

Friend of the Earth Standard

FOE-Accreditation

**Accreditation Procedures for FOE – Agriculture;
FOE – Farming; FOE-CoC; Minimum requirements**

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1 - INTRODUCTION

This document defines the additional requirements to the regulations currently in force for CBs that intend to operate within the certification system defined by the World Sustainability Organisation and related certification schemes.

1.1 - Purpose and scope

This document defines the general requirements through which the World Sustainability Organisation recognises:

- a) CBs of FOE-Agriculture; FOE-Farming and FOE-CoC, that must operate pursuant to standards provided for by the World Sustainability Organisation.
- b) personnel employed by CBs for the assessment of certification schemes as regards FOE-Agriculture; FOE-Farming and FOE-CoC.

1.2 - Legislative and regulatory references

- FOE-Agriculture – Criteria and indicators for the Certification of Sustainable Agriculture
- FOE-Farming – Criteria and indicators for the Certification of Sustainable Farming
- FOE-CoC - Criteria and indicators for the traceability certification of 'Friend of the Earth' products
- ISO 17021 Conformity assessment — Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems
- UNI EN ISO 19011:2003 Guidelines for audits of management systems for environmental quality and/or management
- UNI EN ISO / IEC 17065: 2012 Requirements for Organizations that certify products, processes and services
- ISO/IEC 17011:2004 Conformity assessment - general requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies

1.3 - Definitions and abbreviations

1.3.1 Definitions

Definitions are those provided for by regulation UNI EN ISO 19011 and regulation ISO/IEC 17000.

1.3.2 Abbreviations

- AB:** Accreditation Body
AG: Audit Group
ATL: Audit Team Leader
AU: Auditor
CB: Certification Body

CO: single company (owner or manager) applying for certification

FOE-Agriculture: Criteria and indicators for the Certification of Sustainable Agriculture

FOE-CoC: Criteria and indicators for the traceability certification of 'Friend of the Earth' products

FOE-Farming: Criteria and indicators for the Certification of Sustainable Farming

IAF: International Accreditation Forum

MS: Management System

TC: Technical Committee

WSO: World Sustainability Organisation

2 - ACCREDITATION OF CBs

Prior to issuing certificates in accordance with the Friend of the Earth certification model, CBs must register with the WSO using the specific form provided by the WSO, with all the fields completed.

The notification process for the WSO is a non-discriminatory process that allows all CB's to operate on the basis of the certification models established by the WSO.

Upon notification, CBs have twelve (12) months in which to obtain accreditation.

CBs who intend issuing certificates using the models *FOE-Agriculture* and *FOE-Farming* since these are management systems they will have to be accredited in compliance with regulation UNI CEI EN ISO/IEC 17021:2011, the above mentioned models, however, may contain additional or more stringent requirements than the reference ISO standard.

The *Chain of Custody (CoC)* certification model, the scope of which however, is to preserve the features of origin of the products produced by companies that adopt sustainable management systems, accreditation of CBs must comply with UNI CEI EN ISO/ IEC 17065:2012 (former UNI CEI EN 45011:1999).

Friend of the Earth certifications can be issued exclusively by CBs accredited by a National accreditation body member of IAF signatory of agreements for mutual recognition of the specific accreditation model.

3 - CERTIFICATION: FOE-Agriculture; FOE-Farming; FOE-CoC

3.1 CERTIFICATION: FOE-Agriculture; FOE-Farming; FOE-CoC

The certification procedure, summarized in Figure 1, is based on three main phases:

- 1)** preliminary investigation (equivalent to phase 1 audit described in UNI CEI EN ISO/IEC 17021:2011),
- 2)** audit for the implementation and effectiveness of the management system (equivalent to phase 2 audit described in UNI CEI EN ISO/IEC 17021:2011),
- 3)** resolution.

