
Sustainable cocoa — Part 3: Requirements for Cocoa Certification Scheme



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Foreword

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Introduction

This Standard, ARS 1000-3, contains Requirements for Cocoa Certification Scheme for sustainably produced cocoa. Sustainably produced cocoa beans are obtained by fulfilling the requirements in ARS 1000-1 Requirements for Cocoa Farmer as an Entity/Farmer Group/Cooperative Management Systems and Performance and ARS 1000-2 Cocoa Quality and Traceability. The Farmer as an Entity/Farmer Group/Cooperative shall be certified by a third party (Certification Bodies) to demonstrate compliance to this Standard. The third party shall be appointed by the Regulator/Legal Entity, who shall be the sole owner of the Certification Scheme.

This Standard is the third part of sustainably produced cocoa requirements.

This African standards serie 1000 is designed to be relevant to interested parties within the cocoa sector and is in three parts as follows:

Standard	Title	Subject
ARS 1000-1	Requirements for Cocoa Farmer as an Entity/Farmer Group/Cooperative Management Systems and Performance	The Standard is intended to structure the Management Systems of the Farmer as an Entity/Farmer Group/Cooperative to enhance performance in the production of sustainable cocoa and their livelihood. The requirements include economic, social and environmental aspects.
ARS 1000-2	Requirements for Cocoa Quality and Traceability	The Standard is to be used by all stakeholders in the cocoa value chain to promote and maintain the quality of cocoa beans and establish traceability from the cocoa farm to the point of export.
ARS1000-3	Requirements for Cocoa Certification Scheme	The Standard is intended for certification bodies involved in auditing cocoa farms as well as for registered farmers wishing to be audited by a third-party certification body in order to make claims of conformity. This Standard also addresses requirements for the Regulator/Legal Entity and Supervisory council.

Sustainably produced cocoa beans are obtained by fulfilling the requirements in the ARS 1000-1 and ARS 1000-2 Standards. Farmers as Entities/Farmer Group/Cooperative shall be certified by a third party approved by the Regulator/Legal Entity to demonstrate compliance to these two Standards.

In this document:

- “shall” indicates a requirement;
- “should” indicates a recommendation;
- “may” indicates a permission;
- “can” indicates a possibility or a capability.

Information marked “Note” is for guidance in understanding or clarifying the associated requirement.

Sustainable cocoa — Part 3: Requirements for Cocoa Certification Scheme

1 Scope

This draft African Standard specifies requirements for the Cocoa Certification Scheme for sustainable cocoa, in relation to cocoa supply chain actors and for the certification of Farmer as an Entity/Farmer Group/Cooperative. It is to be used jointly with ARS 1000-1 and ARS 1000-2.

Only Certification Bodies that fulfil the requirements in this Standard shall audit Farmer as an Entity/Farmer Group/Cooperative, which produce sustainable cocoa beans. Only Farmer as an Entity/Farmer Group/Cooperative that fulfil the requirements in this Standard can make claims of sustainably produced cocoa beans.

2 Normative references

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

ARS 1000-1, Sustainable cocoa — Part 1: Requirements for cocoa farmer as entity, farmer group, cooperative — Management systems and performance

ARS 1000-2, Sustainable cocoa — Part 2: Requirements for cocoa quality and traceability

3 Terms and definitions

For the purpose of this standard the following definitions apply.

3.1

accreditation

third-party attestation related to a conformity assessment body conveying formal demonstration of its competence to carry out specific conformity assessment tasks.

3.2

accreditation body

Authoritative body conducting accreditation activities

(ISO/IEC 17000: 2020, 4.7)

3.3

certificate

document issued by a certification body indicating that a designated object has met the certification requirements

3.4

certification

Third-party Certificate granted regarding a subject-matter of conformity assessment, except for accreditation

(ISO/IEC 17000: 2020, 7.6)

Note 1 : Certification of a Management System is also called registration.

Note 2 : Certification is applicable to all objects of conformity assessment except for conformity assessment bodies themselves, to which accreditation is applicable.

3.5

certification body

authoritative body carrying out certification activities.

3.6

certification requirement

specified requirement that is fulfilled by the client as a condition of establishing or maintaining certification.

Note : Certification requirements are obligations imposed on the client by the certification scheme and Regulator/Legal Entity via the certification agreement to meet the requirements of this standard.

3.7

certification scheme

conformity assessment system related to specified products, processes, services and management systems, to which the same specified requirements, specific rules and procedures apply.

Note 1: The term "conformity assessment system" is defined in ISO/IEC 17000:2004, 2.7.

Note 2: The rules, procedures and management for implementing product, process, service and management system certification are stipulated by the certification scheme.

3.8

client

entity or person responsible to a Certification Body for ensuring that certification requirements are fulfilled.

Note : Whenever the term "client" is used in this Standard, it applies to both the "applicant" and the "client", unless otherwise specified.

