

REGULATION FOR CERTIFICATION RSPO STANDARD

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Editing RSC	Check RAQ	Approval CDA	Type of revision	Date	Ed.	Rev.
Pulga A.	Razionale V.	G. Paparella (CDA)	Edition	09.02.12	02	00
Pulga A.	Razionale V.	G. Cavinato (CDA)	Revision	10.08.13	02	01
M. Coli	V. Razionale	P. Campus	Edition	10.04.2016	03	00
M. Coli	V. Razionale	P. Campus	Revision	10.09.2018	03	01
M. Coli	V. Razionale	P. Campus	Revision	31.12.2019	03	02
M. Coli	V. Razionale	P. Campus	Revision	15.06.2021	03	03
L. Pizzato	V. Razionale	P. Lumaca	Revision	09.08.2023	03	04
L. Pizzato	V. Razionale	P. Lumaca	Revision	25.10.2023	03	05

1. Foreword: principles

ICEA was accredited to provide RSPO Supply Chain Certificate on 05/03/2014 by ASI.

All operators who take legal ownership and physically handle (including receipt into storage tanks) RSPO Certified Sustainable oil palm products need to be RSPO supply chain certified. This requirement applies up to and including the end product manufacturer. After the end product manufacturer, there is no further requirement for certification.

Operators who take legal ownership and physically handle (including receipt into storage tanks and outsourced contractors) the RSPO Certified oil palm products also include mill operators. To achieve supply chain certification, a mill must demonstrate compliance with the intent and simplified version of the requirements of the RSPO Supply Chain Standard depending on which supply chain model(s) it is trading under.

Outsourced contractors shall be considered high risk if physically transforming products or if there is a risk of uncontrolled, non-deliberate or accidental cross-contamination resulting in mixing of certified and non-certified products.

Any site that is looking for certification shall be operational at least three (3) months before an initial certification audit can be conducted.

The Supply Chain Certification audit shall take place on individual site level. Multi-site certification is possible under specific requirements on sampling.

This Regulation describes procedures followed by ICEA for the control and certification activities based on RSPO standard and system.

Validity of general principles regulating ICEA control and certification activities are confirmed, and they are summarized in the following list.

- a) ICEA guarantees admission of Applicants to the certification schemes governed by this Regulation, without any discrimination whatsoever. In particular:
 - there are no undue economic or other conditions applied;
 - qualification for evaluation and certification is not conditioned by the size of the unit or the membership of particular associations or groups.
- b) ICEA undertakes to apply current procedures and expenditure accounts based on its own national List of Fees in force, guaranteeing uniformity of application.
- c) The request for inspection and certification does not entail any obligation for the concerned Organization to utilize other ICEA's services not contemplated in this Regulation.
- d) The request for inspection and certification does not entail any obligation for the concerned Organization to join the ICEA Consortium or any other related body.

On the Italian territory, ICEA carries out its activity with Italian staff and documents in the Italian language; in case of documents to be provided directly to RSPO (summary report, check list, certificate), they will be in English language.

For inspection and certification activities abroad, ICEA undertakes to use, when necessary, the English language or the language used by the local populations, reserving the possibility to utilize translators and interpreters appreciated for their ability and accepted also by the operators under the inspection scheme.

The same principle is adopted when drawing up and distributing documents which are necessary for requesting, obtaining and maintaining the certification (e.g. standards, regulations, registration forms, etc.)

Certification documents are generally issued in English.

2. General conditions

2.1 Scope of the regulation and application field

This document shows procedures to comply with, in order to obtain and maintain RSPO certification - "Supply Chain Certification System" based on RSPO standard, Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (Version February 2020).

This certification is for those companies using sustainable palm oil models after and including refinery.

In this regulation are described these particular conditions, in addition or to substitute those listed in the ICEA Operative Manual and related procedures, that are completely applicable to RSPO scheme.

The purpose of the certification of the products, processes and services of an organization is to give, through initial assessment and subsequent surveillance, an independent, trustworthy assurance that such products, processes and services comply with rules and/or requirements specified and contained in a Technical Reference Standard.

Application field of this regulation is trade and use of refined sustainable palm oil.

This regulation is not applicable to the oil palms agriculture production.

ICEA comply with the accreditation body's requirements pertaining to accreditation decisions.

2.2 References

References are:

- RSPO Principles and Criteria for Sustainable Palm Oil Production
- RSPO Guidelines on Communications and Claims
- RSPO Supply Chain Certification Systems (Rev. Feb. 2020)
- RSPO Supply Chain Certification Standard (Rev. Feb. 2020)

Other references:

- EN UNI 17065:2012.
- Guide Line to ISO/IEC Guide 65:1996. Issue 2 (IAF GD 5:2006)
- ISO/IEC 17020:2004. Criteria for inspection bodies..
- ISO/IEC 17025:2005. General requirements for laboratories.
- ISO/IEC 17011. Criteria for accreditation bodies.
- ISO 19011 Guide lines for audits on quality systems.

Each form, however, has to be referred to the specific application fields required for RSPO certification.


2.3 Terms of reference, definitions and abbreviations

Definitions and terms, included in §2 of RSPO Supply Chain Certification Systems (Rev. February 2020), are valid and are considered as part of this chapter.

2.4 Side, organization and personnel

ICEA office competent for RSPO control and certification (following define as ICEA RSPO Office) is based on the ICEA national side, via Giovanni Brugnoli, 15 (Phone +39 051 272986 – fax +39 051 232011 – E mail rspo@icea.bio).

ICEA RSPO Office includes the following professional figures:

- ICEA RSPO Office Manager; 
- ICEA RSPO Certification Manager;
- Technical and operative personnel;
- Auditors and/or evaluators.

