be carried out according to ACAP 3.
- (e) For Food and Food related products and services, all products in the scope of certification must be carried out under the responsibility of the producer.

D.3.2.2 Harvesting process

- (a) If harvest, slaughtering, collection of vegetal or animal products (including forestry products) is carried out by the same Producer, the harvesting process shall be included in the scope of certification
- (b) If harvest, slaughtering, collection of vegetal and animal products is carried out under the responsibility of the buyer of the product (the producer does not own the product), the harvesting process shall be excluded from the scope of certification
- (c) In case of exclusion of harvest, in order to be able to use the ACAP AES along the supply chain, the buyer of the product shall be ACAP Certified according to one of the ACAP AES certification schemes applicable for the product.

Example: the buyer is a food manufacturer that buys apples to make apple juice. In this case, he/she shall be certified according to the ACAP AES Certification Scheme D.

D.3.2.3 Post-harvest produce handling

- (a) Produce handling includes any type of post-harvest handling of products that is still under the legal responsibility of the same producer. (ex: storage, chemical treatment, trimming, washing, bleeding, degutting, slicing or any other handling where the product may have physical contact with other materials or substances but does but change its main aspect and nature.
- (b) Produce handling, including description of processes done, shall be declared during registration and indicated on the certificate.
- (c) Produce handling shall always be included as long as the product belongs to the producer during handling (by the producer or subcontractor), if the ARSO Mark in order to receive a licence for the ARSO Mark.

D.3.2.4 Processes related to tourism services

- (a) All activities/ services that are under the legal responsibility of the same legal entity for a specified site or multisite operation
- (b) All activities carried out by the same legal entity for the same site or multisite shall be declared during registration and indicated on the certificate.
- (c) All activities/ services carried out on the same site or multisite shall always be included in the scope of certification (by the legal entity or subcontractor), in order to receive a licence for the EMA label.

D.3.2.5 Sub-contractors and process outsourcing

- (a) Outsourcing of certified processes/ services is under the responsibility of the certified legal entity. It is allowed and regulated in different ways for different ARS/AES.
- (b) Details on sub-contractors and outsourcing management will be specified in the different standards.

D.4 Conditions for certification

D.4.1 General conditions

- (a) Audits are based on an evaluation of conformity with the ARS/AES Standard applicable for the scope.
- (b) For the purpose of these rules, two organization types are recognized: single legal entities and group administrators.
- (c) Organizations that cultivate or process products/ carry out operations considered illegal by applicable law in the country where they are grown or processed/ operated or by international agreements and conventions shall not be eligible for certification.
- (d) Conditions specific for different ARS/AES Standards are specified in each Standard's regulatory documentation.

D.4.2 Single Legal Entity (Operation)

In this model, one certificate is granted to one single Legal Entity (ex: farmer, producer processor, operator).

The whole area and activities within the operation's limits and under the responsibility of the legal entity are covered by the audit scope. This includes, but is not limited to:

- (a) Areas destined for agricultural and livestock production, aquaculture, forestry, processing and tourism operation, with focus on products/ services intended to be sold with certification claims.
- (b) High Conservation Value (HCV) areas, forests and other natural ecosystems, as well as fallow land.
- (c) Areas involving human activity and other infrastructure within its limits that include but are not restricted to administrative infrastructure, collection points, processing and packing units and storage facilities.
- (d) Leased areas inside the operation.
- (e) Personnel, including all contracted and subcontracted workers, supervisory and administrative staff, and management and owner representatives.

ACAP 1-2:2023

- (f) People who live temporarily or permanently on the operation's site.
- (g) All documentation relating to social, agronomic and environmental management and considered relevant to determining compliance with the Standard.
- (h) Documentation related to trading of the certified and non-certified product handled by the farm.

Infrastructure owned or leased outside the Operation's limits but which is directly related to activities included in the audit scope. This may include, but is not limited to administrative infrastructure, collection points, processing and packing units and storage facilities.

Impacts on the surrounding communities that may be directly affected by the farm's activities.

D.4.3 Group administrators

In this model, one certificate is granted to an organization, called the 'Group Administrator', who acts on behalf of a group of Producers (Farmers, processors, tour operators) and is responsible for their compliance with the applicable ARS/AES Standard. The Group Administrator is responsible for implementing an Internal Management System (IMS), including but not limited to coordinating the commercialization of product, training and technical assistance for staff and group members, as well as internal inspections and the corresponding follow-up actions.

Group administrators fit three basic models:

- (i) multi-site, where a single legal entity owns or holds more than one discrete farm/production operation or site with separate production management system, but under one IMS of the group administrator;
- (ii) groups that have a democratic structure, such as cooperatives, associations and federations;
- (iii) private entities, such as plantations with associated product suppliers, exporters or a consultant's office.

The audit scope of a group administrator includes the following:

- (a) Infrastructure owned or administered by the group administrator, related to the production activity in the scope. This includes but is not limited to roads, housing, administration, collection, storage, processing and packing infrastructure, as well as their surroundings.
- (b) Group Members subject to the group's audit scope.
- (c) All personnel hired or subcontracted by the group administrator.
- (d) All documentation relating to the IMS: Documentation related to trading of the certified and non-certified product handled by the group administrator.

D.4.4 Rules for group administrators

- (a) The minimum number of member farms of a group administrator is two member farms/operations.
- (b) The group administrator is responsible for trading and commercializing the products covered in the scope of the certificate, unless it decides to delegate the responsibility to third parties.
- (c) If a member of the group wishes to sell certified product individually, it shall have a written agreement with the group administrator. Records of each individual transaction, indicating the volume of certified product sold individually by members shall be made available.

- (d) The group administrator is responsible for ensuring that all member farms comply with the respective requirements of the relevant ARS/AES Standard.

D.5 Quality management system for Scheme D2

The QMS designed for the ACAP AES certification schemes contain elements specific for the scope of the ACAP AES certification.

- (a) The requirements, as well as the criteria for compliance, for the QMS are described in the ACAP AES QMS check list for group administrators.

D.6 Assessment process

D.6.1 ACAP AES Certification

Organizations wishing to achieve certification or certified organizations that are due a re-certification audit shall apply to an accredited CB.

At initial certification and every three years from then, the organization shall be subject to a certification audit. The CB will issue a certificate to the audited organization once the requirements of this standard are complied with.

In addition to ACAP 1-1, the following rules apply for the certification of the ARSO Certification schemes D1 and D2.

D.6.2 Self-assessment and Internal Audit and verification

D.6.2.1 Self-assessment

It is required for ACAP certification schemes D1. It is based on the requirements of the specific standard's check lists.

During self-assessment, all deviations and not applicable requirements must be recorded and corrective actions implemented.

No specific requirements are in place for the qualification of the assessor.

D.6.2.2 Internal audit and verification.

It is required for ARSO certification Scheme D2.

There are 2 different requirements of qualification for self-verification of the QMS and verification of the activity on site, according to the specific ACAP Standard.

- (a) **Internal Auditor:** The internal auditor is qualified for both verification of QMS of a group of Producers and for the technical verification of the farm on-site. The following requirements shall be complied for qualification of the Internal Auditor:
 - (i) Post-High school diploma, including courses pertinent with the major scope of certification (crops, livestock, aquaculture, food science, or equivalent)
 - (ii) Documented official training on auditing techniques according to ISO 19011 with focus on ISO 9001 auditing standard of minimum 16 hours.
 - (iii) Demonstrated competence in the productions in scope of certification and sustainability according to principles included in ARS/AES Standard implemented by study or practical experience.

ACAP 1-2:2023

- (b) **Internal verifier.** Can carry out only the internal on-site verification of production sites according to the requirements related to production. Can work in team with the internal Auditor for verification of the producers of a group.
- (i) High school diploma including courses pertinent with the major scope of certification (ex: crops, livestock, aquaculture, food science or equivalent)
 - (ii) Demonstrated competence in the productions in scope of certification and sustainability according to principles included in ARS/AES Standard implemented by study or practical experience.
 - (iii) 1 verification as observer and 1 verification as verifier witnessed by a qualified Auditor

D.6.3 Independent external verification

D.6.3.1 Certification Body

For the certification of the ACAP Certification Scheme D, the certification Body must be approved for the scope D1 for single Producers certification or the all scope D for single and groups of producers. Approved CBs are listed in the ARSO website

D.6.3.2 Laboratory

For testing and analytical verification of compliance for the ACAP Certification Scheme D, the Laboratory shall be approved for the specific tests and methodologies required by the specific standards to be certified. Approved Laboratories, with the detail of the approved tests and methods are listed in the ARSO website.

D.6.3.3 Qualification of assessors

Also for external verifications, two different kind of assessors are identified:

D.6.3.3.1 Verifier for Scope D

- (a) **Task**
- (i) Can carry out only the technical on-site verification of production sites according to the requirements related to production
 - (ii) Can work in team with the Auditor for verification of the producers of a group.
- (b) **Qualification:** The following requirements shall be complied for qualification of the Verifier:
- (i) High school degree including courses pertinent with the major scope of certification (crops, livestock, aquaculture, food science, environmental science or equivalent degree)
 - (ii) Documented official training on auditing techniques according to ISO 19011 with focus on ISO 9001 auditing standard of minimum 16 hours.
 - (iii) Demonstrated technical competence in the production in scope of the audit. This competence can be from education, courses or demonstrated practical experience of minimum 2 years working in the industry
 - (iv) Demonstrated competence in social and environmental management according to principles included in the different ARS/AES Standards. This competence can be from education, courses or demonstrated practical working experience of minimum 2 years
 - (v) Documented qualified Course in food hygiene and good agricultural of food hygiene practices, according to scope, of minimum 2 days duration.

- (vi) 1 verification as observer and 2 verification as verifier witnessed by a qualified Auditor or Verifier

D.6.3.3.2 Auditor for scope D

(c) **Task**

- (i) Can carry out Audits of the QMS and on-farm post-harvest activity (ex: packing of crops, slaughtering of first processing of animals and fish, food processing)
- (ii) Can carry out the technical on-site verification of production sites according to the requirements related to production
- (iii) In team, covers the task of team leader and/or lead auditor.

(d) **Qualification:** The following requirements shall be complied for qualification of the Auditor:

- (i) Post-High school degree including courses pertinent with the major scope of certification (crops, livestock, aquaculture, food, environment, other.)
- (ii) Documented official training on auditing techniques according to ISO 19011 with focus on ISO 9001 auditing standard of minimum 36 hours.
- (iii) Demonstrated technical competence in the production in scope of the audit. This competence can be from education, courses or demonstrated practical experience of minimum 2 years working in the Industry
- (iv) Demonstrated competence in social and environmental management according to principles included in the different ARS/AES Standards. This competence can be from education, courses or demonstrated practical working experience of minimum 2 years
- (v) Documented qualified Course in food hygiene and good agricultural practices of minimum 2 days duration.
- (vi) For QMS audits, the technical competence on production can be complementary covered by a sector expert, working in together with the auditor.
- (vii) 1 verification as observer and 2 verification as auditor on a complete audit (QMS plus Production), witnessed by a qualified Auditor

D.6.3.4 Initial certification

The initial certification is carried out once, at the first ARSO Certification for the specific Scheme of certification. The change of certification Body does not require a new initial certification. The initial Certification is composed by 2 phases:

D.6.3.4.1 Documental review

This phase is applicable only for Initial Certification for scheme D2 and regards the desk verification of the QMS documentation

D.6.3.4.2 Initial certification audit

- (i) It represents the verification carried out by the CB for final certification. In case of Initial Certification Audit for scheme D2, this audit shall follow the documental review. It can be consecutive or carried out with a maximum timeframe of 3 months from the documental review. In case of exceedance of the timeframe, the review must be repeated.

ACAP 1-2:2023

- (ii) A certification audit is carried out when the organization applies for certification for the first time, to establish the level of conformity of the organization with all applicable criteria.
- (iii) It shall always take place on site, during a period of activity when workers, crop plants and/or cattle are present and processes are in place.
- (iv) On the application, the organization may voluntarily request to be audited against the criteria of a higher performance level.

D.6.3.5 Periodical Surveillance Audit

According to the duration of 3 years of the certification cycle, there are 2 surveillance verifications in one certification cycle.

- (a) The objectives of the surveillance audits are:
 - (i) To ensure the certified organization complies with all applicable critical criteria;
 - (ii) To determine whether the organization has implemented the improvement actions for continuous improvement criteria in this standard.
- (b) Surveillance audits can be planned within 6 months from the date of certification audit (4 months before and 2 months after).
- (c) According to CB risk assessment and decision, single Operators and group administrators, surveillance audits may be planned or short-noticed at any time. The CB may inform the certified organization about unannounced or short-noticed surveillance audits with no more than two working days in advance, with the exception of group administrators of smallholder members, for which up to five working days in advance apply.
- (d) During surveillance audits to group administrators, the sample of member farms will be selected during the opening meeting. In case of groups located in distant areas or different Regions, the selected area or Region can be communicated within 5 working days from the audit.
- (e) Organizations considered as 'high performers' will be allowed to undertake maximum one desk surveillance audit per 3 years' cycle, instead of one on-site surveillance audit.

D.6.3.6 Re-certification Verification

The re-certification verification is carried out at the end of the third cycle of certification and follows the same rules as Initial certification audit.

D.6.3.7 Verification (Follow Up) audit

Before the final audit report is issued and only in the case of nonconformities an audited organization may demonstrate compliance with open nonconformities up to 30 days after the closing meeting of any audit. In case of Initial Certification Audit, corrective actions can be completed up to 90 days. The CB may charge for additional costs of this process.

The objectives of a verification audit are:

- (a) To control whether open nonconformities that prevented a positive certification decision are addressed, closed, and verified for efficacy, to allow the certificate to be issued or maintained
- (b) To determine whether the organization has reached the minimum performance level and the certificate may be issued or maintained.
- (c) If during a verification audit, an audited organization does not comply, the certificate is not issued or suspended. This audited organization may not be subject to additional verification

audits for the next six months and a complete new audit of the same level of the failed audit (surveillance or re-certification) is needed to re-activate the certificate.

- (d) Organizations with nonconformities on any of the zero-tolerance criteria are not eligible for a verification audit. The certificate is not issued, suspended or is cancelled. This audited organization may not be subject to additional verification audits for the next twelve months. A new complete Certification process must be started (document review and Initial audit)
- (e) A verification audit may take place remotely, when it is possible to evaluate the improvement actions through documents or remote interviews with farm management or group administrator representatives.

D.6.3.8 Investigation audit

Investigation audits are carried out in response to a complaint, reported incident, or substantial information regarding the performance of a certified organization relating to one or more critical criteria of a ACAP AES Standard.

An investigation audit may be carried out at any time, when the CB determines there is sufficient evidence of a potential nonconformity. The certified organization may be subject to a desk investigation audit only if it is possible to demonstrate conformity through documents.

Investigation audits are unannounced. However, the certified organization may be given advanced warning (no more than two working days), when doing so can avoid significant logistical obstacles and the issue at hand cannot be influenced by an advanced warning.

The CB bears the cost of investigation audits. However, should the complaint, reported incident, or substantial information be confirmed, the cost of these audits may be charged to the certified organization.

