

**GUIDE ON APPLICATION FOR  
ROUNDTABLE FOR SUSTAINABLE PALM OIL PRINCIPLES AND  
CRITERIA (RSPO P & C) INCLUDING GROUP CERTIFICATION**

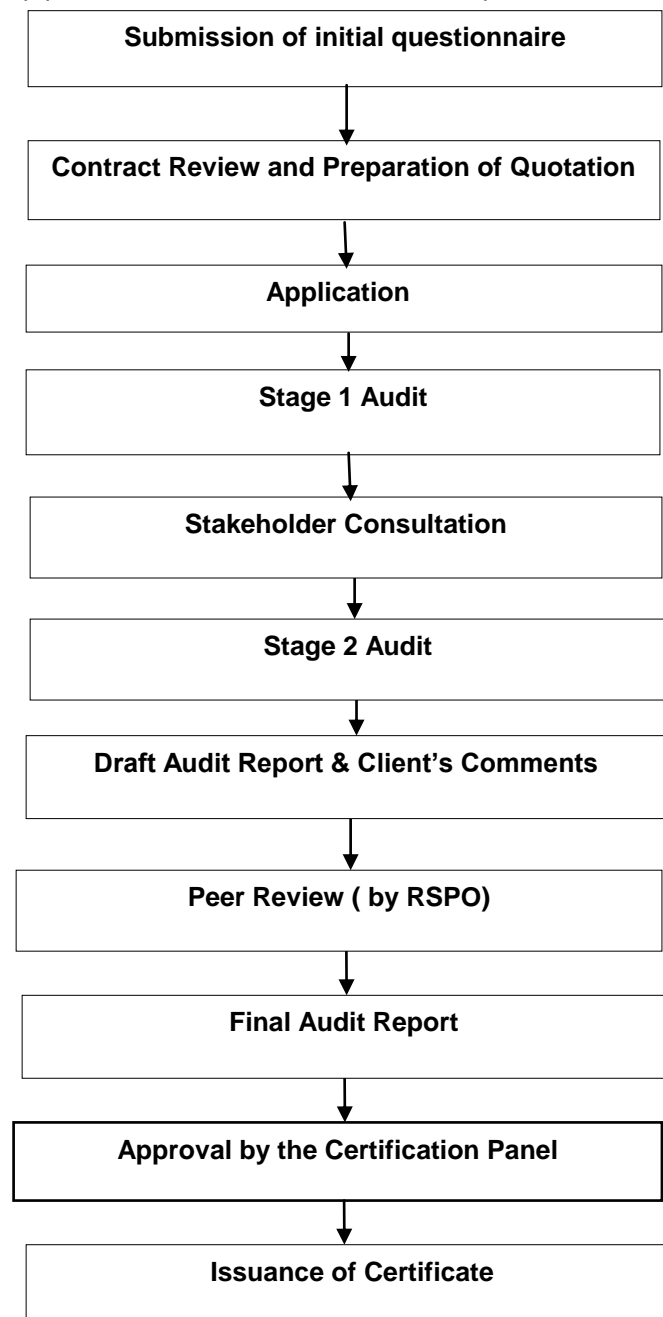
## 1. INTRODUCTION

This guideline has been prepared to provide guidance to organizations/companies that are interested in obtaining RSPO P & C certification and/or Group certification from SIRIM QAS International Sdn Bhd (SIRIM QAS International) to the requirements of the relevant RSPO P & C Certification System Standard published in 2007 and amended in 2011 and/or to RSPO Standard for Group Certification Final – approved July 2010 (Amendment April 2013).

This guideline is prepared in accordance with SIRIM QAS International documented procedures on RSPO P & C certification including RSPO Accreditation and Certification requirements for Group certification, and other related normative documents issued by RSPO. Please contact the Sales, Marketing and Business Development Section of SIRIM QAS International if further clarification is needed with regard to the contents of this document.

## 2. CERTIFICATION PROCESS

The RSPO P & C and/or Group Certification is carried out in accordance to the policies and procedures established by SIRIM QAS International based on the requirements of ISO/IEC 17021, RSPO P & C Certification System and RSPO Accreditation and Certification requirements for Group certification , . The detailed step by step processes for RSPO P & C and Group certification are explained as follows:



## 2.1 **Submission of Initial Questionnaire**

The applicant completes and submits the Initial Questionnaire to SIRIM QAS International.

## 2.2 **Contract Review and Preparation of Quotation**

SIRIM QAS International will review the information given in the Initial Questionnaire by the applicant and based on the information obtained, prepare a quotation on the total cost of certification. Overall certification costs are calculated based on the number of auditor days required to conduct the audit.

The determination of auditor days to conduct the on-site audit is guided by the document on determination on auditor days established by SIRIM QAS International. A quotation will be sent to the applicant for consideration. The quotation provides an estimation of the total cost for certification which includes the professional fees for stage 1 and 2 audits, stakeholder consultation, report writing, peer review and other related incidental costs.