ICEA RSPO Office Manager is the ICEA responsible for the RSPO certification scheme and related activity, while certification is under responsibility of the ICEA RSPO Certification Manager.

ICEA RSPO Certification Manager cannot be involved in any other part of certification system (he/she cannot provide audits or similar activities).

ICEA defines the minimum competencies of lead assessors and assessment teams. As a minimum, these are consistent with the specifications defined in ISO 19011: 2018 Guidelines for quality and/or environmental management systems auditing, with modifications to consider the specific requirements of RSPO Supply Chain Certification, as described below.

All of the audit team members auditing the Supply Chain Standard shall be of a lead auditor status. The lead auditors shall demonstrate, the following:

- a) Possess a minimum of three (3) years field working experience in similar supply chains, or equivalent related to and as necessary for the certification process. Field working experience refers to direct working experience or practical experience in auditing the palm oil sector;
- b) Successful completion of internationally recognized ISO 9001 lead auditor course;
- c) Successful completion of an RSPO-endorsed Supply Chain Lead Auditor's course and a refresher course every three (3) years;
- d) Possess language skills suitable for verbal and written communication with the client and the client's relevant stakeholder groups. This can be supplemented by a translator;
- e) Advanced post high school education degree or diploma or equivalent;
- f) Technical skills and qualifications related to and as necessary for the certification process, like demonstrable relevant experience in other relevant certification schemes;
- g) Supervised period of training in practical auditing by a qualified lead auditor in similar certification schemes (i.e. including traceability), having successfully conducted a minimum of three (3) audits at different organizations and participate in 3 different types of RSPO SC audits

(i.e. a combination of Initial Certification and Surveillance audit or Initial certification and Recertification audits) at different organisations, under the direction and guidance of a qualified Lead Auditor. The performance of the trainee lead auditor shall be evaluated on-site.

ICEA registers all of its approved Lead Auditor (including freelance) with ASI, including details of qualifications and competencies.

ICEA evaluates the performance of each Lead Auditors in witness assessment at least once every three (3) years.

The lead auditor shall be impartial and shall not show favourable treatment to any organization.

2.5 List of applicable forms

- RSPO REGULATION FOR CERTIFICATION
- M RC RSPO 01: Certification Contract
- M RC RSPO 02: Fee chart
- M RC RSPO 03: Check List
- M RC RSPO 04: Summary Report
- M RC RSPO 05: Certificate
- M RC RSPO 06: Company Description
- IS.CON RSPO_Istruzione Controllo

2.6 Fee chart

Costs related to RSPO control and certification services, in charge to interested organizations, are listed in the ICEA RSPO Fee chart (M RC RSPO 02).

3. Conditions for obtaining and maintaining the certification

3.1 Application for Certification

The General Chain of Custody requirements of the RSPO Supply Chain Standard shall apply to any organization in the supply chain that takes legal ownership and physically handles RSPO Certified Sustainable oil palm products at a location under the control of the organization including outsourced contractors. After the end product manufacturer, there is no further requirement for certification.

Any site that is looking for certification shall be operational at least three (3) months before an initial certification audit can be conducted.

The Supply Chain Certification shall take place at site level. Multi-site certification or group certification is possible under specific requirements.

Outsourced contractors shall be considered high risk if physically transforming products or if there is a risk of uncontrolled, non-deliberate or accidental cross-contamination resulting in mixing of certified and non-certified products.

Application of those operators interested in RSPO certification has to comply with requirements listed in RSPO documentation, as described in the previous chapter.

Scheme's rules are described in RSPO Supply Chain Certification Systems.

ICEA ensures that any organization seeking or holding certification against the requirements of the RSPO is provided with necessary information concerning the RSPO Supply Chain Certification and the RSPO Rules on Market Communication and Claims.

If potential clients have any further questions concerning the RSPO these will be directed to the RSPO Secretariat.

Organization, interested to be RSPO certified by ICEA, applies to the ICEA RSPO Office for information about RSPO, forwarding its basic data.

ICEA RSPO Office sends information documentation, including RSPO Fee Chart, RSPO Contract for certification, RSPO Company Description (application), a letter for applicant with reference to obligation to be RSPO member and RSPO website information, RSPO rules and ICEA RSPO Regulation for Certification.

When organization decides to accept the fee (to be calculated directly on the fee chart) and the contract obligations, organization has to send to ICEA the following fulfilled and signed forms:

- M RC RSPO 01: Certification Contract
- M RC RSPO 02: Fee chart
- M RC RSPO 06: Company Description

By signing the RSPO Contract for certification, the Applicant Organization fully accepts to:

- Subdue the organization to ICEA controls based on RSPO Supply Chain Certification Systems and on this Regulation for Certification, and to allow staff appointed by ICEA or by accreditation bodies, to access documentation, records, areas and personnel involved in certification;
- implement and maintain a documented management system demonstrating compliance with RSPO Principles and Criteria for Sustainable Palm Oil Production and RSPO Supply Chain Certification Systems;
- Accept, in case of infraction, sanctions as listed from § 5.3.17 to § 5.3.31 of RSPO Supply Chain Certification Systems;
- Accept economic conditions listed in the RSPO Contract for certification and related fee chart, pay to ICEA the fees due for inspection and certification activity (all expenditures included), no matter what the outcome is;
- promptly inform ICEA of any change in the Organization and in the data declared in the application;
- inform ICEA of the Organization's involvement in cases of judicial proceedings for infringement of laws on product/process/service responsibility or related to the certification obtained;

If the Applicant Organization considers it advisable, when it sign the RSPO Fee Chart, it may ask ICEA to carry out a pre-certification inspection visit.