D.6.3.9 Scope expansion audit

The objective of a scope expansion audit is to assess compliance with certification rules for new areas, activities or member farms that a certified organization wishes to add to its scope before a re-certification or surveillance audit.

All applicable criteria of the ARS/AES standard relevant for the certification are evaluated for the new areas or for a sample of new member farms (in the case of group administrators), as well as for new crops or cattle species.

D.6.4 Verification timing

D.6.4.1 Timing for initial certification verification

The verification shall be planned when the production cycle is completed and evidences can be collected from both visual and documental verification. All the products must be present on-site and at least one product representing a “family” of similar products must be in harvest (end of production cycle, process in place.) at the moment of verification.

- (a) **Crops**
 - (i) Cultivation cycle is completed and harvest is in place the day of verification.
 - (ii) In case of group of farmers, at least 25% of the sample must be harvesting the day of the verification.
 - (iii) Harvest can be assessed on at least one crop representative of the following groups: fruit perennials, open field vegetables, green-house vegetables, multiple harvest crops.

ACAP 1-2:2023

- (iv) If post-harvest activity is included in the scope of certification, it must be in place the day of verification.
- (b) **Livestock and aquaculture**
 - (i) Life/ production cycle is completed.
 - (ii) The final steps of production are completed (ex: slaughtering, milking, eggs picking, etc.)
 - (iii) In case of group of farmers, at least 25% of the sample must have completed one cycle the day of the verification
 - (iv) Complete cycle can be assessed on at least one specie representative of a similar group of species.
- (c) **Fishery**

Wild catch and post-harvest activity (if applicable) must be in place the day of audit
- (d) **Food production**

At least one production cycle representative of product families and technology must be operating the day of the audit.

D.6.4.2 Timing for Periodical Surveillance Audits

In the case Agriculture scopes, if single farms operators or group administrators are cultivating seasonal crops, at least one surveillance audit shall take place during the harvest season.

For all other scopes, at least one production/service process must be in place the day of the audit

Where needed, more details may be found in the intro of the specific ARS/AES Standards.

D.6.5 Sampling of farmers and/or production sites

In case of certification scheme D2, group of producers, a sample of the producers/ production sites registered in a producers group/ multisite operation will be verified.

The D2 scheme is not applicable to Food Processing. In case of multisite food companies, all production sites must be audited to be included in the certificate.

The sample is taken with regard to the following principles.

D.6.5.1 Sampling for initial verification:

- (a) The square root (SQR) of the total number of farmers/ production sites, approximated by the higher value, shall be sampled and assessed for first certification
- (b) The sample shall be representative of all the products “families”/ processes included in the scope of certification and the number of samples for each product/ process must be equally balanced.
- (c) In case of small groups of producers/ production sites, at least one sample for each product/ process in the scope of certification must be verified, even if the final sample is larger than the SQR of the group.
- (d) The same producer/ production site can be sampled for more than one product/ process.

D.6.5.2 Sampling for surveillance verification

- (a) The Square root of the total number of farmers/ production sites multiplied by 0.6, approximated by the higher value, shall be sampled and assessed for surveillance verification
- (b) At least one of the products/ processes included in the scope of certification shall be in harvest (end of cycle, process in place). If more products are on-site, the number of samples for each product must be equally balanced.
- (c) The products/ processes not in harvest or not present at the moment of the surveillance audit must be verified for compliance by evaluating evidences and records from the previous certified cycle.
- (d) The same Producer/ production site can be sampled for more than one product/ process.

D.6.5.3 Re-certification/ transfer of CB Verification:

- (a) The Square root of the total number of farmers/ production sites, approximated by the higher value, shall be sampled and assessed for re-certification or transfer from a different Certification Body.
- (b) The sample shall be representative of all the products/ processes present the day of the verification and included in the scope of certification. The number of samples for each product must be equally balanced.
- (c) At least 1 of the products present on-site must be in harvest (end of cycle, process in place) at the moment of the verification.
- (d) In case of small groups of producers/ production sites, at least one sample for each product/ process on-site must be verified, even if the final sample is larger than the SQR of the group.
- (e) The same Producer/ production site can be sampled for more than one product/ process.

D.7 Sampling and testing of products (where applicable)

The laboratory can be selected by both the CB and the Producer, among the ARSO qualified laboratory list, according to criteria such as kind of testing required, location, etc.

D.7.1 Sampling and testing

- (a) The analytical tests to be carried out on the products to be certified or any testing required to confirm compliance, are specific for the different ARS/AES Standards and are related to product-specific requirements.
- (b) Sampling and testing methodology are specifically indicated in the ARS/AES Standard in relation to the purposes of the sampling and the testing
- (c) Sampling may be carried out on-site, before the product is put on the market, or taken from the market, according to specific Standards requirements.
- (d) The list of the parameters and contaminants to be searched by the laboratory shall be prepared taking into consideration the Specific requests from the Standard of certification.

D.8 Verification results and evaluation of compliance

D.8.1 Continuous improvement criteria

ARS/AES Standards contain a continuous improvement system that requires certified legal entities (ex: farmers, processors, tourism operators) to gradually increase their compliance over four performance levels.

ACAP 1-2:2023

The specific binding level requirements (**Tiers**) will not change under any condition, including suspension or cancellation of a certificate, modification of scope or the change of a CB.

D.8.2 The Maturity Model of ACAP AES certification scheme

The Performance Tiers provide a framework for producers (Producers, processors, tourism operators, etc.) to improve their compliance levels in line with the continual improvement principles. These tiers provide opportunities for producers to invest gradually as well as for small-scale producers to engage in the certification process at affordable rates.

D.8.3 Management plan

The management plan, in this respect called the **Producer Sustainability Plan (PSP)** is an organizational tool for determining baseline performance levels, identifying a roadmap for continual improvement, and for achieving and documenting improvements in the environmental, social, and economic performance of the operation. The contents of the management plan:

- (a) Organized according to environmental, social, and economic factors.
- (b) Describes the operation's land, resources, and current practices, including baseline information on the status of Indicators relevant for the ARS/AES Standard to be applied.
- (c) Identifies critical criteria and indicators the producer must monitor to maintain or improve performance.
- (d) Records goals for meeting criteria and improving performance.
- (e) Documents strategies implemented, results observed, and outcomes achieved.
- (f) Identifies any unexpected outcomes or problems, as well as plans for mitigating or improving outcomes for the next cycle.

D.8.4 Classification of findings

Regarding scheme D, the criteria are applied for the final evaluation of compliance are the following:

- (a) Critical Non-Conformance. This is a Major non-conformance raised against a Required Indicator of a Critical Criteria.
- (b) The classification of other findings raised during the verification and related management is explained in ACAP 1-1 # 15.5

D.8.5 Critical criteria

Critical criteria cover the highest-priority and highest-risk environmental, social and labour issues. Single Producers and group administrators are required to comply with all applicable critical criteria at all time as a condition to grant or maintain the certificate.

Zero-tolerance critical criteria. Failing to comply with any of the Required Indicators related to the following zero-tolerance criteria results in the denial or the immediate cancellation of the certificate:

- (a) No destruction of High Conservation Value areas
- (b) No forced / slave labour
- (c) No mistreatment of workers
- (d) No sexual harassment

- (e) No discrimination
- (f) No worst forms of child labour

Critical criteria are identified with "**C**" in the different ARS/AES Standards.

D.8.6 Level of performance indicators

There are three categories of Indicators to be addressed and complied to achieve and maintain certification against one or more ARS/AES Standards:

- (a) **Required Indicators.** These indicators are critical for compliance and achievement of the certificate and include indicators that are linked to Critical criteria. Compliance to 100% of these indicators is required to complete (or maintain) the certification cycle. Required indicators change according to the different ARS/AES Standards and their number increases with increasing of the certification Tiers, from Bronze to Platinum. Required Indicators are identified with "**R**" in the different ARS/AES Standards.
 - (i) Non-Conformances raised against a Required indicator linked to a Critical Criteria must be scored as Critical non-conformance and cannot be closed with a Follow Up audit and results in the denial or the immediate cancellation of the certificate. It will not be possible to receive a new audit before six months. New audit must be carried out by the same
 - (ii) Non-Conformances raised against a Required indicator linked to other criteria must be scored as Major non-conformance and must be all closed with effective corrective action and Follow Up audit within 28 days (90 days for initial certification). Failure to complete effective corrective actions within the given timeframe will result in the denial or the suspension of the certificate until satisfactory corrective actions are completed.
- (b) **General Indicators.** These indicators are considered fundamental for compliance and achievement of the certificate. Compliance to minimum 80% of these indicators, applicable for the scope, is required to complete (or maintain) the certification cycle. General indicators change according to the different ARS/AES Standards and their number increases with increasing of the certification Tiers, from Bronze to Platinum. General Indicators are identified with "**G**" in the different ARS/AES Standards

Non-compliances raised against a General Indicator may be scored as Major or Minor non-conformity, or Observation, according to categorization given in ARS/AES 1.

- (i) Minor Non-Conformances must be closed with effective corrective action and Follow Up audit within 28 days (90 days for Initial certification) up to the minimum requirement of 80% of compliance for the specific tier of certification. For the remaining 20% a corrective action plan shall be proposed and approved by the Auditor within the same timeframe, corrective actions assessed during the next following audit. If at the end of the following audit some Minor non-conformance are not closed with corrective actions, these will be added to the new Minor non-conformances raised during the audit.
- (ii) Observations do not have influence on the final certification but must be taken into consideration and implemented for continual improvement
- (c) **Optional Indicators.** These indicators are considered for continual improvement. Compliance to minimum 20% of these indicators, applicable for the scope, is required to complete (or maintain) the certification cycle. Optional indicators change according to the different ARS/AES Standards and their number increases with increasing of the certification Tiers, from Bronze to Platinum. Optional Indicators are identified with "**O**" in the different ARS/AES Standards.

ACAP 1-2:2023

Non-compliances raised against an Optional Indicator may be scored as Minor non-conformity, or Observation, according to categorization given in ARS/AES 1.

- (i) Minor Non-Conformances must be all closed with effective corrective action and Follow Up audit within 28 days (90 days for Initial certification) up to the minimum requirement of 20% of compliance for the specific tier of certification. For the remaining 80% a corrective action plan shall be proposed and approved by the Auditor within the same timeframe, corrective actions must be completed before the next re-certification audit. If at the end of a following audit some Minor non-conformance are not closed with corrective actions, these will be added to the new Minor non-conformances raised during the audit.
- (ii) Observations do not have influence on the final certification but must be taken into consideration and implemented for continual improvement

Indicator	Compliance to Tier	Critical NC	Major NC	Minor NC	Observation
Required from Critical Criteria	100% the day of audit	Yes No corrective actions allowed Certificate cancelled Time for new audit >6 months	NO	NO	Yes Only for continual improvement
Required from other Criteria	100% with follow up	NO	Yes Corrective actions allowed within 28 days FU audit required	NO	Yes Only for continual improvement
General From all criteria	80% with follow up	NO	NO	Yes Corrective actions up to minimum 80% allowed within 28 days. FU audit required. Remaining 20% action plan 28 days FU next audit	Yes Only for continual improvement
Optional From all criteria	20% with follow up	NO	NO	Yes Corrective actions up to minimum 20% allowed within 28 days. FU audit required. Remaining 80% action plan 28 days FU next audit	Yes Only for continual improvement

D.8.7 Levels of performance (Tiers)

For the achievement of certification, there are four levels of performance, which are elaborated hereafter.

D.8.7.1 Bronze Tier

Minimum Entry Level: The Producer (Producer, processor, tourism operator, etc....) commits to engage in the process and develops a Producer Sustainability Plan (PSP) that identifies sustainability goals and strategies for achieving them.

In addition, 100% of Required indicators, at least 80% of General indicators and at least 20% of the Optional indicators required for the Bronze tier, must be complied with.

This certification is valid for a period of up to three years, subject to confirmation through annual surveillance verification. Re-certification at the entry level is possible for a maximum of 2 cycles (6 years) after which the entity must progress to a higher tier.

D.8.7.2 Silver Tier

The Producer (Producer, processor, tourism operators, etc.) demonstrates considerable progress in sustainability performance.

Indicators required for the Silver tier are additional to the one required for bronze tier. 100% of Required indicators, at least 80% of General and at least 20% of the Optional indicators for Silver Tier must be complied with.

Silver tier achievement can be claimed if performance is re-verified through annual surveillance, and recertified every three years for a maximum of 2 cycles (6 years) after which the entity must progress to a higher tier.

D.8.7.3 Gold Tier

The Producer (Producer, processor, tourism operators, etc....) demonstrates very substantial sustainability performance.

Indicators required for Gold Tier are additional to the one required for Silver Tier. 100% of Required indicators, and at least 80% of General Indicators for Gold Tier and at least 20% of the optional indicators must be complied with.

Gold tier achievement can be claimed indefinitely if performance is re-verified through annual surveillance, and recertified every three years.

D.8.7.4 Platinum Tier

The Producer (Producer, processor, tourism operators, etc.) demonstrates an outstanding level of sustainability performance.

Indicators required for Platinum Tier are additional to the one required for Gold Tier.

100% Required indicators and at least 80% of General indicators required for the platinum tier and at least 20% of the optional indicators must be complied with.

Platinum tier achievement can be claimed indefinitely as long as performance is re-verified through annual surveillance, and recertified every three years.

Tier	Required Indicators	General Indicators	Optional indicators
Bronze	100%	80%	20%
Silver	100%	80%	20%
Gold	100%	80%	20%
Platinum	100%	80%	20%

D.8.8 Additional performance criteria and rules

- (a) Possible new non-conformities against new criteria detected during surveillance audits or verification audits will be added to the original balance of Minor non-conformances still open from the previous audit/s.
- (b) In the case of group administrators with smallholder members, performance criteria is applied to each single sample.

ACAP 1-2:2023

- (c) A maximum of 20% of the audited sample of smallholders may fail on reaching 80% of General Indicators and 20% of Optional Indicators at Follow under the condition that these remaining Minor nonconformities are corrected no more than 12 months after the preceding audit.

D.9 The ACAP AES certificate

D.9.1 Validity of the certificate

The certificate has a 36 months' validity, starting with the date of issue.

The expiry date of the certificate is fixed, but the validity of the certificate may be extended in the following cases, without modification to the original certificate issue date:

- (a) Up to a maximum of six months in the event of a force majeure condition.
- (b) Up to a maximum of three months, with a justified technical motivation (example: seasonal productions or processes)

D.9.2 Maintaining the certificate

To maintain its certified status, the certified organization shall pass two surveillance audits after a certification audit.

The surveillance audit shall take place within 4 months before and 2 after the date the certificate was issued. In case of audit done after the expiring date of the certificate, an extension to the validity of the certificate up to 3 months will be required.

A certified organization may be subject to investigation audits at any time.

D.9.3 Modifying the scope of the certificate

- (a) The certified organization may request to change the certificate scope at any time to increase or reduce the productive area, or increase or reduce the number or composition of member farms.
- (b) Certified organizations requesting to include new crop activities or new livestock species within the scope of a certificate shall be subject to a scope expansion audit.
- (c) A certified organization may increase its production area or its number of member farms by up to 10%, or add up to 10% of new member farms, without being subject to a scope expansion audit, certification audit or surveillance audit. If the increase in area or number of member farms exceeds 10%, or if the group has more than 10% of new member farms, then the certified organization shall be subject to a scope expansion audit.
- (d) The certified organization may decide to increase its scope through a certification audit or surveillance audit. If this is the case, additional time is added to the audit, if required.
- (e) Modifications to the scope of the certificate will not change the expiration date of the certificate or the organization's baseline year.