Phase 1 audit must be carried out so as:

- a) to audit the documentation of the CO's management system;
- b) to assess the localization and particular conditions of the CO's premises and begin to exchange information with the CO's personnel in order to establish the level of preparation for phase 2 audit;
- c) to re-examine the CO's conditions and understanding of regulatory requirements with particular reference to the identification of key services or relevant aspects, procedures, aims and functioning of the management system;
- d) to collect all necessary information concerning the scope of the CO's management system, procedures and localization(s), including legal and regulated aspects as well as its compliance with the same (for example, quality, environment, legal aspects concerning the CO's activity, associated risks, etc.);
- e) to re-examine the granting of resources for phase 2 audit and agree with the CO on the details of phase 2 audit;
- f) to plan phase 2 audit acquiring sufficient knowledge concerning the CO's management system and activities, with reference to possible significant aspects;
- g) to assess that the level of implementation of the management system proves that the CO is ready for phase 2 audit.

At least part of phase 1 audit will be carried out at the CO's premises, should the distance of the site undergoing the audit not be excessive.

The aim of phase 2 audit is to assess the implementation and effectiveness of the CO's management system.

Phase 2 audit must be carried out at the CO's site(s) and must concern at least the following aspects:

- a) information and evidence concerning the compliance with all regulatory requirements of the applicable management system or with other regulatory documents;
- b) monitoring, measurement, presentation of a financial statement and re-examination of services, with reference to the fundamental aims and targets of the actual services;
- c) the CO's management system and services with reference to compliance with legal precepts;
- d) the keeping under control of the CO's procedures;
- e) responsibility of the manager's office concerning the CO's policies;
- f) connections among regulatory requirements, policies, aims and targets of services, all applicable legal precepts, responsibilities, personnel's competence, activities, procedures.

Audits are carried out in compliance with regulation UNI EN ISO 19011.

Annex 1 describes the sampling modalities for the audits of FOE-Agriculture; FOE-Farming; FOE-CoC.