3.9

cocoa supply chain

sequence of the stages and operations involved in the movement and processing of cocoa, from farm to the point of exit from the factory door of the manufacturer of the final retail product.

3.10

cocoa supply chain actor

person or entity that physically handles, legally takes possession of, or makes claims of sustainably produced cocoa.

3.11

complaints

expression of dissatisfaction, other than an appeal, filed by a person or an organisation to a Conformity Assessment Body or to an accreditation body in relation to the activities of this said body, to which a response is expected

(ISO/IEC 17000: 2004, 6.5)

3.12

conformity assessment

demonstration that the requirements are met

Note 1: The conformity assessment process can lead to a negative result, i.e. by demonstrating that the requirements are not met.

Note 2: Conformity assessment includes activities carried out elsewhere in this document, such as, but not limited to testing, inspection, validation, verification, certification and accreditation

(ISO/IEC 17000: 2020)

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3.13

farmer premium

funds payment to a registered farmer for sustainably produced cocoa in addition to the actual price for equivalent cocoa.

Note 1: Premium is paid in cash or bank transfer or any legal accepted form of payment.

Note 2: Premium is additional money paid by the first buyer of a certified sustainable cocoa product to compensate the farmer for effort made to be in compliance with ARSO standards.

Note 3: Farmer as an Entity,/Farmer Groups /Cooperatives also benefit from this premium.

3.14

impartiality

presence of objectivity

NOTE 1 Objectivity means that conflicts of interest do not exist, or are resolved so as not to adversely influence subsequent activities of the Certification Body.

NOTE 2 Other terms that are useful in conveying the element of impartiality include "independence", "freedom from conflict of interests", "freedom from bias", "lack of prejudice", "neutrality", "fairness", "open mindedness", "even-handedness", "detachment", "balance".

3.15

object

anything that can be perceived or designed. (Example: Product, service, process, person, organization, system, resource)

(ISO 9000: 2015, 3.6.1)

3.16

regulator/legal entity

organization responsible for the development and maintenance of a specific Certification Scheme and the approval of Certification Bodies to implement the Certification Scheme.

3.17

scope of certification

identification of:

- the product(s), process(es), service(s), cocoa field(s) or farm(s), or management systems for which the certification is granted;
- the applicable Certification Scheme;
- the standard(s) and other normative document(s), including their date of publication, to which it is judged that the product(s), process(es), service(s) or management systems comply.

3.18

supervisory council

body established by the Regulator/Legal Entity through Government consisting of independent members who represent interested parties.

3.19

surveillance audit

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

3.20

third-party mark of conformity

protected mark issued by a body performing third-party conformity assessment, indicating that an object of conformity assessment (product, process, person, system or body) is in conformity with specified requirements.

NOTE 1 A protected mark is a mark legally protected against unauthorized use.

NOTE 2 The specified requirements are generally stated in “normative” documents such as International Standards, regional or national standards, regulations and specifications.

3.21

verification

control mechanism or process with objective evidence that demonstrate that specified requirements have been met.

3.22

Recertification

Third-party Certificate granted regarding a new criteria after obtaining Bronze or Silver certificates. Recertification audit takes place every 5 years and each time relates to new criteria.

Note : The initial certification audit (12 months after the Farmer’s registration), the surveillance audits (2.5 years after the initial certification audit Bronze level/ 2.5 years after the recertification audit- Silver level/ 2.5 years after the recertification audit- Gold level) and the recertification audits (5 years after the recertification audits Silver and Gold levels) relate each time to new criteria.

4 Regulator/Legal Entity requirements

4.1 The Regulator/Legal Entity shall be a legal body such as a government body or any other national structure that coordinates the cocoa sector in the cocoa producing country and develops a Cocoa Certification Scheme in which one or more Certification Bodies participate and in which the various stakeholders are involved.

4.2 The Regulator/Legal Entity shall be independent of certified clients and cocoa chain actors and shall not influence the certification decision.

4.3 The Regulator/Legal Entity shall identify any risks to its impartiality on an ongoing basis. If a risk to impartiality is identified, the Regulator shall be able to demonstrate how it eliminates or minimizes such risk. This shall include those risks that arise from its activities, or from its relationships, or from the relationships of its personnel.

The Top Management of the Regulator/Legal Entity shall have a policy on impartiality and demonstrate their commitment to impartiality.

Note: A relationship that threatens the impartiality of the Regulator/Legal Entity can be based on ownership, governance, management, personnel, shared resources, finances, contracts, marketing (including branding), and payment of a sales commission or other inducement for the referral of new clients, etc.

4.4 The Regulator/Legal Entity shall have an independent Supervisory Council appointed by the Government. The composition of the independent Supervisory Council shall be transparent.

4.5 The Supervisory Council shall not engage in any activities that can conflict with their independence of judgment and integrity in relation to activities of the Regulator/Legal Entity, or have functions that can influence the outcome of certification decisions.