D.10 Compensation for announced minor destruction of natural ecosystems

When destruction of natural ecosystems - but never for High Conservation Value areas - up to 1% of the total certified land area is planned by a certified farm manager or group administrator, it will not be a cause for certificate cancellation provided that the responsible CB was informed beforehand and authorized this minor destruction under the following conditions:

- (a) Destruction of natural ecosystems will take place only for the reason of installing new farm infrastructure or repairing previously existing farm infrastructure (roads, irrigation infrastructure, including pumping facilities, channels, ponds, reservoirs, dams, and impoundments),

permanently installed machinery, and facilities for washing, processing, or packing) or for smallholder farms for the purpose of planting food crops;

- (b) Applicable law is complied with.

D.10.1 Reinstatement of the certificate

To reinstate a certificate that was cancelled, the organization shall submit an application for a new certification.

D.10.2 Compensation for unannounced minor destruction of natural ecosystems

Minor destruction of natural ecosystems - but never for High Conservation Value areas - that have inadvertently been conducted by a certified organization or member farm of a certified group administrator or certified group administrator is permitted only under the following conditions:

- (a) The destruction event is the first one during the organization's certification history;
- (b) The converted area is located outside of High Conservation Value areas, protected areas, or land that is illegal to convert;
- (c) A plan with objectives, quantitative targets and parameters, time-bound management actions, resources and responsible personnel for the required restoration is prepared by an ecological restoration specialist and submitted for approval within three months of the date of destruction, including the following requirements:
 - (i) The destruction is mitigated through restoration in the or close to the converted area or by setting-aside for conservation at least a 1:1 ratio of ecologically comparable areas;
 - (ii) The converted natural ecosystem area is taken out of agricultural production and designated with the aim to restore the area to its former natural condition;
 - (iii) On larger farms, destruction of natural ecosystems of up to 2% of the farm area or 50 hectares (whichever is less) is only permitted if such destruction is compensated by at least a 1:1 ratio of ecologically comparable areas, as specified in a time-bound plan prepared by a qualified professional;
 - (iv) Destruction of up to 10% of the farm area or 1 hectare (whichever is less) is permitted without the need for compensation. In the case of smallholder groups, these thresholds apply at the level of each member farm.

D.10.3 Child labour remediation

Farms shall provide evidence of remedial actions for child labourers and his or her family following their removal from farm employment:

- (a) Timely access to medical services;
- (b) Timely access to psychological and rehabilitative services, as indicated by the child's condition;
- (c) Facilitation of the child's entrance and integration into local school until the legally permitted school-leaving age; and

Hiring of the child's immediate or extended family member, if available. If no such family member is available for hiring, the farm management or group administrator pays the child's family a wage support no less than the removed child's wages until the child reaches the legal school-leaving age or age 15, whichever is higher.

Annex E (informative)

Scheme E: Sustainable harvesting of wild botanical species for African traditional medicine

This standard covers certification of produce of medicinal plants both from *Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and Good Collection Practices (GCP)* in the wild. Producers/collectors can achieve certification under any one of the two options described in this document.

The cultivation of medicinal plants is included in the ACAP Certification Scheme A and both A1 and A2 schemes are applicable.

The purpose of this standard is to ensure an objective assessment and certification of the medicinal plant collected in the wild and promote uniformity in its operation for the collector seeking certification.

- (1) ARS 950:2016, *African Traditional Medicine — Terms and terminology*
- (2) ARS 951:2016, *African Traditional Medicine — Good manufacturing practices (GMP) for herbal medicines*
- (3) ARS 952:2016, *African Traditional Medicine — Guidelines on good agricultural and collection practices (GACP) for medicinal plants*
- (4) ARS 953:2016, *African Traditional Medicine — Certification schemes for medicinal plant produce*
- (5) ARS 954:2016, *Minimum requirements for registration of traditional medicines*
- (6) ARS 955:2016, *African Traditional Medicine — Technical guidelines for safety, efficacy and quality of raw materials and herbal medicines*
- (7) ARS 956-1:2016, *African Traditional Medicine — Medicinal plant standards — Aloe vera L. Burm.f.*
- (8) ARS 956-2:2016, *African Traditional Medicine — Medicinal plant standards — Ambrosia maritima L.*
- (9) ARS 956-3:2016, *African Traditional Medicine — Medicinal plant standards — Urtica dioica L.*
- (10) ARS 956-4:2016, *African Traditional Medicine — Medicinal plant standards — Calotropis procera (Ait) R. Br.*

E.1 Registration data

In addition to the requirements in ACAP 1-1, specific information is required for Certification Scheme E.

E.1.1 Detail of certified production

E.1.1.1 Wild crops

- (a) Name of wild species to be collected
- (b) Expected quantity collected (tons)
- (c) Identification of area for collection (map of area)
- (d) Postharvest activities and address of postharvest unit.

- (e) Number and identification of production sites (map of sites and site location information)
- (f) Legal authorization for collection of wild species

E.1.1.2 Additional information for groups of collectors

- (a) Name of wild species collected by each collector
- (b) Area of collection of each collector (map of area)
- (c) Expected quantity collected by each collector

E.2 ACAP Certification Scheme E scopes of certification

E.2.1 Wild species

Products included in the Scheme E come from wild botanical species and are collected from the wild.

- (a) Wild harvest of the identified species in a specified quantity and from a specified area must be carried out according to Legislation and evidence must be provided as a first step of the certification process.
- (b) A clear identification of the species and tools for visual identification shall be prepared and evidence of approval by a qualified entity or expert must be available
- (c) Evidence of qualification of the collectors must be available, as well as a program for training.

E.2.2 Processes

E.2.2.1 Production cycle

- (a) As a general concept, the ACAP certification scheme E requires a different preparation, based on very sensitive sustainability rules based on conservation of wild species and use of correct harvesting techniques variable within different Species.
- (b) The preliminary preparation of guidelines and instructions specific for each wild Species harvested is required in order to avoid inappropriate actions that may lead to damage of the wild biodiversity or damage to the final users (consumers). Guidelines must be approved by a qualified entity or qualified expert.
- (c) Demonstration of qualification of the personnel involved in collection and selection of the wild crops is required. A program for continual qualification improvement and update shall be provided.
- (d) The production cycle is the growing cycle of the plant in the wild, in the different environmental and climate conditions.

E.2.2.2 Harvesting process

- (a) Harvest is the core of the process to be certified. For this reason, it cannot be excluded
- (b) If harvest is subcontracted, the subcontractor must follow the same rules of qualification as the collectors of the certified company and will be audited for certification.

E.2.2.3 Post-harvest produce handling.

- (a) Produce handling includes any type of post-harvest handling of products that is still under the legal responsibility of the same producer. (ex: storage, drying, trimming, washing or any other

ACAP 1-2:2023

handling where the product may have physical contact with other materials or substances but does but change its main aspect and nature).

- (b) Medicinal plants processing is not considered a post-harvest activity and, where applicable, it is covered under Certification Scheme B.
- (c) Produce handling, including description of processes done, shall be declared during registration and indicated on the certificate.
- (d) Produce handling shall always be included if the product belongs to the producer during handling (by the producer or subcontractor), if the ARSO Mark in order to receive a licence for the ARSO Mark.

E.2.2.4 Sub-contractors and process outsourcing

- (a) For ACAP Certification Scheme E, sub-contractors of harvest and produce handling are considered at the same level as part of the Company and must comply with the same Standard Rules.
- (b) Sub-contractors for harvesting shall be audited for certification.
- (c) Sub-contractors for produce handling shall be audited for certification. Exception is dome if the sub-contractor is already ACAP certified for Scheme E.
- (d) Any other sub-contractor will be under the responsibility and control of the certified Producer. On a case-by-case base, the Certification Body has the right to audit any other sub-contractor, within the scope of the Standard's requirements covered by the sub-contractor.

E.3 ACAP Certification Scheme E Specific Normative Documents

The Normative documents presented in this chapter (and any additional document or integration that will be identified as "Normative for certification scheme E") are specific for certification scheme E and relevant to all Parties involved in the ACAP certification process.

The specific documents are represented by:

- (a) ACAP Standard, technical normative document to be certified within Scheme E: Traditional African Medicine Standard.
- (b) ACAP check list for assessment for good collection practices (GCP) for medicinal plant produce
- (c) ACAP QMS check list for group or collectors operating for the same legal entity



E.4 Quality management system for Scheme E

The QMS designed for the ARSO ACAP certification schemes contains elements specific for the scope of the ACAP certification.

- (a) The requirements, as well as the criteria for compliance, for the QMS are described in the ACAP QMS check list for group of collectors of wild species operating for the same certified legal entity.

E.5 Assessment process

The specific processes for certification of medicinal plant produce are provided in the following documents:

ACAP 5-1, *Certification scheme for medicinal plant produce — Part 5-1: General requirements*

ACAP 5-2, *Certification scheme for medicinal plant produce — Part 5-2: Good collection practices (GCP) for medicinal plant produce*

ACAP 5-3, *Certification scheme for medicinal plant produce — Part 5-3: Good agricultural practices (GAP) for medicinal plant produce*

ACAP 5-4, *Certification scheme for medicinal plant produce — Part 5-4: Good manufacturing practices (GMP) for herbal medicines*

In addition to ACAP 1-1, the following requirements apply for the certification of the ARSO Certification scheme E.

E.5.1 Self-assessment and Internal Audit and verification

E.5.1.1 Self-assessment

It is required for ARSO certification Scheme E.

During self-assessment, all deviations and not applicable requirements must be recorded and corrective actions implemented.

No specific requirements are in place for the qualification of the assessor.

E.5.1.2 Internal audit and verification.

It is required when more than one collector of wild crops is involved in the certification scope.

There are 2 different requirements of qualification for self-verification of the QMS and verification of the collection and post-harvest activities, according to the specific ARSO Standard.

E.5.1.2.1 Internal Auditor. The internal auditor is qualified for both verification of QMS of multi-collector's organization and for the technical verification of collection and post-harvest operation. The following requirements shall be complied for qualification of the Internal Auditor:

- (i) Minimum a High school diploma.
- (ii) Documented official training on auditing techniques according to ISO 19011 with focus on ISO 9001 auditing standard of minimum 16 hours.
- (iii) Demonstrated competence in wild medicine plants. This competence can be from education, courses or demonstrated practical experience of minimum 2 years.
- (iv) Documented qualified Course in food hygiene and HACCP.

E.5.1.2.2 Internal verifier. Can carry out only the internal technical verification of wild plants collection and post-harvest, according to the requirements included in the ACAP check list for assessment for good collection practices (GCP) for medicinal plant produce . Can work in team with the internal Auditor for verification of the producers of a group.

- (i) High school diploma

ACAP 1-2:2023

- (ii) Demonstrated competence in wild medicine plants. This competence can be from education, courses or demonstrated practical experience of minimum 2 years.
- (iii) Documented qualified Course in food hygiene and HACCP.
- (iv) 1 verification as observer and 1 verification as verifier witnessed by a qualified Auditor

E.5.2 Independent external verification

E.5.2.1 Certification Body

For the certification of the ARSO Certification Scheme E, the certification Body must be approved for the scope. Approved CBs are listed in the ARSO website

E.5.2.2 Laboratory

For testing and analytical verification of compliance for the ARSO Certification Scheme E, the Laboratory shall be approved for the specific tests and methodologies required by the specific standards (technical specification) to be certified. Approved Laboratories, with the detail of the approved tests and methods are listed in the ARSO website.

E.5.2.3 Qualification of assessors

Also for external verifications, two different kind of assessors are identified:

E.5.2.3.1 Verifier for Scope E

- (a) **Task**
- (a) Can carry out only the technical verification of wild plants collection and post-harvest, according to the requirements included in the ACAP check list for assessment for good collection practices (GCP) for medicinal plant produce.
- (b) Can work in team with the internal Auditor for verification of the producers of a group.
- (c) Qualification. The following requirements shall be complied for qualification of the Verifier:
 - (i) High school diploma with agricultural, natural science or similar applicable focus, or
 - (ii) High School diploma and post high school courses with focus agriculture, natural science or similar applicable focus.
 - (iii) Documented official training on auditing techniques according to ISO 19011 with focus on ISO 9001 auditing standard of minimum 16 hours.
 - (iv) Demonstrated competence in wild medicinal plants. This competence can be from education, courses or demonstrated practical experience of minimum 2 years.
 - (v) Documented qualified Course in food hygiene and HACCP of minimum 2 days' duration.
 - (vi) 1 verification as observer and 2 verification as verifier witnessed by a qualified Auditor or Verifier

E.5.2.3.2 Auditor for scope E

- (a) **Task:** Can carry out Audits of the QMS and post-harvest activity.

- (b) Can carry out the technical verification of the wild plants collection, according to the requirements included in the ACAP check list for assessment for good collection practices (GCP) for medicinal plant produce.

In team, covers the task of team leader and/or lead auditor.

- (c) **Qualification:** The following requirements shall be complied for qualification of the Auditor:
- (i) Post-High school diploma including courses pertinent with the major scope of certification (agriculture, natural science, botany, other similar scopes)
 - (ii) Documented official training on auditing techniques according to ISO 19011 with focus on ISO 9001 auditing standard of minimum 36 hours.
 - (iii) Demonstrated competence in wild medicinal plants. This competence can be from education, courses or demonstrated practical experience of minimum 2 years.
 - (iv) Documented qualified Course on food hygiene and HACCP of minimum 2 days duration
 - (v) The technical competence on wild collection can be complementary covered by a sector expert, working in together with the auditor.
 - (vi) 1 verification as observer and 2 verification as auditor on a complete audit (QMS plus Production), witnessed by a qualified Auditor

E.5.2.4 Initial Certification

The initial certification is carried in 2 steps, at the first ARSO Certification for the specific Scheme of certification. The change of certification Body does not require a new initial certification. The initial Certification is composed by 2 phases:

E.5.2.4.1 Documental review

This phase regards the desk verification of the documentation related to internal operative manuals and guidelines on collection of the wild species in object. It also includes verification of legislation requirements, required authorization for collection, internal QMS procedures and documentation on qualification of involved personnel, including sub-contractors, where applicable.

E.5.2.4.2 Initial verification

It represents the verification carried out by the CB for final certification. It is carried out on-site during practical collection, this verification shall follow the documental review. It can be consecutive or carried out with a maximum timeframe of 3 months from the documental review. In case of exceedance of the timeframe, the review must be repeated.

E.5.2.5 Periodical Surveillance Verification

According to the duration of 3 years of the certification cycle, there are 2 surveillance verifications in one certification cycle.

E.5.2.6 Re-certification Verification

The re-certification verification is carried out at the end of the third cycle of certification.

E.5.2.7 Verification timing: Initial certification verification

The verification shall be planned when the production cycle is completed and evidences can be collected from both visual and documental verification:

ACAP 1-2:2023

Crops

Harvest is in place the day of verification.