## 2.3 **Application**

Upon agreeing to the quotation, the applicant is required to submit an application form together with an application fee to SIRIM QAS International. For RSPO P & C certification, an applicant is the Certification Unit which shall comprise of a mill and its supply base. For RSPO Group certification, the unit of certification shall be the Group manager and group members who have signed a contract and/or agreement with the Group Manager to comply with the relevant RSPO Standard for Sustainable Oil Palm Production and the RSPO Standard for Group Certification; and permits assessments by both the Group Manager and an RSPO accredited certification body. All the FFB from all managed land (or estates) of group members shall be produced to RSPO certifiable standards.

## 2.4 **Stage 1 Audit**

Upon receipt of the application form, SIRIM QAS International will appoint an Auditor, who will be responsible for the applicant's application. Stage 1 Audit is carried out on site to determine (1) the adequacy of the applicant's documentation, (2) whether an internal audit or assessment in the case of Group certification and management review have been conducted and (3) the readiness of the applicant to proceed to Stage 2 Audit.

## 2.5 **Stakeholder Consultation**

Stakeholder consultation shall be carried out not less than 30 days before the Stage 2 Audit is conducted.

## 2.6 **Stage 2 Audit**

After the findings of the Stage 1 Audit have been resolved and issues from stakeholders have been identified, the Applicant is required to inform the Audit Team Leader on the readiness to proceed to Stage 2 Audit. It is recommended that all proposed actions to address the issues of concerned identified during Stage 1 audit are submitted to the Audit Team Leader at least two weeks before the conduct of Stage 2 Audit.

During Stage 2 Audit, the audit team will evaluate the implementation including the effectiveness of the applicant's RSPO P & C system and practices against the requirements of the RSPO P & C standard.

For Group Certification, Stage 2 will comprise of the following:

- i) Evaluation of the performance of the internal assessor i.e. Group Manager or appointed personnel in accordance with the requirements of the RSPO Standard for Group Certification.
- ii) Assessment of a sample of group members, according to the requirements of the relevant RSPO standard for Sustainable Palm Oil Production and relevant elements of the RSPO Standard for Group Certification. These assessments will also provide evidence of the conformance of the Group Manager with the RSPO Standard for Group Certification.

## 2.7 Findings from Stage 2 audit

Audit findings of Stage 2 RSPO P & C Certification and Group Certification audit shall be classified as either major and minor nonconformities based on the classification on each indicator under each Criteria.

## 2.8 Draft Audit Report

Upon receipt of corrective actions and satisfactory closure of the major non conformities, the Audit Team Leader will prepare a draft report on the findings of the audit within 60 days from the last date of the Stage 2 Audit.

## 2.9 Client's Comments

Draft audit report is submitted to Client for comment. Client is given 2 weeks to submit comments to the Audit Team Leader.

## 2.10 Peer Review

The draft Stage 2 Audit Report will be submitted to RSPO for peer review. After a period of time, RSPO shall submit the comments by peer reviewers to SIRIM QAS International to seek clarification and responses. SIRIM QAS International shall respond to the comments made by the peer reviewers and resubmit the responses to RSPO.

## 2.11 Final Report

Upon RSPO's instruction that the draft report has been accepted, the final report shall be prepared .

## 2.12 Approval by the Certification Panel

The Certification Panel is informed on the acceptance of the final report by RSPO and approves the award of certificate to the Certification Unit /Group.

## 2.13 Issuance of Certificate

A RSPO P & C Certificate or RSPO Group certification shall be issued upon payment of all fees due and signing of the Certification Agreement. The *Certificate* is valid for 5 years from the date the certification is approved.

## 2.14 Preparation of Public Summary

A public summary shall be prepared and published on SIRIM QAS International's website within 1 month of the approval by the Certification Panel to provide an overview of the audit process, management programmes and the result of the audit on the certified Certification Unit.

## 2.15 Surveillance Audit/Recertification

All certified Certification Units including Groups shall be subjected to one annual surveillance audit. In exceptional cases, two surveillance audits shall be carried out annually. The first surveillance audit shall be conducted not more than 12 (twelve) months from the date of approval by the Certification Panel but not sooner than 9 months. Recertification is carried out once every five years prior to the expiry of the certificate.

Minor non conformities raised in any audit shall be upgraded to major non conformities if the corrective actions have not been adequately addressed.