Note : Examples of conflicts are personal involvement in complaints, appeals, finances, contracts, marketing (including branding), payment of a commission, fraud and bribery, etc.

4.6 The responsibilities of the Supervisory Council shall include the following:

- a) ensuring the impartiality and independence of the scheme, including ensuring the scheme does not allow commercial, financial, political or other pressures to compromise impartiality;

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- b) overseeing the risk management policies and processes associated with ensuring impartiality and independence;
 - c) approving the operational framework of the scheme;
 - d) addressing unresolved complaints and appeals, and the Regulator/Legal Entity's actions for resolving them, including recommending to the Regulator/Legal Entity further actions for resolution;
 - e) reviewing and validating annually the activities report from the Regulator/Legal Entity;
 - f) conduct an annual review of scheme-related activities and provide feedback to the Regulator/Legal Entity.
- 4.7** The Regulator/Legal Entity shall have a sufficient number of competent personnel to effectively perform its activities.

5 Scheme development and management

- 5.1** The Regulator/Legal Entity shall be responsible for developing and maintaining its Certification Scheme in accordance with this document.
- 5.2** The Regulator/Legal Entity shall set up a structure for the development, operation and management of the scheme and provide guidance when required.

Note : General Guidance for the development and operation of schemes is given in ISO/IEC 17067.

- 5.3** The Regulator/Legal Entity shall create, control and maintain adequately documented information via an "Implementation Guide" for the operation, maintenance and improvement of the scheme. The documented information shall specify the rules and the operating procedures of the scheme and, in particular, the responsibilities for governance of the scheme
- 5.4** The Regulator/Legal Entity shall evaluate and manage the risks arising from its activities.
- 5.5** The Regulator/Legal Entity shall establish requirements for the Certification Bodies involved in the certification process. These requirements shall include accreditation of Certification Bodies to ISO/IEC 17021-1 by an accreditation Body operating in accordance with ISO/IEC 17011.
- 5.6** The Regulator/Legal Entity shall establish criteria for the access of Certification Bodies and clients to the scheme. The Regulator/Legal Entity shall specify what the Certification Bodies and clients shall report to the Regulator.
- 5.7** The Regulator/Legal Entity shall have an input in the development of contracts between all parties. The rights, responsibilities and liabilities of the various parties should be defined in the contracts.
- 5.8** The Regulator/Legal Entity shall ensure consistency of audits performed by Certification Bodies. The Regulator/Legal Entity shall define what shall be considered as major nonconformities. The Regulator/Legal Entity shall establish a sanctions policy to be applied by Certification Bodies.
- 5.9** The Regulator shall define procedures on actions to be taken and any sanctions to be imposed if the Certification Bodies fail to meet scheme requirements.

Note : Annex C gives guidance for risk-based control and review of Certification Bodies.

- 5.10** The Regulator/Legal Entity shall establish and maintain a traceability system in order to monitor and validate sustainable cocoa as specified in ARS 1000-2. The traceability system shall distinguish between the types of traceability allowed as specified in ARS 1000-2. The traceability system should allow the Regulator/Legal Entity to control the use of certificates, claims or third-

party marks of conformity in accordance with this Standard.

5.11 The Regulator /Legal Entity shall have a procedure/ legal document for negotiation of farmer premiums, cost recovery mechanisms and the right of refusal between:

- a) the first buyer and the Farmer group producing cocoa bean;
- b) the cocoa bean producing farmer group and registered farmers.

The procedure shall provide that the outcome of the negotiations is documented and confirmed by both parties, and that the payments of cost recovery mechanisms and farmer premiums are recorded and verified.

The premium shall be paid in cash or bank transfer or any legal accepted form of payment.

In the development of the above procedures or legal document for negotiation of farmer premiums, cost recovery mechanisms and the right of refusal, the Regulator/Legal Entity shall estimate and consider the costs of implementing ARS series 1000.

5.12 The Regulator/Legal Entity shall make arrangements to protect the confidentiality of information provided by the parties involved in the scheme.

5.13 The Regulator/Legal Entity shall define a process for reviewing the operation of the scheme. This review shall identify aspects requiring improvement, taking into account feedback from interested parties, including Farmer as an entity/Farmer Group/Cooperative, hired workers/registered farmers and cocoa supply chain actors. The review should include provisions for ensuring that the scheme requirements are being applied in a consistent manner.

5.14 The Regulator /Legal Entity shall have a process for making the necessary changes in the scheme whenever changes in these documents occur, and for managing the implementation of the changes (e.g. transition period) by the Certification Bodies, clients and, where necessary, other interested parties.

5.15 The Regulator/Legal Entity should engage in periodic peer assessment of its scheme in accordance with the principles of ISO/IEC 17040. The result of this peer assessment of the scheme shall also be available to its Supervising Council.