In case of groups of collectors operating for the same legal entity, at least 75% of the sampled collectors must be harvesting the day of the verification.

Harvest can be assessed on at least one wild species representative of the following groups: perennials, herbs, etc.

If post-harvest activity is included in the scope of certification, it must be in place the day of verification.

E.5.2.8 Sampling of collectors of wild species

In case of certification scheme E, where a group of collectors is operating under the same certified legal entity, a sample of the collectors registered in the group will be verified. The sample is taken with regard to the following principles.

E.5.2.8.1 Initial verification

- (a) The Square root of the total number of collectors, approximated by the higher value, shall be sampled and assessed for first certification
- (b) The sample shall be representative collection of all the groups of species included in the scope of certification and the number of samples within species must be equally balanced.
- (c) At least 30% of the products must be in harvesting period at the moment of the verification.
- (d) The same Collector can be sampled for more than one product

E.5.2.8.2 Surveillance verification

- (a) The Square root of the total number of collectors multiplied by 0.6, approximated by the higher value, shall be sampled and assessed for surveillance verification
- (b) At least one of the Species included in the scope of certification shall be in harvest or at end of cycle. If more products are on-site, the number of samples for each group of species must be equally balanced.
- (c) The products not in harvest or not present at the moment of the surveillance audit must be verified for compliance by evaluating evidences and records from the previous certified cycle.
- (d) The same Collector can be sampled for more than one product.

E.5.2.8.3 Re-certification/ transfer of CB Verification

- (a) The Square root of the total number of Collectors, approximated by the higher value, shall be sampled and assessed for re-certification
- (b) The sample shall be representative of all the groups of Species present the day of the verification and included in the scope of certification. The number of samples for each product must be equally balanced.
- (c) At least 1 of the species in the certification scope must be in harvest (end of production cycle) at the moment of the verification.
- (d) In case of small groups of collectors, at least one sample for each product on-site must be verified, even if the final sample is larger than the SQR of the group.
- (e) The same Producer can be sampled for more than one product.

E.6 Sampling and testing of products (where applicable)

The laboratory can be selected by both the CB and the Producer, among the ARSO qualified laboratory list, according to criteria such as kind of testing required, location, etc.

E.6.1 Sampling and testing

- (a) The analytical tests to be carried out on the products to be certified or any testing required to confirm compliance, are specific for the different ACAP Standards and they related to product-specific requirements.
- (b) Sampling and testing methodology are specifically indicated in the ACAP Standard in relation to the purposes of the sampling and testing
- (c) Sampling may be carried out at harvest time, before the product is put on the market, or taken from the market, on a case-by-case base.
- (d) The list of the parameters and also contaminant to be searched by the laboratory shall be prepared taking into consideration the Specific requests from the Standard of certification.

E.7 Verification results and evaluation of compliance

The classification of findings raised during the verification and related management is explained in ACAP 1-1.

With regard to scheme E, the following criteria are applied for the final evaluation of compliance.

E.7.1 Major Non-Conformance

- (a) Initial (First certification) verification: All Major NC must be closed with effective corrective actions before the release of the certificate
- (b) Surveillance and Re-certification verifications: All Major NC must be closed with effective corrective actions before the release of the certificate

E.7.2 Minor non-conformance

- (a) Initial (First certification) verification: It is allowed for the 20% of the Minor NC raised during Initial audit to be closed within the next surveillance audit, upon presentation and approval of a corrective action plan.

The remaining 80% of the Minor NC raised shall be closed within the given time

- (b) Surveillance and Re-certification verifications: It is allowed for the 10% of the Minor NC raised during Initial audit to be closed within the next surveillance audit, upon presentation and approval of a corrective action plan.
- (c) The remaining 90% of the Minor NC raised shall be closed within the given time

Annex F (informative)

Scheme F: Sustainable wild catch fisheries and aquaculture of marine and freshwater species

F.1 Introduction

This certification scheme is applicable to wild catch of fish and other sea water/ fresh water species and marine and freshwater inland and marine aquaculture. It can be operated by single fishery units of by a fishery fleet willing to certify their products according to the African Standards included in African Conformity Assessment Programme.

F.2 Reference standards

F.2.1 African reference standards

F.2.1.1 The African Standard ARS/AES 02:2014, *Fisheries — Sustainability and eco-labelling — Requirements* has the following principles:

Principle 1: Legal compliance

Principle 2: Respect human rights

Principle 3: Respect labour rights

Principle 4: Maintain fisheries resources and rebuild depleted fish stocks

Principle 5: Maintain ecosystems integrity

Principle 6: Contribute to the mitigation and adaptation to the detrimental effects of climate change.

Principle 7: Responsible waste management

Principle 8: Efficient use of resources

F.2.1.2 ARS AES 5:2018, *Aquaculture — African catfish — Sustainability and ecolabelling — Requirements* and ARS AES 6:2018, *Aquaculture — Tilapia — Sustainability and ecolabelling — Requirements* have the following core principles:

Principle 1: Comply with all applicable laws and regulations

Principle 2: Responsible environmental management

Principle 3: Conserve water resources

Principle 4: Conserve species biodiversity and wild populations

Principle 5: Use resources responsibly

Principle 6: Environmentally responsible fish biosecurity and welfare

Principle 7: Be socially responsible

Principle 8: Economically sustainable aquaculture farm

F.2.1.3 Other African standards

ARS 1106:2018, *Tilapia production aquaculture farms — Good aquacultural practices*

ARS 1107:2018, *Freshwater aquatic animal production farms — Good aquaculture practices*

ISO 16488:2015, *Marine finfish farms — Open net cage — Design and operation*

WD-ARS 1866:2022, *Abalone — Ecolabelling and sustainability — Requirements*

WD-ARS 1867:2022, *Shrimp/prawns — Ecolabelling and sustainability — Requirements*

WD-ARS 1868:2022, *Tropical marine fin fish — Ecolabelling and sustainability — Requirements*

WD-ARS 1890:2022, *Seaweed — Ecolabelling and sustainability — Requirements*

WD-ARS 1894:2022, *Freshwater trout aquaculture — Ecolabelling and sustainability — Requirements*

WD-ARS 1944:2022, *Fish breeding and hatchery management (fish seed certification) — Ecolabelling and sustainability — Requirements*

F.2.2 Other reference documentation

ISO 19011, *Guidelines for auditing management systems*

ISO/IEC 17065, *Requirements for organisations that certify products, processes and services*

ISO/IEC 17011, *Conformity assessment — general requirements for accreditation bodies assessing and accrediting conformity assessment bodies*

F.3 Verification results and evaluation of compliance

F.3.1 Continuous improvement criteria

ARS/AES Standards contain a continuous improvement system that requires certified legal entities to gradually increase their compliance over four performance levels.

The specific binding level requirements (**Tiers**) will not change under any condition, including suspension or cancellation of a certificate, modification of scope or the change of a CB.

F.3.2 The Maturity Model of ACAP AES certification scheme

The Performance Tiers provide a framework for producers to improve their compliance levels in line with the continual improvement principles. These tiers provide opportunities for producers to invest gradually as well as for small-scale producers to engage in the certification process at affordable rates.

D.8.3 Management plan

The management plan, in this respect called the **Producer Sustainability Plan (PSP)** is an organizational tool for determining baseline performance levels, identifying a roadmap for continual improvement, and for achieving and documenting improvements in the environmental, social, and economic performance of the operation. The contents of the management plan:

- (a) Organized according to environmental, social, and economic factors.
- (b) Describes the operation's land, resources, and current practices, including baseline information on the status of indicators relevant for the ARS/AES Standard to be applied.
- (c) Identifies critical criteria and indicators the producer must monitor to maintain or improve performance.
- (d) Records goals for meeting criteria and improving performance.
- (e) Documents strategies implemented, results observed, and outcomes achieved.
- (f) Identifies any unexpected outcomes or problems, as well as plans for mitigating or improving outcomes for the next cycle.

F.3.4 Classification of findings

Regarding scheme F, the criteria are applied for the final evaluation of compliance are the following:

- (a) Critical Non-Conformance. This is a Major non-conformance raised against a Required Indicator of a Critical Criteria.
- (b) The classification of other findings raised during the verification and related management is explained in ACAP 1-1 # 15.5

F.3.5 Critical criteria

Critical criteria cover the highest-priority and highest-risk environmental, social and labour issues. Single Producers and group administrators are required to comply with all applicable critical criteria at all time as a condition to grant or maintain the certificate.

ACAP 1-2:2023

Zero-tolerance critical criteria. Failing to comply with any of the Required Indicators related to the following zero-tolerance criteria results in the denial or the immediate cancellation of the certificate:

- (a) No destruction of High Conservation Value areas
- (b) No forced / slave labour
- (c) No mistreatment of workers
- (d) No sexual harassment
- (e) No discrimination
- (f) No worst forms of child labour

Critical criteria are identified with "**C**" in the different ARS/AES Standards.

F.3.6 Level of performance indicators

There are three categories of Indicators to be addressed and complied to achieve and maintain certification against one or more ARS/AES Standards:

- (a) **Required Indicators.** These indicators are critical for compliance and achievement of the certificate and include indicators that are linked to Critical criteria. Compliance to 100% of these indicators is required to complete (or maintain) the certification cycle. Required indicators change according to the different ARS/AES Standards and their number increases with increasing of the certification tiers, from Bronze to Platinum. Required Indicators are identified with "**R**" in the different ARS/AES Standards.
 - (i) Non-Conformances raised against a Required indicator linked to a Critical Criteria must be scored as Critical non-conformance and cannot be closed with a Follow Up audit and results in the denial or the immediate cancellation of the certificate. It will not be possible to receive a new audit before six months. New audit must be carried out by the same audit team.
 - (ii) Non-Conformances raised against a Required indicator linked to other criteria must be scored as Major non-conformance and must be all closed with effective corrective action and Follow Up audit within 28 days (90 days for initial certification). Failure to complete effective corrective actions within the given timeframe will result in the denial or the suspension of the certificate until satisfactory corrective actions are completed. Considering the complexity of possible missing data to be retrieved, the time interval allowed for the correction of non-conformities is extended to 6 months.
- (b) **General Indicators.** These indicators are considered fundamental for compliance and achievement of the certificate. Compliance to minimum 80% of these indicators, applicable for the scope, is required to complete (or maintain) the certification cycle. General indicators change according to the different ARS/AES Standards and their number increases with increasing of the certification tiers, from Bronze to Platinum. General Indicators are identified with "**G**" in the different ARS/AES Standards
 - (i) Non-compliances raised against a General Indicator may be scored as Major or Minor non-conformity, or Observation.
 - (ii) Minor Non-Conformances must be closed with effective corrective action and Follow Up audit within 28 days (90 days for Initial certification) up to the minimum requirement of 80% of compliance for the specific tier of certification. For the remaining 20% a corrective action plan shall be proposed and approved by the Auditor within the same timeframe, corrective actions assessed during the next following audit. If at the end of the following audit some Minor non-conformance are not closed with corrective actions,

these will be added to the new Minor non-conformances raised during the audit. Each corrective action must be fully implemented within a year.

- (iii) Observations do not have influence on the final certification but must be taken into consideration and implemented for continual improvement.
- (c) **Optional Indicators.** These indicators are considered for continual improvement. Compliance to minimum 20% of these indicators, applicable for the scope, is required to complete (or maintain) the certification cycle. Optional indicators change according to the different ARS/AES Standards and their number increases with increasing of the certification tiers, from Bronze to Platinum. Optional Indicators are identified with “**O**” in the different ARS/AES Standards.
- (i) Non-compliances raised against an Optional Indicator may be scored as Minor non-conformity, or Observation, according to categorization given in respective standards.
 - (ii) Minor Non-Conformances must be all closed with effective corrective action and Follow Up audit within 28 days (90 days for Initial certification) up to the minimum requirement of 20% of compliance for the specific tier of certification. For the remaining 80% a corrective action plan shall be proposed and approved by the Auditor within the same timeframe, corrective actions must be completed before the next re-certification audit. However, during the inspection all the aspects concerning these requirements will be checked and each deficiency will be highlighted in the Auditing Report as a recommendation. The Company shall evaluate the possible necessity of implementing corrective measures and, within the following inspection, shall inform the Certification Body regarding the decisions taken and the corrective measures implemented.
 - (iii) Observations do not have influence on the final certification but must be taken into consideration and implemented for continual improvement

Indicator	Compliance to Tier	Critical NC	Major NC	Minor NC	Observation
Required from Critical Criteria	100% the day of audit	Yes No corrective actions allowed Certificate cancelled Time for new audit >6 months	NO	NO	Yes Only for continual improvement
Required from other Criteria	100% with follow up	NO	Yes Corrective actions allowed within 28 days FU audit required	NO	Yes Only for continual improvement
General From all criteria	80% with follow up	NO	NO	Yes Corrective actions up to minimum 80% allowed within 28 days. FU audit required. Remaining 20% action plan 28 days FU next audit	Yes Only for continual improvement
Optional From all criteria	20% with follow up	NO	NO	Yes Corrective actions up to minimum 20% allowed within 28 days. FU audit required. Remaining 80% action plan 28 days FU next audit	Yes Only for continual improvement

ACAP 1-2:2023

F.3.7 Levels of performance (Tiers)

For the achievement of certification, there are four levels of performance, which are elaborated hereafter.

F.3.7.1 Bronze Tier

Minimum Entry Level: The Producer commits to engage in the process and develops a Producer Sustainability Plan (PSP) that identifies sustainability goals and strategies for achieving them.

In addition, 100% of Required indicators, at least 60% of General indicators and at least 20% of the Optional indicators required for the Bronze tier, must be complied with.

This certification is valid for a period of up to three years, subject to confirmation through annual surveillance verification. Re-certification at the entry level is possible for a maximum of 2 cycles (6 years) after which the entity must progress to a higher tier.

F.3.7.2 Silver Tier

The Producer (Producer, processor, tourism operators, etc.) demonstrates considerable progress in sustainability performance.

Indicators required for the Silver tier are additional to the one required for bronze tier. 100% of Required indicators, at least 80% of General and at least 20% of the Optional indicators for Silver Tier must be complied with.

Silver tier achievement can be claimed if performance is re-verified through annual surveillance, and recertified every three years for a maximum of 2 cycles (6 years) after which the entity must progress to a higher tier.

F.3.7.3 Gold Tier

The Producer demonstrates very substantial sustainability performance.

Indicators required for Gold Tier are additional to the one required for Silver Tier. 100% of Required indicators, and at least 80% of General Indicators for Gold Tier and at least 20% of the optional indicators must be complied with.

Gold tier achievement can be claimed indefinitely if performance is re-verified through annual surveillance, and recertified every three years.

F.3.7.4 Platinum Tier

The Producer demonstrates an outstanding level of sustainability performance. Indicators required for Platinum Tier are additional to the one required for Gold Tier.

100% Required indicators and at least 80% of General indicators required for the platinum tier and at least 20% of the optional indicators must be complied with.

Platinum tier achievement can be claimed indefinitely as long as performance is re-verified through annual surveillance, and recertified every three years.