The pre-certification visit is optional. The purpose of the pre-certification inspection visit is to determine to what extent the Applicant Organization is prepared to face the certification process and guarantee compliance with the RSPO standard and with this Regulation.

ICEA may synchronise and combine RSPO Supply Chain audits with other on-site audits (such as food safety, quality, etc.) where possible and appropriate.

ICEA recognises certificates previously issued under RSPO Supply Chain Certification Systems by other RSPO approved certification bodies.

3.2 Preliminary documents evaluation and basic requirements

When RSPO Fee Chart and RSPO Contract for certification are signed and received, ICEA sends to the applicant a list of required forms necessary for the preliminary documents' evaluation. The preliminary documents' evaluation is made by an assessor.

The appointed assessor will evaluate all the documents submitted by the Applicant Organization with a view to verifying their compliance with RSPO and this Regulation.

In case of negative evaluation due to documental lack or inconsistency, the appointed assessor informs the applicant about all lacks and non-compliances and about specific day term to send updated required documentation.

If the applicant cannot provide required documentation in the appointed day term, application has to be considered expired and it can be presented again only with a new debit of the fee due to ICEA for the organization evaluation (una tantum fee).

In case of positive evaluation, the appointed assessor records, in the ICEA system, all data related to the organization.

3.3 Inspections plan and on-site assessment (initial and surveillance audits)

ICEA RSPO Office plans inspections of applicants (and in general of operators included in the certification system) with methodologies and frequency required RSPO Supply Chain Certification Systems.

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

In general, as a minimum, inspections are performed annually, before the expiry of license period.

ICEA will undertake the first annual surveillance audit within twelve (12) months of the certificate issue date, but not earlier than eight (8) months after the certificate issue date. The subsequent annual surveillance audits shall be undertaken within twelve (12) months of the license expiration dates, but not earlier than eight (8) months after the expiration date.

A request for time extension of up to a maximum of three (3) months may be approved by the RSPO Secretariat. If a surveillance audit is not conducted within the required timeframe, unless due to the actions of ICEA itself, ICEA will notify the organization and the RSPO Secretariat that the certificate is suspended, until the surveillance audit has been undertaken and the certification decision has been approved by RSPO Secretariat. The surveillance audit shall then be undertaken within six (6) months of the suspension date, otherwise an initial certification audit shall be carried out.

For audit of a single food service company, the audit shall involve onsite audits for initial certification, surveillance, and recertification audits.

In the case where the food service company uses less than 1000kg of oil palm products annually, then a remote audit by ICEA is allowed for surveillance audits.

For audit of multisite and group certification of the food service companies refer to Annex 2 and Annex 3 of RSPO Supply Chain Certification Systems.

Inspections are done by qualified, trained and monitored ICEA personnel; these activities are done following criteria listed in RSPO Supply Chain Certification Systems as described in §2.4 of this document.

The assessment starts with an opening meeting during which the lead assessor informs the certification applicant about the certification process, agree logistics for the assessment, confirm access to all relevant documents, field sites and personnel, explain confidentiality and conflicts of interest and agree on the timing of the closing meeting.

During the on-site audit, the assessor shall review whether the organizational systems, the management systems and the operational systems, including any documented policies and procedures of the operation seeking or holding certification, are sufficient and adequately implemented to meet the intent and requirements of the RSPO Supply Chain Certification Systems. The assessor clarifies any issues or areas of concern with the organization seeking or holding certification.

In cases where an operation seeking or holding certification outsources activities to independent third parties the auditor will assess, based on a risk assessment, whether a visit to the subcontractor is required. If the outsourced contractor holds RSPO Supply Chain certification, then it does not require an additional audit.

ICEA verifies compliance of all outsourced activities (as specified in the RSPO SCC Standard) conducted by subcontractors engaged by an organization seeking or holding certification with the intent and requirements of the RSPO Supply Chain Certification Standard.

ICEA verifies company's confirmed estimated volume of palm oil / palm kernel oil content (in separate categories) used in the RSPO certified oil palm products aggregated over a period of twelve (12) months (Annex 1 is provided and verified). The record shall consist of aggregated volume purchased (input) and actual or estimated claimed (output) over a period of twelve (12) months, except for the period prior to Annual Surveillance Audit 11 (ASA1).

For organizations using the RSPO IT Platform, the trading records have to be verified.

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

Any palm oil claim, including those highlighting the absence of palm oil, must be highlighted during the audit to ensure that all claims comply with the requirements of RSPO Rules on Market Communication and Claims. ICEA confirms the outcome of these audits, to be conducted annually, to RSPO who may continue to grant a trademark license or withdraw permission based upon the audit findings.

Pertinent RSPO Supply Chain records relating to the receipt, processing and supply of certified oil palm products being supplied to buyers wishing to make a RSPO claim to the certified oil palm products shall be reviewed retrospectively until the previous audit (when applicable).

ICEA defines its sampling method to verify the records of transaction since last audit as follow: at least DDT/invoices for 3 different purchases and sales (3 for each) have to be evaluated, when possible, for 3 different suppliers and 3 different clients.

At every surveillance audit, ICEA will verify the company's annual aggregated volume to determine whether the organization is under the correct RSPO membership category and that no overselling have taken place.

Only for audits involving mills:

- ICEA will assess whether an interim visit is required to confirm quantities if a site has informed them of a projected overproduction.
- if the higher production volume is confirmed to be correct ICEA will provide the information to RSPO Secretariat through RSPO IT platform.
- if there is underproduction, ICEA will provide the information to the RSPO Secretariat and the mill shall compensate the excess volume sold, should there be any, through buy-back of RSPO Credits.

