GUIDELINES FOR
CERTIFICATION OF MALAYSIAN SUSTAINABLE PALM OIL
(MSPO)

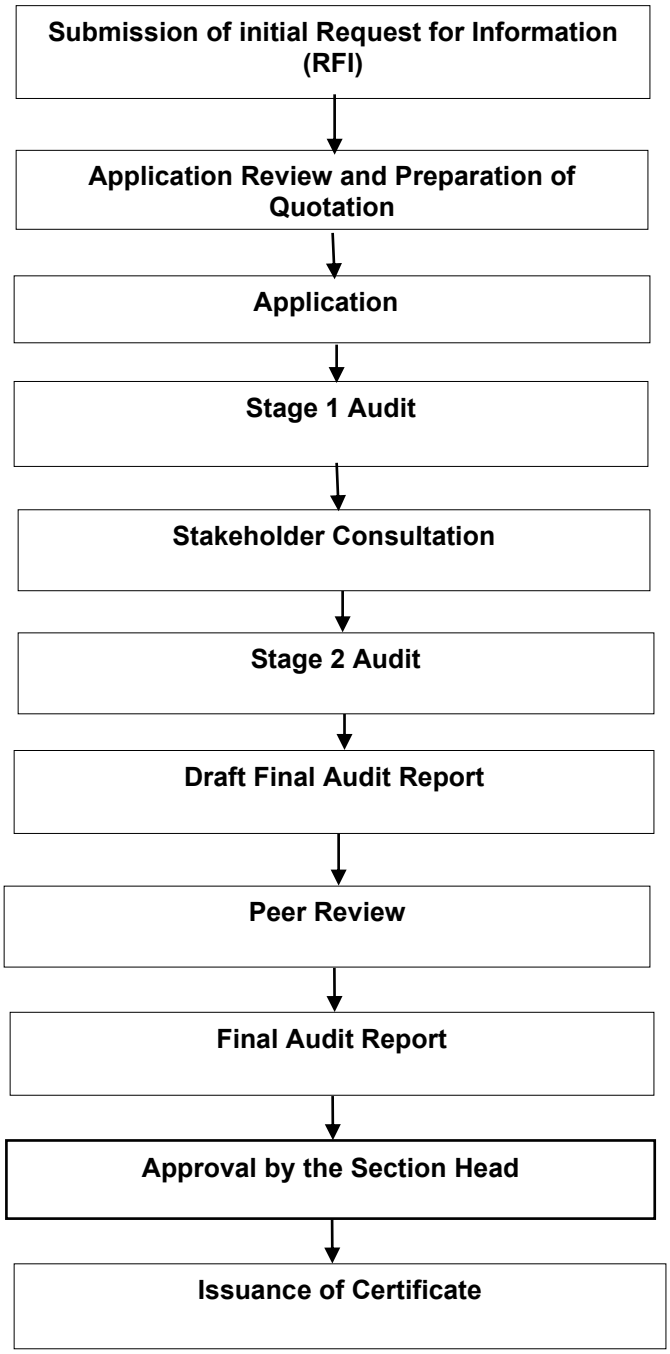
1. INTRODUCTION

This guideline has been prepared to provide guidance to organizations/companies that are interested in obtaining MSPO certification from SIRIM QAS International Sdn Bhd (SIRIM QAS International) to the requirements of the relevant MSPO Certification Scheme Document Standard.

This guideline is prepared in accordance with SIRIM QAS International documented procedures on MSPO certification including MSPO Certification Scheme Document requirements and other related normative documents referred by MSPO standard. Please contact the Customer Experience Section of SIRIM QAS International if further clarification is needed with regard to the content of this document.

2. CERTIFICATION PROCESS

The MSPO Certification is carried out in accordance to the policies and procedures established by SIRIM QAS International based on the requirements of ISO/IEC 17021-1, ISO 17065 and MSPO Certification Scheme Document requirements. The step by step processes for MSPO certification are explained as follows:



2.1 Submission of Initial Request for Information (RFI)

The applicant completes and submits the Initial Request for Information (RFI) to SIRIM QAS International.

2.2 Application Review and Preparation of Quotation

SIRIM QAS International will review the information given in the Initial Request for Information (RFI) 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 MSPO certification, an applicant can be from an individual premise or group certification/ multisite certification. Individual certification can comprise of a mill, estate/plantation, refinery/kernel crushing plant/oleochemical or food manufacturer and trader/ FFB dealers whereas group certification is a group of plantation/smallholders and mills or a multisite of downstream facilities such as refinery, kernel crushing plant and oleochemicals.

For 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 MSPO Standard for Sustainable Oil Palm and permits assessments by both the Group Manager and an MSPO registered certification body. For Multisite certification, the main plant shall become a ICS where it is to be audited on a yearly basis and would have common documents across all the sites.

2.4 Stage 1 Audit

Upon receipt of the application form, SIRIM QAS International will appoint an Audit Team Leader, 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/ Multisite 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 during the audit process. SIRIM QAS International shall notify the stakeholders at least 30 days before the start of the field visit during the audit

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 MSPO system and practices against the requirements of the MS2530 standard.

2.7 **Findings from Stage 2 audit**

Audit findings of Stage 2 MSPO Certification audit are classified as either major or minor nonconformities and Opportunities for Improvement. For major non-conformities, client is required to take corrective action and submit to the Audit Team Leader not exceeding 180 days after the last day of stage 2 audit. Failure to do so, the audit team shall conduct another Stage 2 audit prior to recommending certification. For minor non-conformities, client is required to submit the corrective action plan within 45 days after the last day of stage 2 audit. The minor nonconformity can be closed in the next audit.