Tier	Required Indicators	General Indicators	Optional indicators
Bronze	100%	80%	20%
Silver	100%	80%	20%
Gold	100%	80%	20%
Platinum	100%	80%	20%

F.3.8 Additional performance criteria and rules

- (a) Possible new non-conformities against new criteria detected during surveillance audits or verification audits will be added to the original balance of Minor non-conformances still open from the previous audit/s.
- (b) In the case of group administrators with smallholder members, performance criteria is applied to each single sample.
- (c) A maximum of 20% of the audited sample of smallholders may fail on reaching 80% of General Indicators and 20% of Optional Indicators at Follow under the condition that these remaining Minor nonconformities are corrected no more than 12 months after the preceding audit.

F.4 Accreditation of CBs

Certification bodies wishing to be accredited for this scope shall apply to ARSO Central Secretariat. The ARSO Secretariat shall link the CBs to the Accreditation Body having jurisdiction in the area of operation of the CBs for assessment. The CBs shall achieve accreditation within twelve (12) months from notification. All CBs wishing to issue certifications within the ACAP schemes shall be accredited according to ISO/IEC 17065 and ACAP 1-3. ACAP certifications can only be issued by CBs that have been accredited by a national accreditation body member of AFRAC and the International Accreditation Forum (IAF), who have signed reciprocal recognition agreements for the accreditation scheme.

F.5 Certification of ARS/AES 2, aquaculture and chain of custody

F.5.1 Certification of ARS/AES 2 and aquaculture

The certification process consists of three main stages (See Figure 1):

- 1) Assessment;
- 2) Review;
- 3) Decision.

F.5.1.1 The assessment phase (1) consists of two phases:

- a) Preliminary phase (S1);
- b) Audit implementation phase (S2).

F.5.1.2 The preliminary phase (S1) aims to:

- a) Audit the documentation of the firm management system;
- b) Assess the firm site location and characteristics and exchange information with the firm's staff in order to assess whether the audit implementation phase, S2 can be started;
- c) Review the firm's understanding of the regulations' requirements, particularly related to the identification of key aspects, processes, objectives and functioning of the management system;
- d) Gather the necessary information about areas of interest of the management system, processes, and location(s) of the firm, including related legal aspects and compliance to the regulation (e.g. regarding quality, environment, legal aspects related to the firm's activity, associated risks, etc.);
- e) Review the allocation of resources for S2 and develop a plan with the firm for S2;
- f) Plan S2, create a detailed document of the firm's management system, activities, and sites;
- g) Check if the implementation of the management system indicates the firm is ready for the S2 audit.

A part of the S1 may take place at firm's head offices. Once S1 is completed with positive outcome, it is possible to proceed directly to S2.

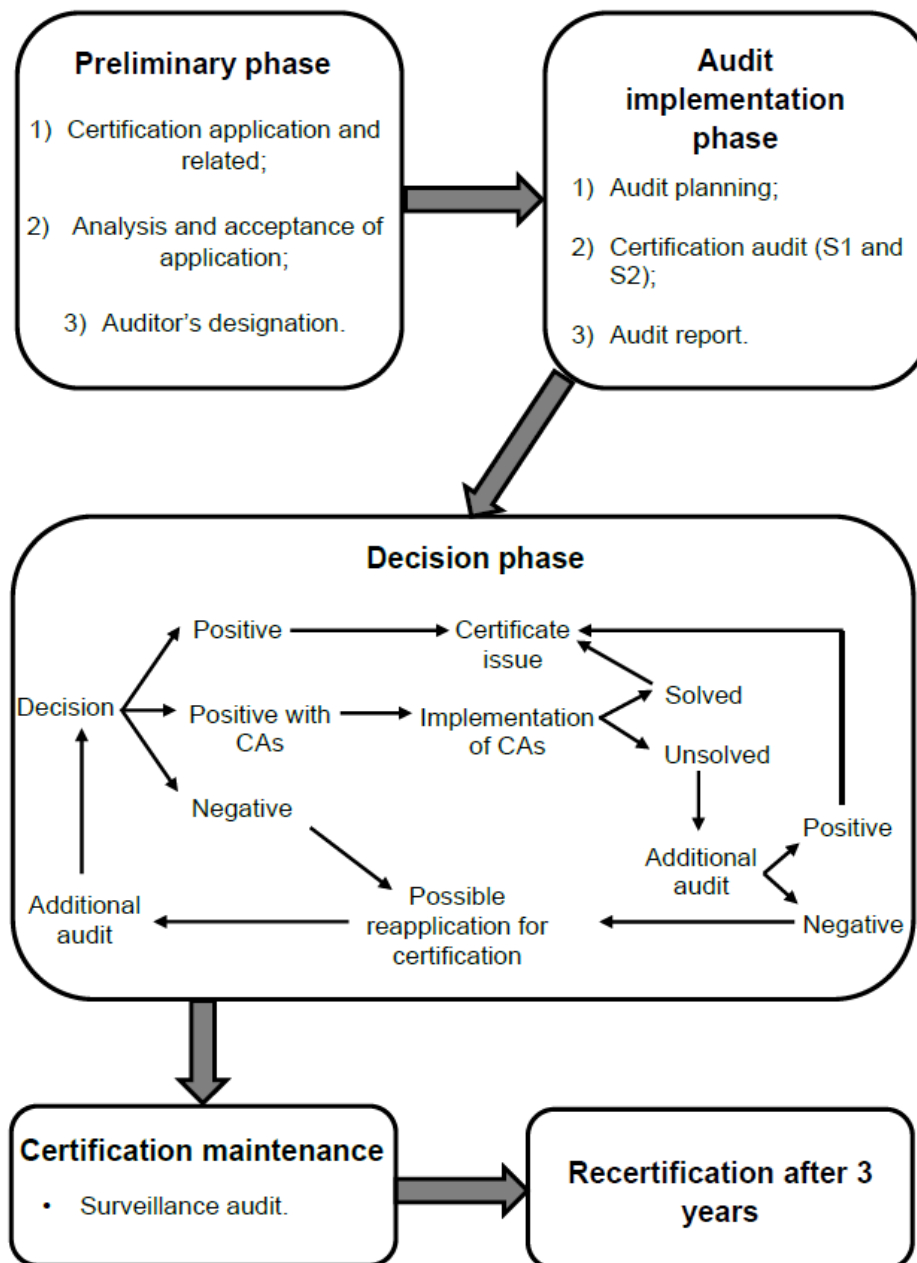


Figure F.1: Steps for issuance and maintenance of certification²

Audit implementation phase (S2):

During S2, the implementation and efficiency of the firm’s management system are assessed. This phase shall be carried out at the firm’s site(s) where the processes subjected to certification take place, and shall include an assessment of the following:

- a) Compliance of the management system to all the legislative requirements;
- b) Activities of monitoring, measuring, reporting and reviewing in accordance to the fundamental objectives and goals of the firm;
- c) The firm’s management system and its compliance against the legal requirements;
- d) The firm’s control of the processes;

² FOS 0001, Certification Procedure — FOS-Aqua, FOS-Wild, FOS-FF, FOS-FM, FOS-FO, FOS-O3 and CoC General requirements

- e) The firm's governance;
- f) Links between regulation requirements, policy, objectives and goals of the firm, all the applicable legal requirements, responsibilities, staff competences, activities, and procedures;
- g) Internal audits and review by the firm's management.

Audits are carried out according to the principles outlined in ISO 19011.

F.5.2 Certification of FOS- CoC

All companies processing certified products shall undergo a Chain of Custody (CoC) audit. The chain of custody standard applies to each step of the supply chain. In the case of companies and/or subcontractors (service providers) only trading, distributing or storing certified tamper-proof, packaged products, the audit is not necessary. On these products, FOS logo may be used according to clear reference to the certified producer.

The certification process for Chain of Custody (CoC) consists of three main stages detailed in F.5.1.

F.5.3 Subcontractors and suppliers

Subcontracted producers (*i.e.* fish farms, fishing vessels and processors) working on behalf of the firm and responsible for the production of the product to be certified, shall be included in the scope of certification.

Subcontracted activities that fall within the scope of the certification shall be declared during application, to allow the CBs to schedule audits at these premises. There shall be a contract between the firm and all subcontractors responsible for the production of the product to be certified, as the firm is responsible for the compliance of all subcontracting company to ACAP standards. CBs are responsible for verifying the existence of those contracts before starting the certification process.

Suppliers are independently certified producers or processors that own a valid ACAP certification. Suppliers do not need to be included in the scope of certification of a processor seeking ACAP CoC certification when they own a valid ACAP certification.

F.5.4 Certification of producer group

The certification of producer or processor group is authorized when:

- (1) All producers or processors in the group belong to the same legal entity, and/or
- (2) All group members implement a common management system (e.g. evaluation of escapes, farming practices, traceability of the batch, equipment maintenance, etc).

In the latter case, there shall be written contracts in force between each producer member and the legal entity of the producer group. The group shall undertake internal audits of all members, covering all products under the certification scope to ensure compliance with the certification requirements. The internal audits shall include minimum one internal audit of the management system and of one internal audit covering 50% of all group members per year. The group is the certificate holder once certified. If individual members of a producer or processor group leave the group, the certificate is not valid for that member, and its products cannot carry the label anymore.

New producers may be added to a certificate in effect. If it corresponds to 10% or less, this addition can be done with an internal audit. It is the responsibility of the certificate holder to update the CB and ARSO on any addition or change of group members. The newly added producers shall be audited during the subsequent audit. If it corresponds to more than 10%, the audit shall be carried out by a CB.

The CB does not inspect all producers or production sites, but just a sample. Hence, the CB shall assess whether the internal controls of the group are appropriate.

ACAP 1-2:2023

F.5.5 Non-conformities and corrective actions

From the date of the onsite audit, the CB shall produce the audit report within 15 working days. Non-conformities (NCs) detected during the audit shall be reported by the auditor to the firm and to ARSO. The firm is responsible to address and solve all NCs detected during the audit before the issue of the certification.

- **In the case of Major NCs:** The company requesting the certification shall be 100% compliant with essential requirements to be recommended for certification by the certification body. The certificate cannot be granted if the company has a major NC that is not closed.
- **In the case of Minor NCs:** To be recommended for certification by the certification body, the company shall:
 - (a) **Elaborate a corrective action plan to come into compliance with all important requirements:** within maximum three weeks from the date of assessment of the NCs, the company shall submit a proposal to carry out the corrective actions to the satisfaction of the certification body. In the proposal, the company shall include the timeframe for the implementation of each corrective action, considering that all minor NCs must be closed before the surveillance audit. The proposal shall be analysed by the certification body regarding its consistency and feasibility. If accepted, the certificate can be granted.
 - (b) **Resolve all minor NCs reported in the corrective action plan which are verified in the surveillance audit:** the company must have complied with the approved proposal. If the approved proposal has not been fully implemented, the certificate is suspended until the resolution of any remaining minor NCs.

The firm shall plan and implement corrective actions (CAs) in the appropriate timeframe.

CBs are responsible for the communication of the NCs, for their implementation within the appropriate timeframe, and for their verification and approval. The auditor shall report any NCs in the audit report together with evidence of non-compliance. The CAs are considered completed for the purpose of certification only when their implementation is verified and approved by the auditor.

The CB shall report non-conformities according to the latest ACAP CAR template and related evidence of CA implementation together with the audit report to ARSO.

F.5.6 Decision

The CB shall make the decision of granting a certification within a maximum of 30 working days after closure of any outstanding NCs. The decision is based on the amount and type of NCs recorded, if any, during the audit, and on any other relevant information given. The requirement for firms to solve NCs before gaining certification depends on the level of the NC.

ARSO Secretariat shall be informed of audit outcomes alongside the complete audit report and a copy of any certificates.

F.5.7 Issue of certificates

The CBs issue the certificates, which are valid for three years and shall include the following minimum information:

- ARSO logo;
- Accreditation Body Logo;
- The name and address of the company;

- The address of ARSO;
- The name and address of the CB;
- The certified sites and/or list of certified vessels;
- The certification scheme with reference to the current standard version;
- The fishery subjected to certification, fishing method and fishing area for wild catch products, or the type of aquaculture production and farm sites for farmed products;
- In case CoC certificate, describe the audited process (e.g. farming, fishing, fish feed production, fish oil production, pre – processor, end processor, import, export, distribution, ...) and refer to products covered by certification;
- The certificate number;
- Date of issue;
- Date of expiry;
- Signature or other authorisation defined by the responsible person.

In addition, each issued certificate shall include information about the national accreditation body (including accreditation number and name of the AB and CB).

The validity of the certificate can be extended beyond three years for a maximum period of 60 days after the certificate's expiry date to allow for recertification. This maximum extension can only occur if there is a valid reason, which shall be reported by the CB and evaluated by ARSO Secretariat.

Valid reasons are here intended as:

- Lack of production (e.g. sanitary problem, closed fishing season, etc.);
- Geopolitical situations (e.g. civil wars, general strikes, etc.);
- Natural disasters (e.g. tsunami, earthquake, etc.);
- Evidence of absence of key people in the company related to the certification process.

F.5.8 Publication of the audit report

The CB shall produce an audit report using the checklist relative to the appropriate standard. It is the CB's responsibility to use the most updated version of the standards.

It is requested to specify in the audit report, section "Additional information", what type of audit is being conducted (initial, surveillance, additional or recertification) and, in the case of multi-site audits, specify also the method for calculation of places inspected.

The report shall be approved by the CB and sent to ARSO Secretariat once the certification process is concluded

Certification Body shall file full audit reports at its office and make these reports available to relevant parties upon request and specify in the contract with certified companies the possibility of excluding commercially sensitive information before making audit reports publicly available.

F.5.9 Use of ARSO ACAP logo

The ARSO ACAP logo can be used by the certificate owner on its own or together with other labels. Guidelines on the use of these logos are provided by ARSO.

ACAP 1-2:2023

F.5.10 Maintenance and renewal of certification

F.5.10.1 Surveillance audit

A surveillance audit shall be carried out by the CB to ensure certified companies maintain certification standards. The first surveillance audit shall be carried out within 12 months from the certificate issue. In the case of justified impediments (e.g. delayed fishing season), the CB may request for authorization to postpone surveillance audits for a maximum period of 90 days after the due date. Where possible and subject to fishery restrictions surveillance audits shall be carried out within 18 months from each recertification audit.

F.5.10.2 Recertification audit

Recertification audits shall be carried out at the end of the certificate's period of validity, *i.e.* three (3) years. The CB shall inspect the complete checklist (Essential/ Required, General and Optional requirements) of the applicable standard(s) during all audits.

Recertification audits are mainly focused on the NCs identified during the initial audit and on the CAs. Audits also review any additions to the management system, fishing boats or aquaculture sites previously not sampled. Audits shall follow the requirements of ISO 19011.

F.5.10.3 Unannounced audits

Unannounced audits come in addition to the initial, surveillance or recertification audits of the three-year certification cycle. Therefore, these are additional audits and shall be carried out without significant advance warning. The CB shall inform the firm staff with a maximum of two working days before the intended visit.

The CBs shall specify in the contract with certified companies the possibility of undergoing unannounced audits and that related costs shall be covered by the company subject to the audit. Annually, 3% of the companies certified by the CB in the previous year must undergo unannounced audits. This monitoring shall be carried out in a diversified manner, aiming to include at least one company certified according to each African standard. Audits shall follow the requirements of ISO 19011.