Palm oil 'micro users' (organizations which use a very low volume of oil palm products, i.e. less than 1000KG of oil palm products per annum) shall undergo a remote audit by ICEA instead of undergoing surveillance audits. Initial certification audits and recertification audits shall take place as normal.

3.4 Inspection results and certification

At the conclusion of the on-site audit the assessor conducts a closing meeting with the client's representative(s). During the closing meeting the ICEA ensures that:

- The client is informed that until they receive written confirmation of their RSPO Supply Chain certification registration and its expiry date that they are not certified and cannot make any claims concerning certification;
- The client is made aware what actions they may have to complete before certification can proceed;
- The client is made aware of the findings of the audit team including any deficiencies which may result in a negative certification decision or which may require further actions to be completed before a certification decision can be taken.
- The client is aware that non-conformances issued for RSPO Supply Chain certification are all major.

A detailed record is compiled of the closing meeting including a list of the participants in the meeting, a detailed description of the information supplied to the operation seeking or holding certification, any information additionally supplied by the operation, and any other information exchanged, including a written record of the findings of the audit team and decision making by the duly designated representatives of ICEA. No additional findings should be issued after the closing meeting record been signed by both parties.

The record of the closing meeting shall be signed by the lead auditor and the most senior relevant management representative of the operation seeking or holding certification.

ICEA inspectors have to record inspection results on M RC RSPO 04: Summary Report and on M RC RSPO 03: Check list.

All non-conformances shall be addressed to the satisfaction of ICEA by the organization before certification is granted.

In case of initial audit, if non-conformances are not satisfactorily addressed within three (3) months of the initial certification audit, a full re-audit shall be required. The CB shall assess the effectiveness of the corrective and/or preventive actions taken before closing out the non-conformances.

Where objective evidence indicates that there has been a demonstrable breakdown in the supply chain caused by the certified client's actions or inactions, and that oil palm products have been or are about to be shipped which are falsely identified as RSPO certified product, then immediate action shall be taken by ICEA, and the RSPO Supply Chain certification is suspended until such time that the situation has been addressed.

ICEA will inform RSPO Secretariat within 24 hours of the decision to suspend certification.

In case of surveillance audits, non-conformances raised during surveillance audit against a certified organization are serious and the integrity of the RSPO Supply Chain Certification is at risk.

Maximum of one (1) month is given to the certified organization to address the non-conformance.

ICEA will assess the effectiveness of the corrective and/or preventive actions taken within 14 days after submission of the proposed corrective actions. Should the non-conformance not be satisfactorily addressed within the one (1) month plus 14 days timeframe, the certificate will be suspended and subsequently terminated if the non-conformance is not addressed within an agreed timeframe as set by CB and client, not longer than three (3) months from the last day of the audit. A full re-audit will then be necessary.

If no non-conformances are observed at an audit or when the corrective action plan has satisfactorily addressed the raised non-conformance(s), the client shall be recommended for re-certification.

If certification is suspended or terminated, for example on the basis of lack of effective or non-satisfactory corrective actions, the site shall cease from making any certified product claim from the termination or suspension date and inform their supply chain clients within three (3) business days.

Applicant documentation and inspection results are evaluated by the ICEA RSPO Certification Manager, who decides, in case of positive evaluation, to issue the required certification if all applicable RSPO requirements are respected.

Validity, model and format of certificate, such as application field of the product, are described in Annex 4 of RSPO Supply Chain Certification Systems.

Certificate is issued following:

- ICEA RSPO Certification Manager positive evaluation and related decision
- Send, from the applicant, of eventual updated documentation to demonstrate eventual non-compliances resolution as required by ICEA, even if the evaluation is positive

Certificate is signed by the ICEA RSPO Certification Manager.

Upon granting certification to the organization, ICEA will forward a copy of the Supply Chain Certificate and the Supply Chain Audit Report to the RSPO Secretariat by uploading the documents and requesting for a license in the RSPO IT platform within 14 days of closure of the last non-conformance or of the audit date (in case no non-conformances are observed during the audit).

RSPO Secretariat will ensure the Supply Chain Certificate is available on the RSPO website. See RSPO website www.rsपो.org

3.5 Use and maintaining of Certification

The validity of certificates is 5 years with annual surveillance. The certificate shall only be valid upon activation of the supply chain licence in the RSPO IT platform.

Before the end of the initial certification period a full re-audit will need to occur in order to maintain continuity of certification.

Date of initial validity, written on certificate, is the date of ICEA RSPO Certification Manager certification decision, after that all NC are solved.

Date of initial validity, written on certificate, is the date of certificate issuing.

A request for certification time extension of up to a maximum of three (3) months needs to be requested to and approved by the RSPO Secretariat. If the certificate is not issued within the required timeframe, unless due to the actions of ICEA itself, ICEA will notify the organization and the RSPO Secretariat that the certificate is suspended, until the necessary audit has been undertaken and the certification decision has been approved by RSPO Secretariat.

Certification reduction can be recognized by ICEA for reduction of:

- Units' number
- Scope
- Supply Chain model

It can be authorized by ICEA, after the related documental review, following a specific organization' request or as consequence of NC raised during an audit.

3.6 Multi-site

Multi-site is permitted under certain circumstances.

If a multi-site certification audit is conducted all rules in Annex 2 of RSPO SCCS apply.

When a multi-site audit is conducted ICEA will determine that the client's management system is adequate to ensure all sites under its control meet the RSPO Supply Chain Certification Standard and the intent thereof.