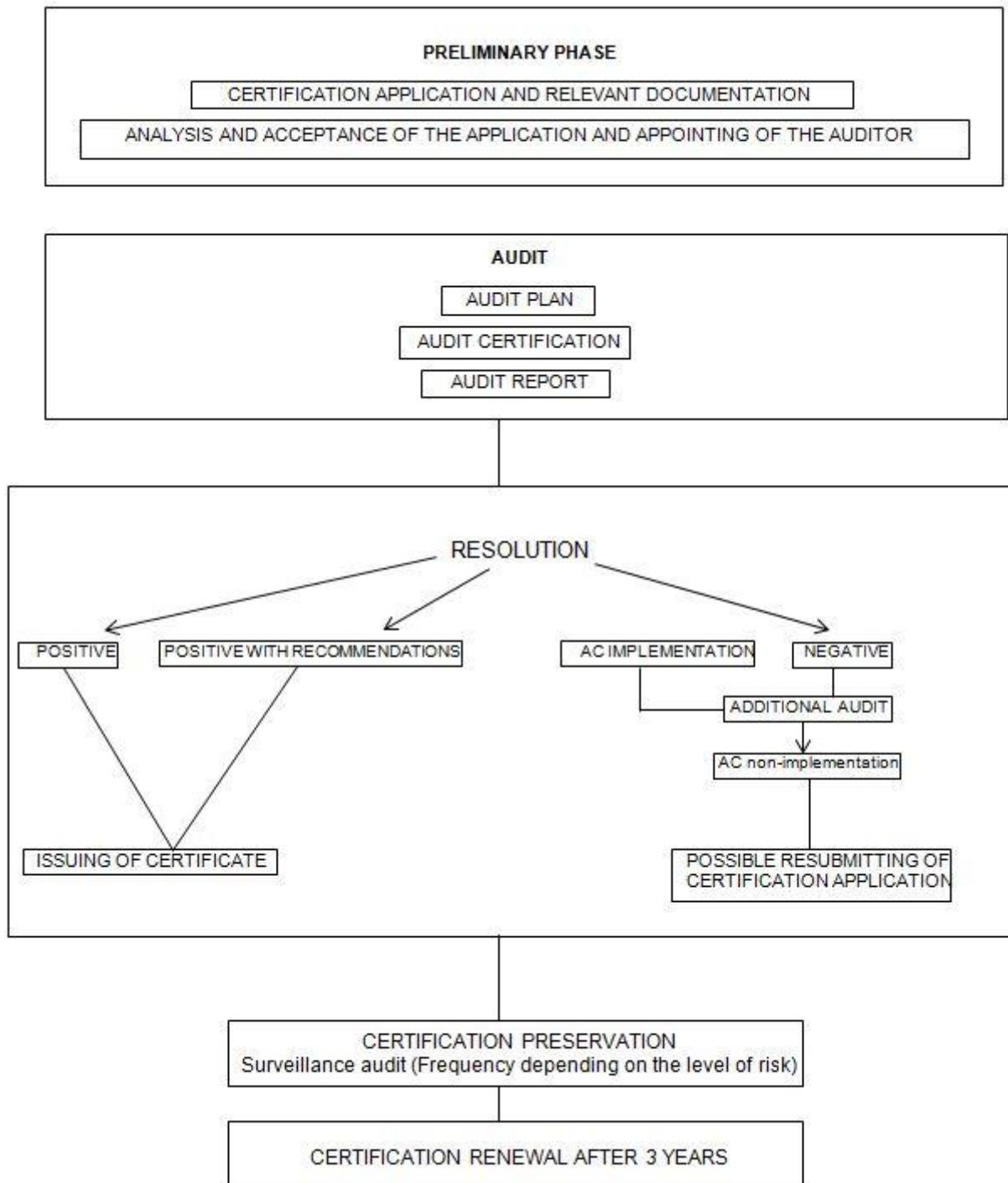
3.2 FOE-CoC Certification

The certification process consists of three main phases:

- 1) Evaluation
- 2) Review
- 3) Decision

The sampling methods for the FOE-CoC audit are identified in Appendix 1

Fig. 1: Certification procedure and preservation.



3.3 Decision

The decision to grant or refuse certification/renewal is up to the CBs according to the type of Non-Conformity (NC), if found during the audit and during the examination of any other relevant information. No certificates may be issued until all Major NC have been closed.

The NC differ based on the importance of disregarded requirements, as follows:

- **For essential requirements:** a 100% compliance is required so that the Certifying Body can recommend the company for certification. Any deficiency related to these requirements shall be considered a Major Non-Conformity and relative corrective actions will have to be implemented within a maximum of three months from the date the Non Conformity is assessed. The company must provide satisfactory evidence to the CB regarding the correction of all Major Non-Conformities, even through additional audits if necessary.

- **For important requirements:** a 100% compliance is required so that the Certifying Body can recommend the company for certification. Any deficiency related to these requirements shall be considered a Minor Non-Conformity and proposals for relevant corrective actions (statement of purpose and action plan), must be submitted to the CB within a maximum of three weeks from the date the Non Conformity is assessed. In the proposal made, the company must include the timeline for the completion of each corrective action.
The certification may be granted only after the corrective action is accepted by CB with the relative implementation timeline.

- **Recommended Indicators:** compliance with these requirements is not strictly required in order to be recommended for certification. However, during verification all aspects of these requirements will be subject to control and any deficiencies will be highlighted in the audit report in the form of Recommendation. The company will have to assess the need for corrective actions and, by the next inspection, must inform the Certification Body of decisions taken and corrective actions implemented.

The outcome of the decision must be communicated to the WSO, together with the issuance of the certificate by sending the certificate.

The certificate is valid for three years and must contain at least the following information:

- the business name,
- the sites covered by certification
- the product to be certified (the scientific species name) for the CoC diagram
- the reference standards with the current revision,
- the level of certification,
- the number of the certificate,
- the date of issue.
- the expiry date
- the CB
- the name and surname of the ATL

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

3.4 Publication of the summary report of the audit for FOE-Agriculture; FOE-Farming; FOE-CoC

The CB will have to develop a summary report of the audit (the minimum content of which are included in Annex 2), which must be confirmed by the CO and sent to the WSO within one month after notification of the certification/monitoring; this summary must be made available to the public through the website of the WSO at the discretion of the certified body.

3.5 Use of Friend of the Earth logo

The logo Friend of the Earth can be used by the applicant (certificate holder) jointly with individual or collective brands.

As regards the rules for using the logo Friend of the Earth, refer to document FOE_Logo: "Rules for the use of Friend of the Earth logo".

The WSO manages the rights for using the logo Friend of the Earth; the CB must verify the use of the logo granted to the CO.