5.16 The Regulator /Legal Entity shall describe the specific actions taken or planned to be taken, within a defined timeframe, to remedy any identified nonconformities and to inform the Supervising Council accordingly.

5.17 The Regulator/ Legal Entity shall have the financial stability and resources required to play its role in the operation of the scheme.

6 Publicly available information

The Regulator/Legal Entity shall ensure the following information is maintained and made publicly available in a timely manner, as appropriate:

- a) operational framework and organizational structure of the scheme;
- b) policy on impartiality and the processes associated with ensuring impartiality and independence;
- c) list of Certification Bodies that are approved to audit clients to the scheme requirements;
- d) list of accreditation bodies having accredited the above-mentioned Certification Bodies;
- e) procedure for control and review of Certification Bodies;

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- f) current list of clients, including the issuer and expiry date of their certificates;
- g) list of clients whose certificates have been withdrawn;
- h) policy on premium and cost recovery negotiation(s) and its procedures;
- i) policy on sanctions for noncompliance to sustainable cocoa production;
- j) types of audits performed, including methodology, sampling requirements and frequency of assessment;
- k) list of certification bodies whose accreditations have been withdrawn.

7 Complaints and appeals to Certification Bodies and the Regulator/Legal Entity

- 7.1** The Regulator/Legal Entity shall define and make publicly available a procedure for the handling of complaints and appeals against a client, a Certification Body or the Regulator itself. At a minimum, the procedure shall provide that:
- a) complaints to be given to the certification body and the copy given to the regulator/Legal Entity for them to be informed of all that is happening.
 - b) complaints about contractual obligations between a client and the Certification Body, complaints about a client, and appeals against the decision of a Certification Body shall be addressed to the Certification Body in the first instance and resolved according to the Certification Body's complaints- and appeals-handling processes (see ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015);
 - c) complaints about the certification activities of a Certification Body shall be addressed to the Certification Body in the first instance and, in addition, the Certification Body shall provide a copy to the Regulator /Legal Entity upon receiving and resolving the complaint;
 - d) complaints and appeals that have not been, or cannot be, resolved by the Certification Body shall be addressed to the Regulator/Legal Entity.
 - e) complaints and appeals about nonconformity to the Regulator's policies, procedures and certification requirements, including complaints relating to misleading statements or potential fraud, shall be addressed directly to the Regulator/Legal Entity copy to the Supervisory Council.
 - f) complaints and appeals filed by clients, certification bodies or any other stakeholder in the chain against the Regulator/Legal Entity shall be first submitted to the Regulator/Legal Entity itself, with a copy to the Supervisory Council, which shall deal with them if such complaints and appeals by clients have not been or cannot be settled by the Regulator/Legal Entity.
 - g) The Regulator/Legal Entity shall facilitate complaints (from clients and the public) regarding the Regulator/Legal Entity's policies, procedures, systems and certification scheme requirements via an open and transparent platform..
- 7.2** The Regulator/Legal Entity shall investigate and take appropriate action regarding any claims, including reviewing the management of its system and taking any necessary corrective action.
- 7.3** The Regulator/Legal Entity shall retain documented information of all complaints and appeals, including actions undertaken to resolve them and inform the Supervisory Council at regular intervals.
- 7.4** The Regulator/Legal Entity shall ensure that the submission, investigation and decision on complaints and appeals shall not result in any discriminatory actions against the complainant or appellant.

- 7.5** The Regulator/Legal Entity shall provide an annual summary report to the Supervisory Council, as a means to support its role.

8 Requirements for Bodies performing audits for certification

8.1 General

- 8.1.1** Bodies performing audits and certification shall fulfill the requirements specified in ISO/IEC 17065. Certification Bodies shall permit clients to make claims of product conformity to the Certification Scheme in conformity to this document-African Standard.
- 8.1.2** The Certification Body shall identify risks and provide recommendation to the Farmer as an Entity/Farmer Group/Cooperative on the remedial processes to address the identified risks. The Certification Body shall not provide consultancy services to its clients.
- 8.1.3** The Regulator/Legal Entity shall determine the information needed for the application of certification and shall inform interested parties accordingly.

In case of a change of Certification Body, the client shall inform the new Certification Body prior to the certification and audit of its fulfillment of requirement level and status, achievements of conformity with the requirements of this Standard, ARS 1000-1 and ARS 1000-2 within the past certification period.

Note: Examples of information to be shared with the new Certification Body are certification reports and internal auditing reports.

- 8.1.4** There shall be a contract between the Certification Body and the Farmer as an Entity/Farmer Group/Cooperative for the provision of certification activities, in reference to 5.7 and in accordance with the relevant requirements of this Standard. This contract shall include the scope of certification, timeframe and fees.

8.1.5 The Certification Body shall determine

- a) the time needed for considering application forms from clients for certification of sustainable cocoa;
- b) the time needed to plan and accomplish a complete and effective audit of the client;
- c) information needed from the client before proceeding to audit planning.