A multi-site shall only be awarded if:

- The client's management system demonstrates it ensures compliance with the RSPO Supply Chain Certification Standard for all sites under its management; and
- Compliance with the RSPO Supply Chain Certification Standard is established in all sites included in the audit sample.

3.6.1 Criteria for eligibility

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

3.6.2 Criteria for operation

- A common centrally administered and documented internal control system (ICS) will be used and monitored by the Central Office.
- The Central Office will appoint a management representative with overall responsibility for ensuring that all participating sites comply with the RSPO supply chain certification standard. Internal audits of all participating sites will be carried out on an annual basis and will be reviewed and recorded at the Central Office.
- Different operations within the multi-site certification will be grouped by sets.

The main sets shall operate a common management system and will be classified as follows:

- Refining and blending
- Kernel Crushing Plants
- Storage and distribution
- Processing (including secondary processing after the refinery)
- Production (final manufacture of end product)

- At least one (1) site from each set will be included in an audit sample.

Central Office functions will be audited annually.

3.6.3 Certificates

- Certificates of compliance will be awarded to organizations who have been audited by the ICEA and who have demonstrated full compliance.
- The certificate will be issued in the name of the Central Office, listing all other participating sites.
- The supply chain model and/or scope of certification of the participating sites if it differs from the central office.
- Certificates will be valid for a period of five (5) years and subject to annual surveillance audits.

3.6.4 Sample audit formula

Certification audit

Square root of the total number of participating sites, rounded up to the next whole number, plus Central Office.

Surveillance audit

Square root of the total number of participating sites, multiplied by a coefficient of 0.6 rounded up to the next whole number, plus Central Office.

Re-certification audit

Square root of the total number of participating sites, multiplied by a coefficient of 0.8 rounded up to the next whole number, plus Central Office.

ICEA ensures that all sites are to be audited within the 5-year cycle.

3.6.5 Scope extension

To add a site into an existing multi-site certification:

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

3.6.6 Auditing multisite food service companies

The audit includes on-site audit to the Central Office and all purchasing facilities for initial certification, surveillance audits, and recertification. In the case where all the purchases are controlled through strict protocol centrally by the Central Office, then only the Central Office has to be audited through a site visit, with the regional purchasing office audited remotely, if deemed necessary.

Sample audit formula mentioned in 3.6.4 above, which includes onsite audits of the sampled participating sites are not required for this multisite food service companies. However, during surveillance audits, the sample audit formula shall be used to carry out remote audit sampling of

participating sites' documentation during the site visit audit at the Central Office.

ICEA determines which participating sites documentation to be reviewed during the remote audit every year. The Central Office is then required to provide relevant information and documentation of the sampled participating sites to the auditor.

3.6.7 Suspension/removal

If there is a non-conformance at one (1) participating site this can lead to suspension of the whole multi-site certificate. The Central Office has the option to voluntarily remove that participating site from the multi-site certificate.

To add the site back in, scope extension rules apply (see section 3.6.5 on Scope extension, above).

3.7 Transfer of Certification Body

ICEA officially communicates with the old CB and RSPO. The old CB shall provide all reports, including non-conformance forms, to the new CB.

ICEA recognise certificates previously issued under RSPO Supply Chain Certification Systems by other RSPO accredited CBs.

Transfer of CB shall not be permitted until all major non-conformances are closed or all financial obligations have been met.

The new CB shall conduct a new audit assessment using the previous report as guidance.

After conclusion of the audit and reviewing of documentation, a new certificate shall be issued to the company by ICEA maintaining the previous expiry date. Upon issuance of the new certificate RSPO Secretariat shall be informed by uploading the new certificate to the RSPO IT Platform.

Transfer of certification body is allowed at any stage of the certification cycle.

3.8 Group certifications

Group certifications is permitted under certain circumstances.

If a group certification audit is conducted all rules in Annex 3 of RSPO SCCS apply.

When a group certification audit is conducted ICEA will determine that the client's management system is adequate to ensure all sites under its control meet the RSPO Supply Chain Certification Standard and the intent thereof.

A group certification shall only be awarded if:

- The client's management system demonstrates it ensures compliance with the RSPO Supply Chain Certification Standard for all sites under its management; and
- Compliance with the RSPO Supply Chain Certification Standard is established in all sites included in the audit sample.

3.8.1 Criteria for eligibility

- All members included in the group certification will be represented by a Group manager.
- The Group manager will document and implement clear rules regarding eligibility for members' participation in the certificate.
- All group members will have a legal and/or contractual relationship with the Group Manager.
- Group certification is not restricted to a single country and can be performed across borders.
- Group members will be:
 - Separate legal entities
 - Use up to 500 MT of oil palm products per year

Micro users can be part of group membership.

Palm oil mills cannot join a group, with the exception of independent palm oil mills without their own supply base and producing up to 5000 MT palm oil products per year.

3.8.2 Criteria for operation

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

A common centrally administered and documented internal control system (ICS) will be used and monitored by the Group manager.

The Group entity will appoint a Group Manager who is appointed management representative with overall responsibility for ensuring that all group members comply with the RSPO Supply Chain Certification standard requirements.

Internal audits of group members will be carried out on an annual basis and will be reviewed and recorded by the Group Manager.

Different operations within the Group certification will be grouped by sets. The main sets will operate a common management system and may be classified as follows:

- Refining and blending
- Transport and distribution
- Processing (including secondary processing after the refinery)
- Production (final manufacture of end product)

At least one (1) site from each set shall be included in an audit sample.
The Group Manager will be audited annually.