F.5.11 Certification suspension and cancellation

During a certification contract, the CB can suspend the firm's certification for the following reasons:

- a) A wrong or misleading use or advertisement of the certification by the company;
- b) The company refuses or hinders the audit activities;
- c) The company fails to meet the financial obligations defined by the contract with the CB;
- d) The auditor detects major NCs that the firms are not able to solve (e.g. stock status);
- e) The company fails to carry out any CAs following NCs detected by the CB;
- f) Unlicensed use of the ARSO logo or failure to pay the annual fee for the logo use.

The CB shall inform the firm about the time period within which the CAs shall be undertaken. In the event of a suspension of certification, ARSO Secretariat shall be notified.

A suspension can be revoked after an additional audit whose outcome provides evidence all NCs have been corrected. This shall take place within 90 days, otherwise the certification is revoked. The costs of the additional audit shall be covered by the firm. In the time period between the suspension of the certification and the cancellation of the suspension, the product will not be considered compliant to the African standards.

The revocation of certificate causes the immediate prohibition of the use of the certificate by the company and/or the withdrawal of all certificates of membership. The decision of revocation and the related reasons shall be communicated to the company and ARSO Secretariat.

The CB shall have clear procedures for receiving, processing and investigating complaints concerning and from certified companies, as well as appeals of non-compliances of certification decisions in relation to the standards valid at the time of the audit.

F.6 Minimum qualifications of auditing staff

F.6.1 Auditing staff for ARS/AES 2, aquaculture and chain of custody shall have the following minimum knowledge and experience:

- a) Knowledge of ACAP documentation related to the certification scheme under assessment, achieved through successful completion of a course officially recognised by ARSO Secretariat. The course shall include updated current best practices for fisheries and/or aquaculture.
- b) Knowledge of the ISO 19011 standard and proficiency in the related techniques and methodologies. Particularly, the CB shall ensure that the auditing staff complete a course on this subject of at least 8 hours.
- c) Knowledge of the processes related to the certification scheme under assessment and sufficient knowledge of the related products/services, including legal requirements.

These skills may be concentrated in one single auditor or they can be distributed among several staff members of the audit team.

- d) A high school diploma or equivalent is necessary and for the following certification criteria are required:
 - For aquaculture: minimum one-year work experience in the technical or production department of an aquaculture company;
 - For wild capture fisheries: minimum one-year work experience in the technical or production department of a fishing company or a seafood processing company;
 - For sustainable fish feed, fishmeal, fish oil: minimum two years of work experience in the food industry.

Alternatively, the auditing staff shall have one of the following university degrees: Biology, Marine Biology, Chemistry, Veterinary, or similar degree in food technology or food safety, and should carry out the following as a trainee auditor:

- For aquaculture: three audits of aquaculture sites (ARS/AES 5, ARS/AES 6 or in alternative Friend of the Sea, Global GAP Aquaculture, Best Aquaculture Practices (BAP), Global Aquaculture Alliance (GAA), Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC) audit experience or other similar schemes);
- For wild capture fisheries: three audits of fishing activities (ARS/AES 2 or in alternative Friend of the Sea or Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) audit experience or other similar schemes);
- For sustainable fish feed, fishmeal, fish oil: three audits of food processing activities.

In all cases, the candidate shall have successfully completed at least one audit as “auditor in training” of the standard he/she is being qualified for under the supervision of a qualified auditor.

These requirements also apply to the lead auditor. In addition, the lead auditor shall have successfully completed a minimum of one audit as “lead auditor in training” for the standard he/she is being qualified for under the supervision of a qualified lead auditor.

ACAP 1-2:2023

When any changes in the requirements for assessing CBs are applied, the CBs have up to six months to come into compliance, as a transitional period. In addition, the CBs have the option to apply for exceptions with a valid justification (e.g. by demonstrating that the number of auditors is not sufficient).

The CB shall provide a Curriculum Vitae of all auditors selected for assessing companies against seafood standards prior to their first audit. Specific template shall be used.

Once ARSO receives all the requested documents and approve them, the auditor shall undertake the audit(s) training. The CB shall communicate when the process is completed and then ARSO shall issue an official statement.

The CB shall provide a Competence Assessment of all the auditors selected for assessing companies against seafood standards.

The Competence Assessment shall include the following items:

- An assessment of knowledge and skills for each fundamental area the auditor will be expected to be working;
- An assessment of knowledge of pertinent fishery and/or aquaculture programs and the ability to access and be able to apply relevant laws and regulations;
- An assessment of the personal attributes of the auditor, to ensure they conduct themselves in a professional manner;
- A period of supervision to cover the assessment fishery and/or aquaculture principles, specific audit techniques and specific category knowledge;
- A documented sign off by the certification body of the satisfactory completion of assessment requirements.

The CB shall provide every two years, starting from the date of the first submission, an updated Competence Assessment of all the auditors assessing companies against seafood standards.

F.6.2 Specific requirements for CoC

The auditors in charge of CoC shall have the knowledge and experience listed in F.6.1 (a, b, c, and d) and shall have completed at least five CoC audits as a trainee for chain of custody standards (including the three audits for sustainable fish feed, fishmeal, fish oil as mentioned above) or in alternative Friend of Sea, Global GAP, Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC), Marine Stewardship Council (MSC), Best Aquaculture Practices (BAP), Global Aquaculture Alliance (GAA), ISO 22000, British Retail Consortium (BRC), International Featured Standards (IFS), ISO 22005 or other recognized schemes.

F.7 Standards in introduction and revision

ARSO shall notify any change to standards, certification and accreditation procedures to ABs, CBs, and companies/ firms. The updates are sent to all accredited CBs as official communications. It is the responsibility of the CBs to inform their staff of such updates.

When the competent AB revises a new version of the current certification standards, the firms are allowed a transitional period (36 months for the wild capture standard and 12 months for all the other standards) from the date of publication of the standard to come into compliance. During this period both standards versions are considered valid, while the new version becomes compulsory at the end of the transitional period, as defined for that standard revision. In the case of modifications that require considerable investments by the firms, the length of the transitional period can be extended for an additional time span of six months. The additional time request shall be submitted by the CBs with a valid justification.

F.8 Sample's temporal and spatial distribution

Friend of the Sea does not indicate to the CBs a fee structure in order to determine the audit costs, since they are highly variable. However, each CB shall specify to its potential customers its own fee structure in a non-discriminatory manner, detailing how the costs are calculated and considering the special circumstances and requirements of developing countries and countries in transition. The written fee structure shall be made available upon request and adequate to support accurate and truthful assessments commensurate with the scale, size and complexity of the fishery, fish farm or chain of custody. The initial audits shall include onsite visits.

The following procedure allows to understand how potential operating costs are calculated:

F.8.1 Certification of ARS/AES 2

The number of man-days necessary to carry out the audit depends on the size of the company and fishery being audited. If the fleet meets all the following similarities, only the square root (see Table F.1) of the total number of vessels supplying the company to be certified shall be inspected:

- All fishing vessels use the same fishing method;
- All fishing vessels use the same catching capacity per vessel ($\pm 40\%$);
- All fishing vessels operate in the same fishing area (intended as FAO or ICES area, depending on the reference area for the assessment of the stock status of the species under consideration);
- All fishing vessels are managed uniformly by the same shipowner or under the same regulation.

To ensure that costs are kept to a minimum, the number of vessels to be inspected is determined using the calculation in Table F.1. Vessels already certified for other companies (common fleet) can be included in the certification scope but shall not be considered in the calculation of vessels to be inspected. The method for the calculation of the number of man-days required is outlined in Table F.2.

Table F.1: The number of vessels to be inspected based on the total number of vessels under audit

Total number of vessels	Sample size
up to 30	$x = \text{SQRT}(n \text{ vessels})$
31-300	$x = 0.8 * \text{SQRT}(n \text{ vessels})$
301-3.000	$x = 0.6 * \text{SQRT}(n \text{ vessels})$
3.000-10.000	$x = 0.4 * \text{SQRT}(n \text{ vessels})$
over 10.001	$x = 0.2 * \text{SQRT}(n \text{ vessels})$

Table F.2: The calculation of man-days for the audit of wild capture fisheries

Audited item	In situ man-days
Fishing boat	0.25 (2 hours)
Chain of Custody	0.5 (4 hours)
Social Accountability	0.5 (4 hours)

A day of assessment is comprised of 8 hours, excluding travel time. The indications in Table F.2 correspond to the minimum allowable audit time.

Other factors may affect assessment times:

- a) Management complexity, as reported by the CB through the collection of information about the company;

ACAP 1-2:2023

- b) Complexity of the environmental legislation and regulations, e.g. simplifications due to a very restrictive legislation, with strict controls of single properties, complications due to a lax legislation and rare controls;
- c) Complexity of the organisation, e.g. simplifications due to the existence of documents and controls by the Public Administration, i.e. application of the principle of subsidiarity; complications of the controls due to the complex organisation of firm;
- d) Other factors, such as delays in fishing vessels returning to port and during transshipment operations.

Exceptional cases:

1. Audit in remote areas:

When the onsite audit is not immediately possible because of remote geographical location or temporal constrictions of the fishing activity, a documental audit can be considered acceptable only if the vessels to be audited are equipped with full-time closed-circuit TVs (CCTVs) system on board and digital logbooks, that can provide the evidence of standard compliancy. The firm shall also engage to undergo onsite audit during the fishing season or as soon as the fishing vessels return to port.

Off-site documental audits may be carried out when the fishing vessels do not land for periods longer than 6 months or when the landing ports are located in areas that are not accessible for the auditing staff.

2. Unavailability of vessels:

In the case of unavailability of vessels at port (e.g. due to delays in landing or other impediments), the CB shall perform remotely the complete audit of the unavailable vessels included in the sample to inspect. This implies the review of all the documents and supporting evidences requested by the standard (e.g. fishing licences, boat registrations, logbooks, procedures) for all the vessels in the samples. The complete audit of vessels shall be performed during the following audit (i.e. surveillance or recertification).

F.8.2 Certification to aquaculture standards

The number of working days necessary to carry out an audit is proportional to the number of aquaculture sites and the number and complexity of the processing factories to be inspected. If all aquaculture sites operate within the same management system and same farming practices, the number of sites inspected will be the square root of the total number of sites, as outlined in Table F.3. The method for the calculation of working days is outlined in Table F.4.

Table F.3: Calculation of the number of aquaculture sites to be inspected

Total number of sites	Sample size
up to 30	$x = \text{SQRT}(n \text{ sites})$
31-300	$x = 0.8 * \text{SQRT}(n \text{ sites})$
301-3.000	$x = 0.6 * \text{SQRT}(n \text{ sites})$

Table F.4: Method for quantification of working days for the audit of aquaculture

Audited item	In situ working days
Aquaculture site	1 (8 hours)
Chain of Custody	0.5 (4 hours)
Social accountability	0.5 (4 hours)

Other factors may affect assessment times:

- a) Possible integration with Global G.A.P. Aquaculture;
- b) Management complexity, as reported by the CB through the collection of information about the company;
- c) Complexity of the environmental legislation and regulations, e.g. simplifications due to a very restrictive legislation, with strict controls of single properties; complications due to lax legislation and rare controls;
- d) Complexity of the organisation, e.g. simplifications due to the existence of documents and controls by the Public Administration, i.e. application of the principle of subsidiarity; complications of the controls due to the complex organisation of firm;
- e) Other factors.

Exceptional cases:

In case the audit of offshore plants is not possible due to adverse weather conditions, a documental audit may be considered acceptable if the firm is able to provide evidence of compliance to all requirements related to the production site management. The firm shall also engage to undergo onsite audit during the following surveillance audit.

F.8.3 Certification of FOS-FF, FM, FO, O3 and CoC

The number of working days necessary to carry out the audit is proportional to the number of certification items and, above all, to the number of suppliers involved in the sourcing process and to the source(s) of the product.

If all processing sites (permanent locations where organizations carry out production processes) operate under the control of a single entity (multi-site organisations), the number of sites inspected will be the square root of the total number of sites (Table F.3). The minimum audit time required for sustainable fish feed, fishmeal, fish oil and chain of custody certifications is summarised in Table F.5.

Table F.5: Minimum audit time required for sustainable fish feed, fishmeal, fish oil and chain of custody certifications

Audited item	In situ working days
Product source and use of GMO, Chain of Custody per processing site	0.5 (4 hours)
Social Accountability	0.5 (4 hours)

A day of assessment is comprised of 8 hours, excluding travel time. The indications in Table F.5 correspond to the minimum allowable audit time. All processing sites shall be audited during the period of validity of the certificate (three years).

Other factors may affect assessment times:

- a) Possible integration with Global G.A.P. Aquaculture;
- b) Management complexity, as reported by the CB through the collection of information about the company.

F.8.4 Certification of producers and processors groups

- The number of man-days necessary to carry out the audit depends on the size of the producer group being audited and of its members.
- If all members of a fishery group meet the homogeneity criteria defined for fishing fleets (A1), only the square root (see Table 1) of the total number of vessels supplying the company to be certified shall be inspected.

ACAP 1-2:2023

- In the case of a group of aquaculture producers, the number of producers/sites to be audited is equivalent to the square root of the current number of producers/production sites operating with the same management system.
- Procedures for auditing methods and frequency of audits shall take into consideration risk factors to decide in which cases more audits are necessary. Anyway, all firms shall undergo at least one surveillance audit during the certification cycle (3 years). CBs can use their own judgment to determine risk factors and shall document it.
- For audit timing, refer to paragraphs from F.8.1 to F.8.4.
- The CB shall inspect the complete checklist (Essential, Important and Recommended requirements) of the applicable standard(s) during all audits.

Surveillance Audits

The duration of the surveillance audit shall be 1/3 of the duration of the initial certification audit and shall be greater than 0.5 days. One third of the fishing vessels/farm sites/processing sites inspected during the initial certification audits shall be visited during the surveillance audits. These shall be selected amongst those that were not inspected during the previous audit(s), when possible. The surveillance audits shall include onsite visits.

Recertification Audits

Recertification audits shall have a duration of 2/3 of the initial certification audit. Two thirds of the fishing vessels/farm sites/processing sites inspected during the initial certification audits shall be inspected during the recertification audits. These shall be selected amongst those that were not inspected during the previous audit(s), when possible. The recertification audits shall include onsite visits.

Additional Audits

Additional audits (i.e. unscheduled audits due to the detection of major NCs) can have a shorter duration that shall be proportional to the importance of the NC or to the specific case and shall be justified by the CB. Firms that have been certified before official accreditation of ACAP schemes shall be verified by means of a first certification audit at recertification.

Unannounced Audits

The duration of the unannounced audit shall be 1/3 of the duration of the initial certification audit and shall be greater than 0.5 days. One third of the fishing vessels/farm sites/processing sites inspected during the initial certification audit shall be visited during the unannounced audits. These shall be selected amongst those that were not inspected during the previous audit(s), when possible. The unannounced audits shall include onsite visits.

Annex G (informative)

Scheme G: Good financial grant practice certification

The objective of this standard for Good Financial Grant Practice (GFGP) is to standardize, simplify and strengthen the financial governance of grant funding. For grantors, they can use the standard as a minimum requirement to their grantees. For grantees, they can claim compliance with this standard to support applications for grants from grantors. This standard is to establish a consistent approach to the management of grants throughout the grant life cycle, for the benefit of grantors and grantees.