The Certification Body shall inform clients accordingly and shall do so in a timely manner once the client has applied for certification.

The client may request the Certification Body to accept a change of scope of the certification (e.g. change in volume, numbers of registered farmers or number of sites). The Certification Body shall, in response to an application for expanding the scope of a certification already granted, undertake a review of the application and determine any audit activities necessary to decide whether or not the extension may be granted. This may be conducted in conjunction with a surveillance audit. A Certification Body can decline an extension if the client does not provide sufficient evidence that the change in scope is justified.

8.2 Audit cycle for sustainable cocoa

- 8.2.1** The Certification Body shall conduct a certification audit to assess all the requirements specified in ARS 1000-1 and ARS 1000-2, as appropriate.
- 8.2.2** The Certification Body shall conduct surveillance audits after the initial certification audit per Annex D.
- 8.2.3** The Certification Body should conduct audits of certified clients at short notice or unannounced as necessary following the risk-based approach, or to investigate complaints, or in response to

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changes, or as follow up on suspended clients, if applicable. The unannounced audit should be done within the stages of the audit (between initial certification audit and first surveillance audits, between the first and second surveillance audit and the second surveillance audit and the renewal audit).

- 8.2.4** The Certification Body shall identify, in consultation with the Farmer as entity/Farmer Group/Cooperative, whether or not the client has a seasonal production cycle, and shall plan the certification and recertification audit accordingly to take place within four (4) months before the beginning of a harvest period.
- 8.2.5** In case where the initial certification audit in a seasonal production cycle leads to a positive certification decision, within four months after the beginning of the harvest period, the cocoa harvested since the beginning of this harvest shall be certified.
- 8.2.6** In case where the initial certification audit in a continuous production cycle leads to a positive certification decision, the cocoa harvested after the date of this decision shall be certified.
- 8.2.7** In cases where the initial certification audit leads to a negative certification decision, the client can seek re-audit six (6) months minimum from the initial certification audit.

8.3 Audit Procedures

- 8.3.1** The Certification body shall effectively implement a documented procedure for:
- a) predefining the audit sample;
 - b) ensure that the physical audit is carried out with minimum sample sizes equal to the square root of the number of Farmers to be certified;
 - c) announcing and adjusting the audit sample during the audit;
 - d) reporting and recording the actual audit sample after the audit.
- 8.3.2** Such a procedure of the Certification Body shall include sample sizes for at least the following:
- a) Farms to be audited;
 - b) farmers to be physically visited and/or interviewed without visiting their farms
 - c) employees to be interviewed
 - d) workers to be interviewed at each site
 - e) workers to be interviewed at farm visits
 - f) procedures to be reviewed
 - g) records to be reviewed
 - h) intermediaries/subcontractors/service providers to be verified
 - i) internal inspectors to be interviewed and witnessed
- 8.3.3** The Regulator shall review and approve such procedure as deem necessary.

8.4 Methods to obtain information during audit

The Certification Bodies shall use various methods for obtaining information during the audit to triangulate audit findings and/or confirm non-conformity, including but not limited to:

- a) check and interview Farmer as an Entity/Farmer Group/Cooperative;
- b) on-site audit, including observation of activities;

- c) checking of facilities;
- d) interviews with registered farmers and their workers within the Farmer as an Entity/Farmer Group/Cooperative;
- e) confirmation of data (e.g. good agricultural practices, working conditions, nonconformities);
- f) reviews of complaints and allegations;
- g) interviews with staff of the Farmer as an Entity/Farmer Group/Cooperative;
- h) performing stakeholder engagement sessions;
- i) performing off-site investigation in high-risk cases;
- j) reviewing of policies, procedures, records pertaining to processes and activities within the certification scope;
- k) auditing subcontractors, service providers and other actors directly linked to the processes and activities within the certification scope, such as intermediaries, transportation services, processing/warehouse services.

8.5 Time needed for an audit

8.5.1 For Farmer as an Entity/Farmer Group/Cooperative, the following minimum time allowances shall be respected for on-site audit activities, if necessary, more time must be allocated::

- a) for cocoa fields, a minimum of one-sixth of a man-day, excluding time needed to travel between locations;
- b) for a management system, one man-day.
- c) for one individual interview of employees/workers, the minimum duration is 0.25 hours;
- d) for one group interview, the minimum duration is 0.5 hours;
- e) for a visit to a house of a farmer or a worker's, the minimum duration is 0.25 hours.

8.5.2 Depending on the size, the risks, the complexity of the cocoa fields and/or the management system and/or the risks emerged from interviews and/or house visits, the Certification Body shall allocate additional audit hours accordingly.

8.5.3 The Certification Body shall record the actual amount of time for each visit and each quality management system audit, each interview and justifications as to how such amount of time was decided to be sufficient.