3.8.3 Certification

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

3.8.4 Audit formula

Initial Group manager audit

Upon application, the Group manager will be audited to ensure it can effectively manage a Group scheme and a maximum growth rate for the Group scheme for the first year is established between ICEA and the Group Manager.

During the first year, the Group manager conducts internal audits on its group members and submits these to ICEA who then adds the new members to the certificate up to the agreed maximum.

Group member initial audit

After twelve (12) months, ICEA will calculate the audit requirements for the Group scheme as follows;

The square root of the total number of members, rounded up to the next whole number plus Group manager audit.

3.8.5 Surveillance audits

After the first year, a group is allowed to grow by a maximum of double the number of members at the start of the year. At the end of the second year, or when the maximum growth is achieved, the audit sample is established for the following twelve (12) months, as follows.

Square root of number of existing members multiplied by 0.6 (or 0.8 in the fifth year the group has held certification and therefore recertification is required) rounded up to the next whole number plus square root of number of new members rounded up to the next whole number, plus Group manager audit.

This process is repeated every year the scheme grows. If in any year, the scheme does not grow or has negative growth then only one sample calculation is required.

To add a new member into an existing Group certification:

- Square root of number of group members to be added together with Group Manager to be audited.
- Internal audits of the sites that are to be added will be completed prior to adding to the Group certification.
- The Group manager has to show evidence of an internal audit of the new site.

If the Group scope extension is combined with the existing surveillance audits then this will be in addition to existing audit requirements.

3.8.6 Suspension / removal

If there is a non-conformance by a group member this can lead to suspension of the whole Group certificate. The Group Manager has the option to voluntarily remove that group member from the Group certificate.

To add the member back in, scope extension rules apply (see section 3.8.5 on Scope extension).

3.8.7 Group certification of food service companies

The audit shall include on-site audit of the Group Manager during initial certification, surveillance audits, and recertification.

Sample audit formula mentioned in 3.8.5 above, which includes on-site audits of the sampled group members' sites, are not required for this group certification food service companies. However, the sample audit formula shall be used to carry out remote audit of the group members during surveillance audits.

ICEA determines which group members' documentation to be reviewed during the remote audit every year.

3.9 Book and Claim Audit Process Requirements

Book and Claim audits shall be conducted once the qualifying level of 500 RSPO Credits have been claimed for a specific calendar year by an organisation. Where the claim is transferred, the qualifying level of 500 RSPO Credits applies to the organisation to which the claim is transferred. Once the qualifying level of 500 RSPO Credits have been claimed, organisations who have not completed the audit shall not be able to participate in the Book and Claim supply chain model. The Book and Claim audits shall either be conducted as a remote audit or combined with RSPO Supply Chain audits or other on-site audits (such as food safety, quality, etc.) where possible and appropriate.

Book and Claim audits shall review the volume of oil palm products used by the organisation, volumes claimed under the Book and Claim supply chain model and claims made by the organisation. The audit shall be under taken within twelve months (12) of the claim made.

The CB or auditor shall prepare an audit report on the outcomes of the audit.

If non-conformances are found, a maximum of one (1) month is to be given to the organisation to address the non-conformance. The CB shall assess the effectiveness of the corrective and/or preventive actions taken within 14 days after submission of the proposed corrective actions. Should the non-conformance not satisfactorily addressed within the one (1) month plus 14 days timeframe, the organisation shall not be able to participate in the Book and Claim supply chain model.

If no non-conformances are observed at an audit or when the corrective action plan has satisfactorily addressed the raised non-conformance(s), the client shall be licensed to participate in the Book and Claim supply chain model.

The CB shall forward the audit checklist to RSPO Secretariat within 14 days of closure of any nonconformance or for audit without non-conformance within 14 days of the last day of audit to the RSPO Secretariat via email to certification@rspo.org

4. Use of logo

RSPO trademark logo can be used on on-pack communication, on about-product communication, on corporate communications, but only RSPO members can receive written authorization to apply the trademark logo directly by RSPO.

RSPO trademark logo can be used only following and complying rules set forth in - RSPO Guidelines on Communications and Claims (RSPO Guidelines - RSPO C&C Guidelines).

Organization that wants to communicate its RSPO certification has to apply to RSPO for a specific authorization, sending copy of draft label with RSPO trademark logo.

RSPO authorization binds organization on decisions about certification communication modalities.

Correct use of RSPO trademark logo and communications will be part of ICEA verification during inspection visits. Any unauthorized use of the RSPO trademark logo will be treated as an infringement of copyright laws and sanctions will be issued.

Organization can use the ICEA logo based on ICEA Regulation for the use of ICEA logo.

5. Appeals against suspension of the use of RSPO Certificate

If the Applicant Organization deems that ICEA's decisions are unjustified and/or discriminating, it may file an appeal to the ICEA Appeal Committee.

The appeal shall be filed in writing, stating reasons, within 15 calendar days from the date of notification of ICEA's decision.

Within 30 calendar days, ICEA will convene the ICEA Appeal Committee, which will examine the appeal within 60 calendar days from date of filing.

On such meeting, the Applicant Organization's representatives may request a hearing.

The decision made at this point will be final and binding on the parties.

All expenses incurred for the appeal will be charged to the losing party.

6. Complains

6.1 Complains during inspections

If the organization responsible, during the inspection, doesn't agree with evaluation results, he/she has to write his/her motivations directly on the inspection report.

6.2 Complains about ICEA activities

Any interested party can present complaints and grievances about ICEA activities.

All complains related to ICEA activities, at any level, have to be sent to the ICEA main office, to the Quality Assurance Responsible (reclami@icea.bio); he/she will verify and process them.