Other uses different from what provided for by document FOE_Logo: "Rules for the use of Friend of the Earth logo" must be approved by WSO.

3.6 Certification preservation and renewal

3.6.1 Surveillance Audit

The CB shall carry out a surveillance audit in order to verify that the companies remains compliant with the requirements provided for by the certification scheme of Friend of the Earth. Surveillance audits are conducted within 18 months from the closing date of the audit. Audits are carried out in compliance with regulation UNI EN ISO 19011.

Annex 1 describes the sampling modalities.

3.6.2 Certification Renewal Audit

Upon the expiry of the validity period of the certificate - 3 (three) years – the audit for certification renewal is carried out.

The renewal audit, in addition to rechecking the entire the management system are oriented mainly on the NCs found during the certification audit and on the CAs object of verification, besides the sampling of fishing boats or aquaculture sites possibly not sampled previously. Audits are carried out in compliance with regulation UNI EN ISO 19011.

Annex 1 describes the sampling modalities.

3.6.3 Certification suspension and revocation

After the issuing of the certification and during its preservation period, **the CB can suspend the certificate:**

- a) should the Organization use or advertise improperly or deceitfully the certification obtained;
- b) should the Organization oppose or hinder the execution of audit activities;

- c) should the Organization not comply with the financial commitments undertaken when defining the contract with OdC
- d) should the audits identify particularly serious NCs;
- e) should the Organization not resolve the ACs upon the CB's finding of particularly serious NCs;
- f) should the Organization use the logo Friend of the Earth without receiving its license by WSO or should it not pay the annual share for the use of the logo (if owed).

The CB shall communicate to the Organization the period of time within which consequent CAs must be carried out; the suspension measure is also notified to WSO.

The suspension may be revoked after a supplementary audit is conducted which highlights that the causes that led to the decision have been resolved; the removal of the reasons for the suspension must take place within a maximum period of 90 days, penalty the revocation of the certificate and its use. The cost of the supplementary audit is at the applicant's expense. In the period comprised between the suspension of the certificate and the revocation of the suspension, the products obtained cannot be considered compliant.

The revocation of the certification entails the immediate prohibition for the Organization to use the certificate and/or the withdrawal of all acceptance certificates. The decision concerning revocation and related reasons must be communicated to the Organization and to WSO.

4 - BASIC QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS OF THE AUDITOR EMPLOYED FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF FOE-Agriculture; FOE-Farming; FOE-CoC

4.1 Basic requirements / Generalities for FOE-Agriculture; FOE-Farming

For an effective, accurate and reliable carrying out of audits for the assessment of FOE-Agriculture and FOE-Farming, the personnel in charge of the audits must have at least the following fundamental competences:

- a) Friend of the Earth documents concerning the certification scheme object of assessment;
- b) UNI EN ISO 19011 and mastery of related assessment techniques and modalities;
- c) procedures implemented within the ambit of the certification scheme object of assessment, and sufficient knowledge of related products/services, including laws – with reference to the applicable sectors.

Said competences can be concentrated in a single auditor or be divided among the personnel composing the Audit Group.

The Audit Team Leader must have one of the following degrees: Degree in Biology, Agriculture, Natural Sciences, Environmental Science, Environmental Engineering, or other degree related to technology or food safety. In alternative, a high school degree and:

- must have carried out at least 5 Audits as regards agricultural/farming activities
- must have carried out at least 5 Audits in Food processing companies
- has engaged in business working as an agronomist

- have at least two years experience of audit in the food industry

NOTE: social responsibility, in the absence of requirements defined for auditors, cannot be the object of accreditation, except for countries that adhere to ILO agreements which do not require specific skills and therefore the accreditation can be granted.

4.2 Basic requirements / Generalities for CoC

The auditors employed for the CoC must comply with what provided for by paragraph 4 (points a, b and c) for auditors of FOE-Agriculture and FOE-Farming. Moreover, they must have a specific competence in the sector object of the audit.

As regards training and specialization, the CoC auditor must have carried out at least three audits on products belonging to the sectors of reference, and the AG must be composed of an Auditor and/or Expert qualified as regards said sectors.