Operating in compliance to the standard should:

- (a) reduce the cost and administration time for both grantors and grantees;
- (b) reduce the multitude of audits and financial assessments that grantees have from different grantors;
- (c) increase the confidence of grantors to fund directly to grantees;
- (d) reduce the risk of corruption, bribery and fraud; and
- (e) enable targeted financial capacity building by grantors

This standard is designed to codify and provide requirements on established good practice. It is a quality standard and not an accounting standard. The GFGP standard provides a common framework for how grantees shall financially manage grants. It provides details of the requirements, specifications and criteria to be applied, to implement good financial grant practice.

Grantors and grantees are very diverse in nature, and range from:

- (a) very large to very small;
- (b) straightforward to very complex;
- (c) short to longer term in nature;
- (d) operating in safe to risky environments;
- (e) having different levels of risk they are willing to accept;
- (f) government to private foundations and individual entities;
- (g) national to regional to international in nature; and
- (h) mature to new and emerging.

The standard is designed to be inclusive of all the above by having four tiers from bronze to platinum. Table 1 is illustrative only and gives some indication of the types of organizations that might fit into each tier.

The tiers are cumulative from bronze through to platinum. Therefore, for an organization to achieve silver compliance, it will be required to comply with all of the requirements within the bronze and silver tiers. For an organization to achieve gold compliance, the organization will be required to comply with all of the requirements within the bronze, silver and gold tiers. To achieve platinum compliance, the organization will be required to comply with all of the requirements in this standard.

The four tiers have been designed to encourage grantees to progressively strengthen their financial grant practices as their organization develops.

ACAP 1-2:2023

The four tiers also enable grantors to manage their exposure to risk as some grantors may choose to specify grantees comply with a certain tier, or parts of a tier, depending on the size or nature of the grants that they manage and are responsible for. Grantors may, after an assessment, decide to award the grant, even if the grantee does not meet their requirements and may mitigate their risk by putting in place additional financial controls, or provide capacity strengthening funding to bring the grantee up to the required level.

This standard addresses the principles of good financial grant practice, which are:

- (i) accountability;
- (ii) stewardship;
- (iii) compliance to standards;
- (iv) transparency;
- (v) viability;
- (vi) integrity;
- (vii) consistency and
- (viii) efficiency and effectiveness

Table G.1 — Organization activity indicative of GFGP tiers

Tier	Description – the organization is likely to:
Bronze	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — only operates within a region in a Country be a sub-grantee of a gold level organization carrying out part of their grant activity; and/or — have few programmes and grantors.
Silver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — operate either regionally or over a number of regions within a country; — have more than a few programmes and/or complex programmes; — be a sub-grantee of a gold level organization carrying out part of their grant activity; and/or — be a local Non-Governmental Organization (NGO).
Gold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — be large with multiple complex programmes or with more complex programmes in which they are both grantees and grantors (i.e., manage sub-grants); — manage activities across international boundaries, receive funding from a variety of grantors and often sell services to raise more funding; and/or — be an International Non-Governmental Organization (INGO), national NGO, research institution or university.
Platinum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — have a mission that requires longer term financial sustainability; and/or — be an INGO, NGO, established research institution, university, charity with the expectation of long term income (i.e., funding that covers a significant portion of its operational costs) that is regularly renewed by the same grantor or has its own income or investments.

In turn, these principles are supported by four key pillars of good financial management, which, if correctly applied, will provide the evidence to support compliance with good financial grant practice. These are:

- (i) Internal controls
- (ii) Record keeping
- (iii) Planning
- (iv) Monitoring

Further detail on both the principles of good financial grant practice and four key pillars of good financial management can be found in ARS 1651, *Good financial grant practice — Requirements*.

Annex H
(informative)

Scheme H: Cosmetology and wellness certification

Certification Scheme H on cosmetology and wellness is detailed in ACAP 4:2017, *Cosmetology and Wellness — Certification Framework*. This framework document provides guidance for the certification of facilities which provide cosmetology and wellness services and products including the following sub-schemes:

- (a) Scheme H1: Barbering
- (b) Scheme H2: Haircare
- (c) Scheme H3: Skin care
- (d) Scheme H4: Nail care
- (e) Scheme H5: Massage therapy
- (f) Scheme H6: Reflexology
- (g) Scheme H7: Aromatherapy
- (h) Scheme H8: Spa therapies
- (i) Scheme H9: Hair removal techniques
- (j) Scheme H10: Body art and body piercing

Annex J (informative)

Scheme J: Sustainable mining certification

Sustainable mining certification is based on a set of African standards which specify objectives and leading performance requirements for economically, environmentally and socially responsible practices. Scheme J serves as the basis of a voluntary system offering independent third-party assessment and certification of economic, environmental and social performance measures at industrial-scale mine sites.

The expected impacts are:

- (1) Promote a common vision of sustainability in the mining industry in Africa.
- (2) Facilitate the implementation of a voluntary sustainable mining management scheme.
- (3) Facilitate the integration of mining sustainability concepts in existing and future legislation in African countries.
- (4) Improve trust relationship among all the stakeholders
- (5) Improve the social acceptance of mining activities.
- (6) Contribute to economic and social development of local communities.
- (7) Improve the efficient use of natural resources.
- (8) Improve restoration and rehabilitation of natural areas affected by mining activities.
- (9) Promote the use of best available techniques.
- (10) Contribute to the streamlining of permitting procedures.
- (11) Help to formalize the set of data to be provided to the authorities for statistical or other regulatory purposes

The sustainable mining certification is based on the sustainability principles and criteria with the following broad objectives:

8.11.1 Institutional and positive legacy framework

- (a) Policy and legal framework for large scale mining (LSM)
- (b) Policy and legal framework for artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM)
- (c) Guidance on governance aspects
- (d) Guidance on legal compliance
- (e) Environmental and social impact, assessment and management
- (f) Environment and social impact monitoring
- (g) Protect, respect and remedy framework
- (h) Complaints and grievance mechanisms, and access to remedy
- (i) Planning and financing reclamation and closure

8.11.2 Economic guidelines

- (a) Econometric assessment of mining developments
- (b) Revenue, royalty and rent payments transparency
- (c) Transparent marketing and fair pricing practices for ASM minerals
- (d) Linkage framework for market access by ASM

- (e) Local mineral beneficiation and mineral separation requirements
- (f) Transparent mineral valuation framework

8.11.3 Social guidelines

- (a) Community and stakeholder engagement
- (b) Engagement with indigenous people
- (c) Fair labour and working conditions
- (d) Occupational health and safety
- (e) Community health and safety
- (f) Emergency preparedness and response
- (g) Human rights due diligence and compliance
- (h) Mining and conflict-affected or high-risk areas
- (i) Security and human rights
- (j) Artisanal and small-scale mining
- (k) HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis (TB) and malaria
- (l) Obtaining community support and delivering benefits
- (m) Free, prior and informed consent (FPIC)
- (n) Cultural Heritage
- (o) Resettlement

8.11.4 Environmental guidelines

- (a) Water management
- (b) Waste and materials management
- (c) Air quality
- (d) Noise and vibration
- (e) Greenhouse gas emissions
- (f) Protected areas
- (g) Conservation and protection of biodiversity and ecosystem services
- (h) Cyanide management
- (i) Mercury management
- (j) Environmental impacts of different mining processes
- (k) End of life mine reclamation/closure requirements

Sub-Schemes in this category include those under development based on the following African standards:

- (i) ARS 1340, *Production of natural stone for building — Sustainability assessment and certification*
- (ii) ARS 1343, *Sustainable sand mining — Requirements and assessment guidelines*

Annex K (informative)

Scheme K: Ecological organic agriculture certification

K.1 Introduction

ACAP Scheme K specifies the criteria for organic agriculture certification to be performed by Certification Bodies (CB) for individual and group certifications.

K.2 Functions and activities for an organic certification scheme

The organic certification scheme includes at least the activities listed in Table 1 of ISO/IEC 17067:2013 as follows:

K.2.1 Selection, including planning and preparation of activities, specifications of requirements, e.g. normative documents, sampling, as applicable;

K.2.2 Determination of characteristics, as applicable through: (a) Testing, (b) Inspection, (c) Design appraisal, (d) Assessment of services/processes, and (e) Other determination activities, e.g. verification;

K.2.3 Review - Examining the evidence of conformity obtained during the determination stage to establish whether the specified requirements have been met;

K.2.4 Decision on certification - Granting, maintaining, extending, reducing, suspending, withdrawing certification; and

K.2.5 Attestation, licensing - Issuing a certificate of conformity or other statement of conformity (attestation).

K.3 General requirements for certification body

A certification body (CB) should be competent to take all necessary steps to ensure the consistent operation, integrity, impartiality, and independence of its certification systems following the principles of ISO/IEC 17065.

K.4 Standard and normative documents

K.4.1 African standards

ARS 751:2013, *Organic food products — Code of practice*

WD-ARS 1016:2022, *Organic fruits and vegetables production and post-harvest handling and storage — Requirements*

WD-ARS 1422:2022, *Organic honey certification — Requirements and guidelines*

WD-ARS 1895:2022, *Organic aquaculture — General principles, management standards and permitted substances lists*

WD-ARS 1896:2022, *Organic dairy production — Requirements*

WD-ARS 1897:2022, *Organic livestock production — Requirements*

WD-ARS 1898:2022, *Organic and grass-finished beef cattle production — Requirements*

WD-ARS 1899:2022, *Organic potato production — Requirements*

WD-ARS 1900:2022, *Organic poultry production — Requirements*

WD-ARS 1901:2022, *Organic rice production — Requirements*

WD-ARS 1902:2022, *Organic tomato production — Requirements*

WD-ARS 1903:2022, *Organic garlic, leek and onion production — Requirements*

WD-ARS 1904:2022, *Organic sweet potato production — Requirements*

WD-ARS 1905:2022, *Biodynamic and organic agriculture — Farming and processing requirements*

WD-ARS 1906:2022, *Organic cotton production — Requirements*
WD-ARS 1907:2022, *Organic tea production — Requirements*
WD-ARS 1908:2022, *Organic coffee production — Requirements*
WD-ARS 1909:2022, *Organic freshwater trout aquaculture — Requirements*
WD-ARS 1910:2022, *Organic shrimps/prawns aquaculture — Requirements*
WD-ARS 1911:2023, *Organic vegetable farming in greenhouse — Requirements*

K.4.2 International standards

SO/IEC 17000:2004, *Conformity assessment — Vocabulary and general principles*

ISO/IEC 17011:2011, *Conformity assessment — General requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies*

ISO/IEC 17065:2012, *Conformity assessment — Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services*

ISO/IEC 17067:2013, *Conformity assessment — Fundamentals of product certification and guidelines for product certification schemes*

K.5 General requirements for applicant for certification

K.5.1 The legal requirements and certification agreement in ISO/IEC 17065 apply.

K.5.2 The organic certification system should be based on written agreements, with clear responsibilities of all parties involved in the chain of operations for production of an organic produce and/or product.

K.5.3 The operators should sign contracts/agreements requiring them to

K.5.3.1 Follow the applicable organic agriculture standards, relevant regulatory requirements and other documents such as certification scheme or certification process;

K.5.3.2 Give access to the CB or designated authority and provide any necessary information for inspection purposes, e.g. access to:

- all relevant units and facilities of the organic operation including the non-organic production and handling units owned or managed by the operator;
- accounts and sales related records of the organic operation for the purposes of traceability of origin, nature and quantities of all raw materials bought, and the use of such materials. In addition, written and/or documentary accounts of the nature, quantities and consignees of all agricultural products sold should be accessed; and
- its record-keeping system adapted to the scope of certification that enables the CB to retrieve information necessary for verification of the production, storage, processing, purchase, and sale; and other relevant documentation to provide adequate audit/inspection trails and traceability of organic produce and/or products.

K.5.3.3 Inform the CB of all complaints received by the certified clients relating to the certified products.

K.5.3.4 Notify the CB of any change that may affect the ability of the operator to conform with applicable certification requirements.

NOTE Examples of changes may refer to changes in group member, plantation areas, or type of products, etc.

K.5.4 Provide the CB with information regarding any previous organic certification and/or other certification scheme currently undertaken or in progress.

ACAP 1-2:2023

K.5.5 Provide the CB with the updated information on the scope of certification, which the operator maintains or intends to maintain for ensuring organic integrity.

K.6 Resource requirements

K.6.1 Resource requirements shall be in accordance with ISO/IEC 17065.

K.6.2 The CB should ensure that its personnel have sufficient knowledge on the applicable organic agriculture standard/s and relevant regulatory requirements identified by the AMS.

K.6.3 The following criteria should be applied for CB personnel in organic certification, which should include but not limited to, as appropriate, the initial review personnel, inspection and evaluation personnel, technical reviewers, and decision-makers. These personnel should have:

K.6.3.1 Sufficient background and knowledge in agriculture and/or food technology. The requirements may vary based on the functions undertaken by the personnel and the product category. Knowledge may be gained typically through educational qualification and/or experience, adequate to provide knowledge of organic products and processes. Personnel should be qualified on the basis of use of appropriate evaluation methods.

NOTE A number of evaluation methods like review of records; feedback; interviews; observations/witness; and examination can be used to evaluate knowledge and skills

K.6.3.2 Received appropriate training with respect to organic agriculture, food, processing, trade, specific production areas (e.g. mushroom production) and the applicable organic agriculture standard/s and relevant regulatory requirements as identified by the AMS.

K.6.3.3 Gained experience through participation in sufficient number of inspection/s or its equivalent man-days as defined by the CB for personnel involved in inspection and evaluation activities.

K.6.4 The CB should actively identify training at entry level as well as based on needs identified through systematic performance reviews and provide, as necessary, training to its staff on the requirements of the applicable organic agriculture standard/s and relevant regulatory requirements identified by the AMS, the certification scheme, and relevant methodologies. Adequacy of such training plans, training and evaluation records, and related materials should be maintained.

K.6.5 The performance assessment should be done regularly for each evaluator/inspector. The performance assessment should include observation of a sufficient number of on-site inspection/s or its equivalent man-days as defined by the CB, typically within a three-year period, unless there is sufficient supporting evidence that the inspector is continuing to perform competently.

K.7 Process requirements

K.7.1 The process requirements shall be in accordance with ISO/IEC 17065.

K.7.2 General

K.7.2.1 Any organic certification scheme offered by the CB should have defined requirements for CB's functioning as well as certification process requirements.

K.7.2.2 The organic certification scheme should take into consideration explicitly the following aspects as applicable: retroactive recognition of conversion period, separation and inspection of non-organic production units, parallel /split production, group certification, and wild collection.

K.7.2.3 The CB should have available and implement policies and procedures for risk-based inspections, management of deviations, non-conformities and corrective actions, exchange of information between CBs and competent authorities.

K.7.3 Application

When accepting an application, the CB receiving the application should ensure availability of all the background information with respect to the operator, and whether another CB had denied certification to the applying operator. The CB should also have a documented system for corroborating the information received from the CB who had previously certified the applying operator.