## 3. SCHEDULE OF FEES

SIRIM QAS International shall prepare and issue a quotation based on the initial questionnaire submitted by the applicant which will consist of the following components:

- (i) Application fee RM 500
- (ii) Audit fee RM 1,800 per auditor day
- (iii) Annual fee RM 500
- (iv) Technical Specialist RM 1,800 (when necessary)

## 4. FEE PAYMENT SCHEDULE

The schedule for payment of fees over the three-year certification cycle is as follows:

| No | Stage   | Fee Due                           |
|----|---|-----------------------------------|
| 1. | Upon acceptance of quotation and submission of application form     | Application fee                   |
| 2. | Upon completion of pre-assessment (Stage 1 Audit)                   | Stage 1 audit fee                 |
| 3. | Upon completion of main assessment (Stage 2 Audit)                  | Stage 2 audit fee                 |
| 4. | Upon approval of certification but prior to issuance of Certificate | Annual fee                        |
| 5. | Upon completion of surveillance audit (year 1 to 4)                 | Surveillance audit and annual fee |
| 6. | Upon completion of recertification (year 5)                         | Re-certification and annual fee   |

## 5. CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

### 5.1 Site of Audit

The applicant shall identify the name and geographical GPS location, (longitude and latitude) of the Certification Unit, number of supply base, size, type, composition and site condition of the Certification Unit to be covered under the scope of certification.

## 5.2 **Scope of certification**

The applicant shall clearly define and ensure that it does not omit elements of its operation from the scope of certification. The scope of certification should clearly specify the products produced by the Certification Unit and the quantity ie tonnage of the certified products eg crude palm oil and palm kernel .

For Group Certification, the scope of certification should clearly specify the quantity i.e. tonnage of the certified fresh fruit bunches (FFBs) produced by the group members. Conversion of the yield of FFBs into Crude Palm Oil (CPO) and Crude Palm Kernel (CPK) shall apply the current National Oil Extraction Rate (OER) published by Malaysian Palm Oil Board (MPOB).

## 5.3 **Audit Criteria**

Audit criteria for certification shall be as follows:

- i) RSPO P & C certification – the document that shall be applied is MYNI RSPO P & C (for Malaysia) or any other RSPO approved National Interpretation applicable in the country where the audit is carried out.
- ii) RSPO Group Certification –documents that shall be applied are:
  - RSPO Standard for Group Certification and
  - MYNI RSPO P & C (for Malaysia) or any other RSPO approved National Interpretation applicable in the country where the audit is carried out.

In all cases, the latest version of the standards shall be applicable.

## 6. **APPEALS PROCEDURE**

The applicant may file an appeal if the applicant does not agree with the decision of the Certification Panel. The appeal shall be made in writing to the Senior General Manager of the Management System Department within 2 (two) weeks of notification of the decision.

The appeals procedure is available on the website of SIRIM QAS International.

## 7. **DISPUTES AND COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

Any complaint on SIRIM QAS International's certification services or on certified organizations/companies shall be directed to the Head, Quality and OSHE (QOSHE) Section.

Complaints may be made verbally or in writing. All complaints received will be verified and validated by the QOSHE Manager. The complainant shall be informed of the receipt of the complaint and will be provided progress report on the outcome of the investigation.

In the event of complaints or disputes involving RSPO certified organizations, stakeholders may use the RSPO Complaints System. However, in order to engage this Complaints System in a practical and more efficient way, parties are encouraged to seek avenues for resolution of disputes by applying a Dispute Settlement Facility (DSF) Framework, Terms of Reference and Protocol, January, 2012. Details of the process are available in the RSPO website.

## 8. WITHDRAWAL/SUSPENSION/REVOCAION/TERMINATION

### (i) **Withdrawal**

Certified organization that wishes to withdraw from the RSPO P & C and Group certification scheme is required to:

- (a) write to the Head of the FAF Section informing of its intention
- (b) ensure that all advertising matters that contain any reference to the *Certificate* are discontinued within a reasonable time frame; and
- (c) return the *Certificate* to the Head of the FAF Section.

### (ii) **Suspension/Termination**

SIRIM QAS International has the right to suspend or terminate the certification of an organization under the following circumstances:

- (a) the certified organisation's/ company's RSPO P & C system has persistently or seriously failed to meet the certification requirements;
- (b) the certified organisation/company does not allow surveillance or re-certification audits to be conducted at the required frequencies;
- (c) the certified organisation/company has voluntarily requested suspension of its certification;
- (d) the certified organization has failed to take corrective actions on non-conformity (ies) raised within the specified timeframe;
- (e) the certified organization has incorrectly made reference to its certification status or used the *Certificate*, marks inclusive of certification mark and RSPO trademark or audit reports in a misleading manner; and
- (f) the certified organization has infringed the requirements of the certification contract.

In the event of suspension, the certified organization under suspension is required to take the necessary corrective actions within the suspension period. Failure to take corrective actions within the specified period may result in the termination of the *Certificate*. The suspension or termination or withdrawal of the certificate shall be informed to RSPO.

The information related to the certification status of the organization will be made publicly accessible. An organization dissatisfied with the decision on suspension / termination has the right to file a written appeal with the Appeal Committee.

## 9. CHANGES TO THE INFORMATION IN THE CERTIFICATE

A certified organization is required to inform SIRIM QAS International of any changes on the name, address, scope of certification or other details on the Certificate. Any request for such changes shall be made in writing. A decision will be made as to whether there is a need for an onsite audit prior to processing the change.