Annex 1 – Temporal and spatial distribution of the sample

1.1 Certification of FOE-Agriculture, FOE-Farming, FOE-CoC

The number of working days necessary for carrying out the certification is proportional to the number of fields/farms to be inspected, as well as the number and complexity of transformation companies to visit.

The first element to consider is the level of homogeneity of the fields/farms composing the company object of the audit. If the fields/farms satisfies all the following homogeneity requirements, that is:

- use the same management practices,
- have the same production capacity, and therefore environmental impact,
- placed in the same region and subjected by the same rules of reference,
- handled in a uniform manner and by the same owner.

It is sufficient to visit the square root (as described in Table 1) of the total number of fields/farms that supply the company applying for the certification of its product

Table 1. Calculation of the number of fields/farms to visit on the basis of the total number of fields/farms object of the audit.

Number of fishing boats	Sample
Up to 30	$x = \text{SQROOT}(n \text{ fields/farms})$
31-300	$x = 0.8 * \text{SQROOT}(n \text{ fields/farms})$
301-3,000	$x = 0.6 * \text{SQROOT}(n \text{ fields/farms})$
3,000-10,000	$x = 0.4 * \text{SQROOT}(n \text{ fields/farms})$
More than 10,001	$x = 0.2 * \text{SQROOT}(n \text{ fields/farms})$

Where:

- x indicates the minimum number of fields/farms, rounded up to the higher integer, subject to audit,
- n indicates the number of fields/farms belonging to the fleet that supplies the CO object of certification.

Should the fields/farms object of the audit not satisfy the homogeneity requirements mentioned above, it is necessary to visit the square root of each homogeneous subset of fields/farms (as described in Table 1).

In order to quantify the number of working days, Table 2 was created as follows.

Table 2

Object of audit	Working days in situ
FOE-Agriculture, FOE-Livestock	0.875 (7 hours)
FOE-CoC	0.125 (1 hour)

One inspection day is composed of 8 hours, transfers excluded.

Increasing variances (at the most 100%) or decreasing variances (at the most 50%) entailing an assessment time different from what established by the modalities defined in Table 2, must be reported and justified.

Said variances can depend on various factors, such as:

- a)** possible integration with certification ISO 9001 and/or ISO 14001;
- b)** management complexity inferable from the CB's forms for collecting information on the company;
- c)** quantity and complexity of the legislation and environmental regulations of reference (for example: simplifications due to the extremely restrictive legislation, with very severe controls of single properties; complications due to a bland legislation and rare controls);
- d)** Organizational complexity (for example: simplifications due to the presence of documental and control evidence already carried out by the Public Administration – implementation of the principle of subsidiarity; complications concerning inspections due to the CO's complex Organization);
- e)** other peculiarities.

The number of transformation companies to be visited shall be established on the basis of the Square Root, for each group of companies with property and/or environmental and social management systems and for each production phase (for example: semi-finished product, finished product, product distributed to consumers).

1.2 Renewal Audit

The time devoted to the Certification Renewal Audit must be proportional to the time devoted to the certification assessment: renewal audits require 2/3 of the time devoted to certification audits.

1.3 Additional Audits

Non-planned audits (additional audits due to, for example, very serious NCs) can last less, or with mean values at 1 day, in any case with values proportionate to the seriousness of the NCs or to the specific case, and however justified by the CB.

1.4 Surveillance Audit

The time devoted to the Surveillance Audit must be proportional to the time devoted to certification assessment: surveillance audits require 1/3 of the time devoted to certification audits and however not less than 0.5 days.

Annex 2 – Minimum contents of the audit summary report

The Audit Summary Report must be made public and provided in writing. It must include at least the following minimum contents:

- Data on the Organization
 - Reference concerning the review in force of FOE-Agriculture, FOE-Farming, FOE-CoC
 - General characteristics of the production unit, object of certification
 - Plant/Animal species object of certification
 - Production zone
- Information on the audit
 - Information on the audit carried out (date, duration, auditor's name, CB, indicators evaluated)
 - Possible contacts with the parties involved (stakeholders), dates and main results
- Outcome of the audit: (that is, the certificate issued, renewed or suspended, possible NCs).