Note: Reference may be made to guidelines established in ISO/IEC TS 17023 for determining the duration of management system audit and/or ISO/TS 22003 or any other established management system guideline for audit time determination (such as IAF MD 5 :2015, Version 3, Determination of audit time of quality management systems and environmental management systems).

8.6 Timeframe for resolving nonconformities

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- 8.6.1** In cases where nonconformities have been identified during the initial certification audit, certification renewal or surveillance audit, both the Certification Body and the client shall agree on a timeframe, in which the corrections and corrective actions shall be undertaken, with a maximum of three (3) months for initial or renewal audit or six (6) months for surveillance audit from the date of the audit report. Unless the certificate is suspended or withdrawn, the client and its cocoa is considered certified during this timeframe, provided it is not an initial certification audit. The Certification Body shall issue a decision to a Farmer as an Entity/Farmer Group/Cooperative not more than twenty eight (28) days after the official written notification of corrections and corrective actions of any non-conformities.
- 8.6.2** If the Farmer as an Entity/ Farmer Group/ Cooperative fails to demonstrate the implementation of the correction or corrective action for any nonconformity within three (3) months from the date of the audit report for the certification or renewal audit, the Certification Body shall not grant a certificate or recertify the Farmer as an Entity/ Farmer Group/ Cooperative. The Certification Body shall issue a decision to the Farmer as an Entity/ Farmer Group/ Cooperative not more than twenty eight (28) days after the three (3) months from the date of the initial or renewal audit report.
- 8.6.3** If the Farmer as an Entity/ Farmer Group/Cooperative does not demonstrate the implementation of corrections and corrective actions of any nonconformity within six (6) months from the date of the audit report, the Certification Body shall withdraw the certificate. The Certification Body shall issue a decision to the Farmer as an Entity/ Farmer Group/ Cooperative not more than twenty eight (28) days after the six (6) months from the date of the surveillance audit report.
- 8.6.4** In order to become recertified, the client shall receive a new certification audit. Certification can be restored six (6) months or more after the surveillance audit that led to the withdrawal of the certificate.
- 8.6.5** Prior to the selection of auditors, the Regulator/Legal Entity shall engage the auditors on the principles, procedures, and all the parameters that will go into the audit before a list of auditors is made available.
- 8.6.6** Guidelines for the audit shall therefore be signed and countersigned between the Regulator /Legal Entity and the auditors.
- 8.6.7** Before refusing to grant certificate to a Farmer as an Entity/ Farmer Group Cooperative, the Certification Body shall engage the Regulator/Legal Entity to evaluate the circumstances leading to the refusal for possible remedy.

8.7 Expiration of a certificate

When a client's certification expires, the Certification Body shall inform the clients that they cannot, from the expiration date of the certificate, claim that their cocoa is certified to the scheme specified in this document.

Note : The Farmer as an Entity/ Farmer Group/Cooperative should take the necessary steps to ensure the renewal of certificates four (4) months before the expiration of the certificate.

8.8 Re-obtaining a certificate

In cases where a client has re-obtained certification, the Certification Body shall not allow claims that the cocoa produced under the expired certificate is certified to the scheme specified in this Standard.

8.9 Requirements for competence of auditors

- 8.9.1** In addition to the requirements specified in ISO/IEC 17021-1, the Certification Body shall ensure

that auditors' competences include, at least:

- a) knowledge of agronomy and skills to identify the adoption of good agricultural and environmental practices;
- b) knowledge to determine whether a client has identified and evaluated its compliance with all applicable statutory and regulatory requirements, and its conformity with other specified requirements within the specific aspect to be audited.
- c) knowledge of social topics that are applicable in the standard as well as relevant practices in the local context;

8.9.2 The auditors shall demonstrate a high level of auditing skills and practices with rich auditing experience. The auditor shall have training and auditing experience of at least:

- a) 10 audits or 40 relevant days auditing good agriculture practices/standard as an auditor;
- b) 10 audits or 40 relevant days auditing social topics/standard as an auditor or auditor in training in a recognized program, e.g SA 8000 Certifications;
- c) 10 audits or 40 relevant days auditing environmental topics/standard as an auditor or auditor in training in a recognized program;

The auditor shall have passed a lead auditor training (IRCA-certified or equivalent of 40 hours) for one of the following programs: ISO 9001; and may have training in ISO 14001; ISO 22000, ISO 19011.

Note 1 : Legal and regulatory requirements can be expressed by the term legal requirements.

Note 2 : Other requirements may include national, international and sectoral voluntary protocols for environmental reporting.

d) Personnel involved in competence evaluation shall have, as a minimum, equivalent competence to the functions being evaluated.

9 Claims

General requirements

- a) Claims or third-party marks of conformity for sustainable cocoa conforming to the ARS 1000 series are optional.
- b) If the Regulator/Legal Entity allows claims or third-party marks of conformity, these shall be claims or marks of product conformity (i.e. claims or marks of sustainable cocoa), and the Regulator/Legal Entity shall control the use of claims or third-party marks of conformity.
- c) The Regulator/Legal Entity shall define a policy and procedure(s) related to misleading use of certificates, marks or claims, and for situations in which the cocoa no longer fulfils requirements.
- d) The Regulator/Legal Entity shall establish rules for the use of claims or third-party marks of conformity. These rules shall meet the requirements and conditions of this standard and shall be made publicly available.