K.7.4 Inspection

K.7.4.1 The CB should ensure that a full physical inspection is undertaken prior to certification of the organic operation. An inspection report should be drawn up after each visit.

K.7.4.2 The inspection protocol of the CB should at the very minimum undertake the following:

- a) Assessment of the production, processing, and handling system by means of visits to facilities, fields, and storage units (which may also include visits to non-organic production units);
- b) Review of records and accounts in order to verify flow of goods (production/sales reconciliation on farms, input/output reconciliation, and the trace back audits in processing and handling facilities);
- c) Identification of areas of risk to organic integrity; and
- d) Verification that changes to the standards and to the requirements of the certification body have been effectively implemented, and that corrective actions have been taken.

K.7.5 Sampling

K.7.5.1 Sample analyses and testing should serve as supporting tools to verify information; the organic certification scheme of the CB should set out standard procedures for taking samples, where necessary, based on perceived risks.

K.7.5.2 The CB should have documented policies and procedures aligned with the regulations relevant to establishing organic integrity. These should generally include the following:

- a) System for identifying cases in which samples should be taken for analysis if use of a substance, prohibited by the standards, is suspected.
- b) A procedure on taking samples and sending them to the laboratory.
- c) The number of samples to be taken and the frequency of sampling.

K.7.6 Testing

Samples taken by the CB should be analyzed in ISO/IEC 17025 accredited testing laboratories. In the absence of laboratories accredited to ISO/IEC 17025, samples should be analyzed by DESIGNATED testing laboratories.

K.7.7 Certification decision

The CB grants organic certification to the applicant upon satisfaction of the criteria for certification.

K.7.8 Certification documentation

The CB should issue official organic certification document/s to each operator containing the following information:

K.7.8.1 For individual certification, the name, address, number of certified farms/plots, and total certified area of the operator whose organic produce and/or products are the subject of organic certification. In case of multiple crops, a crop list could be provided as an attachment. The operator should notify the CB for any change in the organic management system (e.g. change in the size of the area);

ACAP 1-2:2023

K.7.8.2 In case of group certification, name of the group, address, total area, and the name of all group members as well as their addresses, locations, and status (organic or in-conversion) of organic certification of each member should be included as an attachment;

K.7.8.3 Unit certified, e.g. processing unit, packaging unit, and/or storage unit;

K.7.8.4 Name and address of the CB that issued the organic certification documents;

K.7.8.5 The scope of the certification granted, including:

- a) Organic produce and/or products certified, which should be identified by type or range of products. In case of group certification, this information can be described in an attachment;
- b) Unit certified, e.g. processing unit, and/or packaging unit;
- c) Applicable organic agriculture standard/s and/or applicable certification scheme that is/are the basis for the organic certification; and
- d) Effective and expiry dates, or period of validity.

K.7.9 Surveillance

The CB should implement a system and documented procedures in conducting operator risk-based surveillance activities including:

K.7.9.1 A full physical audit/inspection is undertaken, at least once a year, of the organic production, post-harvest, processing, handling, packaging, and storage unit/s.

K.7.9.2 Additional, occasional, and unannounced visits/inspections should also be undertaken according to need or at random.

K.7.9.3 In the case of reported frauds, mislabeling and other complaints, the CB should conduct necessary investigation including, but not limited to, inspection and document review, depending on the nature of reported case.

K.8 Group Certification

K.8.1 Scope

The CB should limit the scope of group certification to groups that fulfill the following requirements:

K.8.1.1 The group have registered operations with a functional internal control system;

NOTE This requirement does not limit the arrangement to farmers. Other operations organized collectively may also be included provided the other requirements in K.8.1 are met.

K.8.1.2 Large farming units, simple processing units, and traders may be included as part of a group but should be inspected directly by the CB;

K.8.1.3 Simple on-farm processing and storage units may be included as part of a sample inspection arrangement;

K.8.1.4 No group of processing units and traders can apply for group certification;

K.8.1.5 Group members should have geographic proximity;

K.8.1.6 The group should be large enough and have sufficient resources to support a functional internal control system (ICS) that assures compliance of individual members with production standards in an objective and transparent manner; and

NOTE The requirement refers to the three factors that the size of the group should ensure sufficient resources, transparency, and impartiality. The CB must determine whether the group is large enough to satisfy these factors.

K.8.1.7 The group should have coordinated marketing.

K.8.2 Requirements

Group certification should require that at least:

K.8.2.1 The entity should be the group as a whole. This means that group members cannot use the organic certification independently (i.e. marketing as separate individual member outside of the group's internal control);

K.8.2.2 An effective and documented internal control system (ICS) should be in place, and there are competent personnel managing and implementing the system. The system should include a documented management structure of the ICS;

K.8.2.3 A general description of the operation with the definition of the type of group (such as cooperative, association, exporter with producers under contract);

K.8.2.4 Internal inspection protocol should be described and implemented. Audits/inspections of all group members for practices in accordance with Clause 8 of this Guide should be carried out by the ICS at least annually;

K.8.2.5 Internal inspectors should be designated by the group to carry out internal audits/inspections. The internal inspectors should receive suitable training. The ICS should set out rules to manage potential conflicts of interest of the internal inspectors;

K.8.2.6 A clear description and identification of the production units and group members should be recorded, updated, and made available at all times;

K.8.2.7 A mechanism to include new members and to implement sanctions on non-conforming group members should be in place;

K.8.2.8 The relationship of the management body to each of the group member, the relationship between group members, and conflict of interest should be evaluated by the CB prior to the issuance of the certificate;

K.8.2.9 Risk assessments should be conducted; and

NOTE Risk assessments should be done by both the CB and the group.

K.8.2.10 The core documentation is complete, which includes:

- a) Appropriate maps/sketches;
- b) A complete list of the group members and status of the members to the ICS;
- c) Farm/field and/or processing records;
- d) Yield estimates; and
- e) Signed member agreements stating obligation from all group members to comply with applicable organic agriculture standard/s and relevant regulatory requirements.

K.8.3 Contracts

Group certification should require that the management body of the group sign a written contract with the CB specifying the responsibilities of the group. The contract should require that the group management obtain signed obligations from all group members to comply with the applicable organic

ACAP 1-2:2023

agriculture standards and relevant regulatory requirements and to allow internal and external inspections.

K.8.4 Access to standards

All group members should have access to the applicable or relevant sections of organic agriculture standards and relevant regulatory requirements presented in a way adapted to their language and knowledge.

K.8.5 External Inspection

The CB should conduct external inspections as follows:

K.8.5.1 Inspection of the group should be carried out by the CB at least annually;

K.8.5.2 The inspection visit should include both an inspection for conformity with the applicable organic agriculture standard/s and regulatory requirements and an evaluation of the effectiveness of the ICS;

K.8.5.3 Inspection of a sample of group members should be undertaken by the CB;

K.8.5.4 Determining the risk classification of the group and sample number of group members subject to external inspection should take into account the following aspects:

- a) The number of operations in the group; and
- b) The outcomes of the risk assessment of the management structure (low, medium or high risk) which include, but are not limited to:
 - 1) The value of the produce/products and the difference between the price of the organic and non-organic produce/product;
 - 2) Degree of similarity of the production systems and the crops within the group;
 - 3) Risks for co-mingling/mixing and/or contamination; and
 - 4) Experience of the group, (i.e. number of years in operation, number of new members registered annually, nature of problems within the organization, potential conflicts of interest, and staff turnover).
- c) Determination of the number of group members subject to annual external inspection for group certification should be calculated by taking the square root of n , where n is the total number of group members or in accordance with the relevant regulations.
- d) The sample should be selected based on a combination of risk-based and random selection. The risk factors may include the number of years an individual group member has been into organic production, post-harvest, processing, handling, packaging and storage, their size, location and/or identified risk.
- e) The production, post-harvest, processing, handling, packaging, and storage units visited by the external inspection body must be predominantly different from one year to the other. Larger production units, processors, and exporters should be inspected annually by the CB.

K.8.6 Evaluation and assessment of the internal control system (ICS)

K.8.6.1 Internal inspections/audits of all group members should be carried out at least annually; new group members are included only after internal inspections/audits, according to procedures agreed with the CB;

K.8.6.2 Sample external inspections/audits should be carried out with the relevant documents from the internal inspection/audits, and the methods and results of the internal inspection/audits should be

compared with the results of the external inspection to determine whether the inspections/audits of the ICS have adequately addressed the compliance of group members;

K.8.6.3 Instances of non-conformity have been dealt appropriately by the ICS and according to a documented system of sanctions;

K.8.6.4 Adequate records of inspections have been maintained by the ICS;

K.8.6.5 The group members understand the applicable organic agriculture standard/s and relevant regulatory requirements; and

K.8.6.6 The external inspector is encouraged to witness a number of internal control inspections.

K.8.7 Records

The CB should maintain basic data on all group members, in addition to certification records of the group as a whole. A standardized form containing the basic data should be completed and updated by the group management which includes: identification code, name, location (at least on an area map), year of entrance into the certification system, date of last internal and external inspection, number of hectares, certified crops, sales, yield estimates, and status of the group members.

K.8.8 Responsibility

The group should be responsible for conformity of all group members. The ICS should include the application of sanctions to individual group members who do not conform with the applicable organic standards and relevant regulatory requirements as identified by the AMS. The group should inform the CB of the irregularities and non-conformities found, as well as the corrective actions implemented.

K.8.9 Sanctions

In the event of non-conformity by the group and/or its group members, sanctions should be issued commensurate with the severity of the non-conformity. Failure of the ICS to detect and act on non-conformances should invoke sanctions on the group as a whole. In cases where it finds the ICS to be lacking in reliability and effectiveness, the CB should apply sanctions to the group as a whole, including, in case of serious deficiencies, the withdrawal of the organic certification of the group.

K.9 Publicly available information

K.9.1 The requirements of ISO/IEC 17065 shall apply with respect to publicly available information and the directory of certified products.

K.9.2 The CB operating the organic certification scheme should have processes for informing all concerned, including the prospective and present certified, operators about the applicable organic agriculture standard/s and relevant regulatory requirements.

K.9.3 The CB should clearly identify the standards and requirements used for the different product categories. These should be available to the operator and publicly accessible.

K.9.4 The detailed information regarding applicable organic agriculture standard/s and relevant regulatory requirements against which the products will be certified and the certification processes, as well as schedule of fees should be made available through publications and electronic media.

K.10 Confidentiality

The provisions of ISO/IEC 17065 shall apply with respect to confidentiality.

K.11 Use of licenses, certificates and marks of conformity

K.11.1 Reference shall be made to ISO/IEC 17065 with respect to use of license, certificates and marks of conformity and non-discriminatory conditions.

ACAP 1-2:2023

NOTE 1 Guidance on the use of certificates and marks permitted by the CB can be obtained from ISO/IEC Guide 23

NOTE 2 ISO/IEC 17030 provides requirements for the use of third-party marks

K.11.2 The conditions for use of certification scheme mark and validity of organic certificate should be in accordance with the rules and regulations the CB that certified the last process (processing, packing, labeling) should be identified.

K.11.3 The validity of certificates for organic certification scheme should be in accordance to the relevant regulations on organic agriculture.

K.11.4 The CB should

K.11.4.1 Exercise control over the use and display of certificates and logos that it can authorize operators to use;

K.11.4.2 Be able to request an operator to discontinue the use of certificates and logos that it authorizes an operator to use based on the provisions of the agreement;

K.11.4.3 Apply suitable actions to deal with incorrect/falsified references to the certification system or misleading use of certificates or logos that it authorizes operators to use.

K.12 Extension, reduction, suspension, reinstatement, withdrawal or transfer of certification

Reference shall be made to the requirements of ISO/IEC 17065 with respect to changes affecting certification and termination, reduction, suspension or withdrawal of certification.

K.13 Records

The CB should maintain records to demonstrate that the certification procedures on organic production, handling, storage, processing, and packaging have been effectively implemented. Such records should include but not limited to:

K.13.1 Full description of the production, handling, storage, processing, and packaging units;

K.13.2 It should also maintain information about individual members of a group as well as the certified organic unit's sub-contractors, if any.

K.14 Complaints and appeals

K.14.1 Reference shall be made to the requirements of ISO/IEC 17065 with respect to complaints and appeals.

K.14.2 The competent authority should also establish policies and procedures for the resolution of complaints received from the general public such as consumers including operators about the operation of the CB or certification activities as well as complaints against operators.

K.15 Non-conforming produce/products

The CB should define procedure(s) that should be implemented when a produce or product no longer fulfils certification requirements, such as product recall and/or providing information to the market. The CB should ensure that appropriate corrective actions have been carried out satisfactorily.

NOTE See also ISO Guide 27 (Guidelines for corrective action to be taken by a CB in the event of misuse of its certification mark of conformity)

K.16 Fraudulent claim of certification

Sanctions and penalties for fraudulent claims of certification including misuse of certification marks and mislabeling should be enforced in accordance with applicable rules and regulations.

K.17 Management systems

Reference shall be made to the requirements of ISO/IEC 17065 with respect to management system requirements.

Annex L (informative)

Scheme L: Made in Africa certification

This certification Scheme applies to any party seeking certification of the requirements for the Made in Africa products, that includes Agro-processing, Forestry and forestry products, Mineral products, Chemicals and pharmaceuticals, Leather and leather products, Textiles and textile products, Machinery, tools and equipment, Construction materials, Petro-chemical products, rubber and plastics products, Tourism, hospitality and creative services, Knowledge based services and Logistics and transport. The award applies to all production, processing, and trading within the ACAP field of application.

The award is based on the main criteria for Made in Africa and can be certified alone or, when available, in combination with the ARSO product certification standard applicable for the production or service in the scope. The criteria included in the Made in Africa are listed below.

- (i) Competitive business environment
- (ii) Rules of origin
- (iii) Intellectual property rights
- (iv) Quality and regulatory infrastructure

According to the kind of production and /or service carried out by the Company, some criteria may not be applicable. Where a certain criterion is not applicable, the company will have to justify.

Various applicable standards are available freely in the ARSO catalogue and website.

8.13.1 Scheme L1: Single site farms/companies

This certification scheme is applicable to Single site Farms/Companies, willing to certify their products according to the ARSO standards included in Scheme L.

The main certification criteria are related to compliance with the Made in Africa criteria applied to the production process of products and services to be verified by assessment of implementation of the Made in Africa Criteria

ACAP 1-2 provides detailed criteria to be applied for design and general rules for assessment and certification.

8.13.2 Scheme L2: Group of farmers/companies or multisite production operations

This certification scheme is applicable to group of Farmers/companies or multisite production operations willing to certify their products according to the African standards included in Scheme L and managed by a centralized Quality Management System (QMS), where the QMS owner is also the owner of the certificate.

The main certification criteria are related to compliance with the Made in Africa criteria applied to the production process of products or services to be verified by:

- (i) Verification of implementation of the MiA criteria.
- (ii) Verification of QMS implementation

The implementation of a QMS at group or multisite level, allows sampling while giving confidence on the general level of compliance of the whole group.

The present certification scheme is applicable to the African Standards included in Scheme L and integrates the general rules for scheme L2 with regard to the management of certification for groups of farmers or multisite and implementation of the QMS.

ACAP 1-2 provides detailed criteria to be applied for design and general rules for assessment and certification.