Complaints relating to ICEA's activities must be sent to the ICEA Quality Office at the Bologna Headquarters.

Within 5 working days of receipt of the formal complaint, ICEA communicates that it has been taken over by activating the appropriate actions for its management.

ICEA ensures the treatment of the Complaint, within 30 days of receipt, by sending a written reply on the results.

It is also possible to report a Complaint by filling out the form on ICEA website.

6.3 Arbitral Award

All disputes arising from the application of the ICEA Certification System, which were not possible to settle at the level of the appeals management, shall be submitted to an Arbitration Team composed of three experts in judicial and technical matters, chosen from the list of the Council of Arbitration of the territorially competent Chamber of Commerce. Two arbitrators shall be appointed by the two parties and the third one shall be jointly appointed by the two arbitrators chosen, or by the President of the territorially competent Court, who shall also appoint the arbitrator of the party that, though invited, has failed to appoint its own arbitrator within the required time limit.

The arbitrators shall examine the case with equity, proceed with no formality except for the obligation to keep written records of the measures, and communicate their final award to the parties stating the reasons, within 90 days from the date of acceptance of the third arbitrator. For what is not foreseen, the arbitration shall comply with the rules of the territorially competent Chamber of Arbitration, which the parties declare that they know and accept.

7. Confidentiality and conflict of interest

ICEA undertakes to treat as confidential, except in cases of legislative or judicial provisions, all the data, documents, and information related to the operation and gathered in the course of inspection activity, and to vouch for the discretion of the staff employed.

Unless otherwise provided for by the law or by the rules, the information gathered in the course of certification activities will not be divulged to third parties without the written consent of the Operator.

ICEA personnel, involved in control and certification activities, undertakes to guarantee to treat as confidential all data especially related to products flow charts and recipes.

Any information regarding confidentiality has to be declared in a specific form (M.1401 a).

All forms taken during inspection or sent by operator will be recorded and filed up only in the ICEA main office, and the access to those forms is permitted only to authorized personnel after subscribing the confidentiality commitment and the disclosure of interest

In case Public Authority asking for specific information, ICEA will divulgate those data informing the operator.

All information and data about RSPO certified clients recorded in the ICEA database are at disposal of RSPO.

ICEA procedure for identifying and managing conflicts of interest includes provision for a specific independent committee, named CSI (Comitato Salvaguardia Imparzialità, Committee to guaranty impartiality). The independent committee consists of at least three external members, and meets at least annually with managers of the certification body to formally review the ICEA's performance in this respect.

All ICEA members of assessment teams must have maintained independence from the company or family of companies for a minimum of three years to be considered not to have a conflict of interest. Independence in this context means neither having any family/personal relationships with people within the organization, nor having been employed in or by the organization being assessed, nor undertaking any consultancy activities or other service provision except for certification or verification activities.

Any person or entity engaged by the ICEA or ICEA itself shall declare any and all interests which may potentially affect the certification process and/or which could possibly constitute a conflict of interest, in advance of engaging in a certification process against the requirements of the RSPO Supply Chain Standard. Any kind of information regarding eventual conflict of interest has to be declared in a specific form (M.1401 b).

Any person or entity engaged by ICEA shall report any circumstance or pressure that may influence its independence or confidentiality immediately to the executive management of ICEA. The ICEA executive management shall notify the RSPO of any such report and ensure that any such report is included in the certification report of the certification process and in the file of the client.

ICEA will not use the same Lead Auditor for more than three (3) consecutive audits to the same organization, including if the lead auditor changes CB.

ICEA cannot not offer assessment or surveillance audits for any organization to which it has provided management advice or technical support related to the scope of RSPO certification, or with whom it has any relationship which creates a threat to impartiality. Doubtful cases shall be discussed with RSPO Secretariat, prior to engaging with the client.

As a general matter, ICEA, for its rule as CB, is not authorize to provide management advice or technical support to any company.

Records of the conflict-of-interest committee's discussions, recommendations and consequent corrective actions are maintained for at least 5 years.

8. Rules' modification

Based on internal audit, updating and modifications of CB activities rules, updating and modifications of RSPO rules (and related forms), ICEA can modify ICEA control system rules and/or the applicable fee chart.

Following those modifications, ICEA will notify the updated requirements to all interested operators, **also eventually** through its **website** www.icea.bio.

Before the due deadline (10 days), operator, that believe to not satisfy updated rules and/or related corrective actions, will communicate in writing his/her renunciation.

In this case operator will be obliged to pay only what due as described in the contract.

In case of no communication before the deadline, it means acceptance of modifications.