10 Third-party mark of conformity

The Regulator/Legal Entity shall ensure that the application of third-party marks of conformity is in accordance with the requirements specified in ISO/IEC 17030.

11 Licencing and control

11.1 Where the scheme provides for the use of certificates, third-party marks of conformity or other statements of conformity, the scheme shall control such use through a licence or other form of enforceable agreement with clients. Licences may be between two or more of the following:

- a) Regulator;/Legal Entity;
- b) Certification Body;
- c) client of the Certification Body.

11.2 Licences shall include provisions to ensure that statements of conformity are in accordance with the requirements specified in Clause 9.

11.3 Licences shall include provisions related to the use of the certificate, third-party mark of conformity or other statement of conformity in communications about the certified product, and certification shall remain valid at all stages of the processes.

Annex A (normative)

Check list for different stages of certification audit

Part 1: Requirements for Cocoa Farmer as Entity/Farmer Group/Cooperative Management Systems and Performance

Clause	Registration of the Farmer as an Entity/Farmer Group/Cooperative	Bronze Level: Initial Certification Audit (12 Months After Registration of the Farmer as an Entity/Farmer Group/Cooperative)	Silver Level: Initial Certification or Recertification Audit (5 years after Bronze certification level)	Gold Level Initial Certification or Recertification Audit (5 years after Silver certification level).	Gold Level Recertification Audit (5 Years after certification to Gold level)
4.1		X	X	X	X
4.2.1	X	X	X	X	X
4.2.2		X	X	X	X
5.1			X	X	X
5.2			X	X	X
5.3			X	X	X
6.1			X	X	X
6.2			X	X	X
7.1.1			X	X	X
7.1.2	X	X	X	X	X
7.2		X	X	X	X
7.3		X	X	X	X
7.4		X	X	X	X
8			X	X	X
8.2.1		X	X	X	
9.1			X	X	X
9.2		X	X	X	X
9.3			X	X	X
10			X	X	X
11.2				X	X
11.3.1 - 11.3.10		X	X	X	X
11.3.11			X	X	X
12.2 – 12.3, 12.5 – 12.6		X	X	X	X
12.4, 12.7			X	X	X
12.8 - 12.9				X	X
13.2				X	X
13.3 (a, b, c)		X	X	X	X
13.3 (d, e)				X	X
13.4				X	X
13.5			X	X	X
13.6			X	X	X

Part 2: Requirements for Cocoa Quality and Traceability

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Clause	Bronze Level: Initial Certification Audit (12 Months After Registration of the Farmer as an Entity/Farmer Group/Cooperative)	2nd initial certification audit or recertification audit: Silver level (5 years after the Bronze level certification audit)	3rd initial certification audit or recertification audit: Gold level (5 years after the Silver level certification audit)	Renewal audit (Every 5 years after the Gold Level certification audit)
4	X	X	X	X
5	X	X	X	X
6	X	X	X	X
7	X	X	X	X
8	X	X	X	X
9	X	X	X	X
10	X	X	X	X
12	X	X	X	X
13.1	X	X	X	X
13.2		X	X	X
13.3	X	X	X	X
14	X	X	X	X
15		X	X	X
16		X	X	X
17		X	X	X

Annex B

(informative)

Sample of risks to be assessed

B.1 Standards-related risks

- a) Poorly written and vague standards leading to varying interpretations.
- b) Intent of standards unclear or missing.
- c) Frequent changes to standards, interpretive guidance or assessment methodologies.
- d) Lack of leadership by the Regulator/Legal Entity on the need for standards clarification.

B.2 Assessment process-related risks

- a) Lack of client understanding or incentive to conform.
- b) Lack of personnel competence (skills, knowledge or attributes).
- c) Audit staff over-familiar with clients, leading to lack of impartiality.
- d) Inadequate calibration between auditors (leading to inconsistent audit results).
- e) Lack of local or relevant auditor capacity (insufficient auditors trained and fluent in the local language in a region).
- f) Inconsistent audit planning and lack of coordination.
- g) Inadequacy of sampling methodology.
- h) Lack of knowledge of cultural attitudes to conformity assessment.

B.3 System-related risks

- a) Price competition among Certification Bodies may result in reduced quality of conformity assessment.
- b) Clients moving between Certification Bodies in a quest for a more lenient assessment.
- c) Potential for corruption (auditors, clients, assurance provider).
- d) Lack of adequate safeguards to prevent positive or negative bias by auditors.
- e) Difficulty engaging interested parties where their input is necessary to the conformity assessment process (lack of interest, lack of resources).
- f) Misleading representation of products and services (claims and labelling issues).
- g) Inadequate complaints system.
- h) Inadequate surveillance system.
- i) Lack of follow-up of nonconformities.