2.8 **Draft Audit Report**

Audit Team Leader will prepare a draft final report within 14 days after the closure of the major non-conformities, 14 days after the acceptance of the corrective action plan or within 30 days from the audit date if there is no findings.

2.9 **Peer Review**

The draft final Stage 2 Audit Report will be submitted to two independent peer reviewers appointed by SIRIM QAS International. Peer reviewer shall review the report within three (3) weeks. Audit Team Leader shall respond to the comments made by the peer reviewers. All issues shall be resolved before the finalization of the audit report.

2.10 **Client's Comments**

The final Stage 2 Audit Report shall be submitted to Client for factual comment.

2.11 **Final Report**

The final report shall be signed off by the Audit Team Leader and the client.

2.12 **Approval by the Section Head**

Section Head will decide and approve on the recommendation for MSPO certification.

2.13 **Issuance of Certificate**

An MSPO Certificate 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.

The MSPO Certificate shall carry additional information in the Appendix or Attachment of the certificate i.e. Name of CU, MPOB License, Location of Planted Area, GPS Coordinates, Certified Area, Planted Area and Mill Capacity accordingly.

2.14 **Public Summary Report**

A public summary of the audit report shall be made available through SIRIM QAS International's website within 30 days after the certification decision.

2.15 **Surveillance Audit/Recertification**

All certified premises including Groups and multisite shall be subjected to annual surveillance audit. The surveillance audit shall be conducted between nine to twelve months

from the date of approval by the Certification Panel. Recertification is carried out once every five years prior to the expiry of the certificate, but not earlier than 6 months.

3. Certification Cost

The cost of certification will vary depending on various factors such as the number of sites to be included in the certification. The schedule for payment of fees over the five-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 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

4. CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

4.1 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.

4.2 Audit Criteria

Audit criteria for certification shall be as follows:

i) MS 2530-2-1:2022 Malaysian Sustainable Palm Oil (MSPO) Part 2-1: General principles for independent smallholders (less than 40.46 hectares)
ii) MS 2530-2-2:2022 Malaysian Sustainable Palm Oil (MSPO) Part 2-2: General principles for organised smallholders (less than 40.46 hectares)
iii) MS 2530-3-1:2022 Malaysian Sustainable Palm Oil (MSPO) Part 3-1: General principles for oil palm plantations (40.46 hectares to 500 hectares)
iv) MS 2530-3-2:2022 Malaysian Sustainable Palm Oil (MSPO) Part 3-2: General principles for oil palm plantations (more than 500 hectares)
v) MS 2530-4-1:2022 Malaysian Sustainable Palm Oil (MSPO) Part 4-1: General principles for palm oil mill including supply chain requirements
vi) MS 2530-4-2:2022 Malaysian Sustainable Palm Oil (MSPO) Part 4-2: General principles for palm oil processing facilities including supply chain requirements
vii) MS 2530-4-3:2022 Malaysian Sustainable Palm Oil (MSPO) Part 4-3: General principles for dealers including supply chain requirements

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

5. APPEALS PROCEDURE

The applicant may file an appeal when he does not agree with the decision of the Certification Panel. The appeal shall be in writing and addressed to the Senior General Manager of the Management System Department within 2 weeks of notification of the decision.

The letter of appeal shall be forwarded to the Appeals Panel appointed by the Certification Advisory Committee. The appellant shall be notified of the composition of the panel and the date of its proposed hearing. The appellant shall have the right to object the composition of the panel and to appear before the panel to present his case. Decisions made by the Appeals Panel including the grounds of their decision shall be recorded and the appellant shall be notified in writing.

6. DISPUTES AND COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Any complaint about SIRIM QAS International's certification services or about organizations certified by SIRIM QAS International shall be directed to QOSHE Section Head.

Complaints may be in writing or verbal. All complaints received will be verified and validated by the QOSHE Section Head. The complainant shall be informed of the receipt of the complaint and will be provided progress report(s) and a report on the outcome of the investigation.

7. WITHDRAWAL/SUSPENSION/REVOCATION/TERMINATION

(i) Withdrawal

Certified organization that wishes to withdraw from the MSPO certification scheme is required to:

(a) write to the Head of Food, Agriculture and Forestry 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 Food, Agriculture and Forestry 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 MSPO 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 MSPO logo or audit reports in a misleading manner; and

(f) the certified organization has infringed the requirements of the certification contract.

(g) The certified organization receives repetitive Major NC during subsequent audit on the specific objective evidence raised in the previous audit. This will lead to the immediate suspension of the certificate by the CB.

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 SIRIM QAS International.

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.

8. INTEGRITY AUDIT & SPECIAL AUDIT

(a) Integrity audit shall be carried out at the CBs' clients' premises (on-site audit). The results of the integrity audit are then compared with the CBs' audit summary report. CBs' representatives shall be present during the integrity audit as observer. The integrity audit results will be shared with the management unit and the CB which require acknowledgement from the recipients.

(b) Special audits shall be carried out at the CBs' offices and/or their clients' premises (on-site audit) by the scheme owner to verify complaints, grievances, issues, or news articles against the applicable MSPO standard and scheme document requirement. The outcome of the special audit may be submitted to the Accreditation Body (AB) if it involves a breach of accreditation requirements, to facilitate further action concerning certification and/or accreditation decisions

9. CHANGES TO THE INFORMATION IN THE CERTIFICATE

The organization may seek to make changes to details in the certificate. This may include, name of organization, change of address or scope of certification. Request for such changes shall be made in writing.