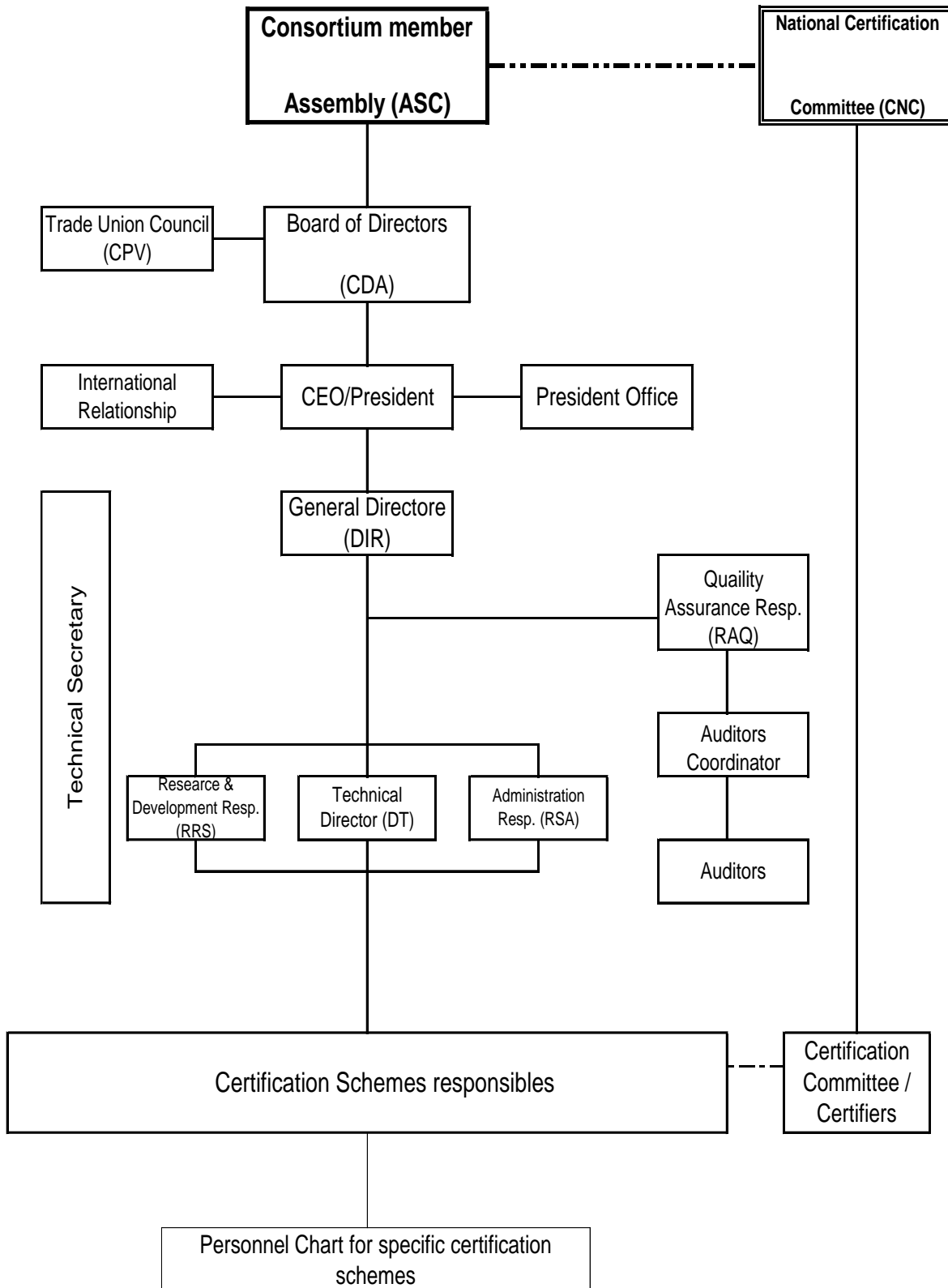
9. Public availability of documentation

ICEA grants the following documents publicly available upon request, and on the RSPO website and/or their own website:

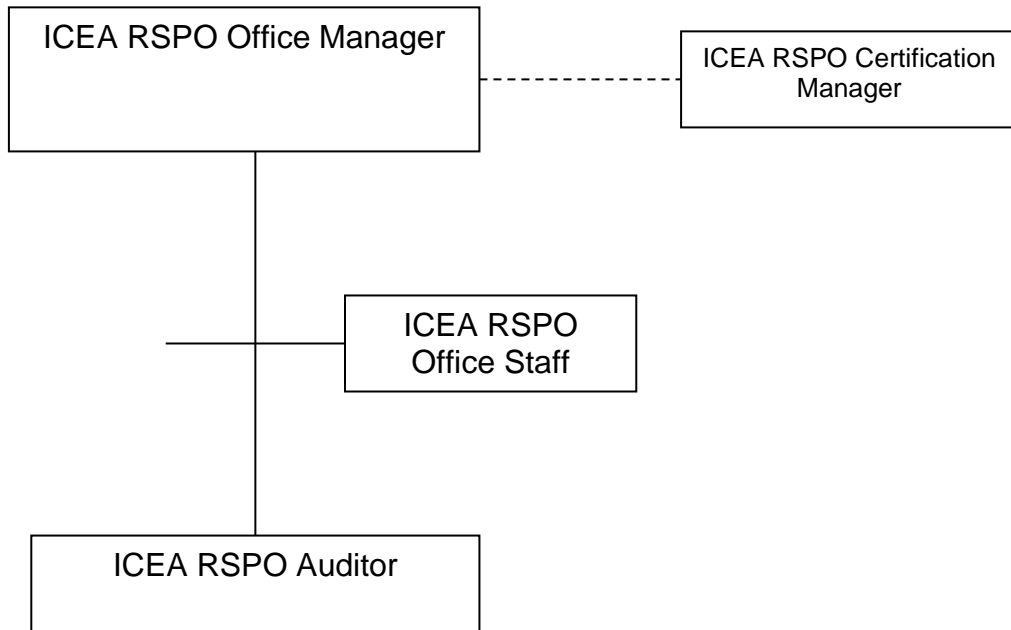
- RSPO Supply Chain Certificate (on RSPO website).
- For Independent mill, the RSPO audit report.
- Procedures of ICEA for complaints and grievances, including resolution mechanisms (on ICEA website).
- The list of certified organizations, which includes details of the scope of each certificate, i.e. which sites and/or processes are approved (RSPO Secretariat).

Annex 1: ICEA personnel chart

a) General



b) RSPO personnel chart



Annex 2: RSPO inspection and certification system chart