Annex C
(informative)

Risk-based control and review of Certification Bodies

C.1 The Regulator/Legal Entity that prescribes a risk-based approach to determine the frequency and intensity of oversight of Certification Bodies should develop a separate procedure that characterizes the risk factors and categories appropriate to oversight and that contains the same elements as described in audit frequency and intensity.

Risk factors to consider when developing a sampling protocol include:

- a) the history of the Certification Body within the Certification Scheme;
- b) the growth rate of Certification Bodies;
- c) the history of low-quality audits in evaluations by Certification Bodies (e.g. where nonconformities have been raised previously about the quality of Certification Bodies' audits);
- d) complaints.

C.2 The Regulator/Legal Entity should ensure that the oversight audit process includes a review of the performance of Certification Bodies and auditors in the field.

C.3 The Regulator/Legal Entity should ensure that the Certification Body oversight personnel meets at least the requirements for the Certification Body auditors and shall be independent and impartial in all the Certification Body oversight activities.

C.4. The Regulator/Legal Entity should ensure that its Certification Body oversight system follows and respects the applicable requirements in the ISO 17011.

Annex D
(normative)

Audit Cycle – Guidance for Farmer as Entity/Farmer Group/Cooperative and Certification Bodies

D.1 Types of Audit

Types of audit	Calendar and frequency
1. Bronze Level Initial Certification Audit	12 Months After Registration of the Farmer as an Entity/Farmer Group/Cooperative. After Farmer registration and before the initial certification audit, twelve (12) months the farmer as entity/farmer group/cooperative shall make a diagnosis of the farm necessary to establish the CFDPs for all registered farmers.
2. Surveillance audit (Risk- based audit)	2.5 years after the Bronze level Initial Certification Audit
3. Silver level Recertification Audit	Five (5) years after the Bronze Level Initial Certification Audit
4. Surveillance audit (Risk- based audit)	2.5 years after the Silver level Recertification Audit
5. Audit de recertification : Niveau Or	Five (5) years after the Silver level Recertification Audit The Farmer as Entity/Farmer Group/ Cooperative shall have established a minimum of 100% CFDPs for the registered farmers.
6. Surveillance audit (Risk- based audit)	2.5 years after the Gold recertification audit
7. Renewal Audit	Every five (5) years after the Gold recertification audit. CFDP shall be maintained fully at 100% implementation in all subsequent renewal audits every five (5) years and surveillance audits two and a half years after every renewal audit.

D.2 Certification is carried out by an Entity which can be :

- a) A farmer as an Entity;
- b) A Farmer Group;
- c) A cooperative.

D.3 Progressive levels of certification shall be awarded based on compliance with the requirements of the sustainability African Standards **ARS 1000-1** and **ARS 1000-2**. Three (03) levels of certification are established for the Farmer as entity/Farmer Group/Cooperative.

- a) Bronze level: Initial level corresponding to the satisfaction of twelve (12) requirements, i.e. 38% of the requirements of ARS 1000-1 and eleven (11) requirements, i.e. 78% of the requirements of ARS 1000-2.
- b) Silver Level: Intermediate level, corresponding to the satisfaction of twenty-nine (29) requirements, i.e. 90% of the requirements of ARS 1000-1, and eleven (11), i.e. 100% of the requirements of the ARS 1000-2 standard.

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- c) Gold Level: Highest level, all requirements of ARS 1000-1 and ARS 1000-2 are met by the Farmer as entity/Farmer Group/Cooperative.

D.4 The audit criteria are the requirements of ARS 1000-1 and 1000-2 that the Farmer as entity/Farmer Group/Cooperative shall carry out. In its organization and its farms.

D.5 The ARS 1000 standards are sustainability standards that aim to enable the Farmer as Entity/Farmer Group/Cooperative to achieve the highest level of sustainability. No Farmer as entity/Farmer Group/Cooperative can claim to remain at the initial or intermediate level.

D.5.1 the Farmer as Entity/Farmer Group/Cooperative may apply for an intermediate or higher-level certification audit at the first certification audit.

D.5.2 To apply for certification audit, the Farmer as Entity/Farmer Group/Cooperative does not have to wait for the maximum period of time. This can be performed at any time.

D.5.3 New farmers entering the Farmer Groups/Cooperatives after the initial certification audit to the Bronze Level shall develop the CFDP, shall have implemented a minimum of 20% CFDP and shall be audited for the CFDP during Bronze Level surveillance audit.

D.5.4 New farmers entering the Farmer Groups/Cooperatives after the initial or re-certification audit to the Silver and Gold Levels shall develop the CFDP, shall have implemented a minimum of 20% CFDP but shall not be audited for 100% CFDP during the surveillance audit.

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