



Document name	RTRS Accreditation and Certification Procedure for responsible soy production Version 4.3_ENG
Document reference	RTRS_A&C_STD_001_V4.3_ENG_for responsible soy production
Date	February 05th 2014
Produced by	<p>Prepared by ProForest with input from: the RTRS International Technical Verification Group (ITVG), Control Union and RTRS Secretariat.</p> <p>Amendments made by the RTRS Executive Board 11/12 May 2010 and by the RTRS Secretariat December 16th 2010</p> <p>Update in accordance to ISO/IEC 17065 made by RTRS Consultant and RTRS Secretariat January 2014.</p> <p>Amendments made by the Technical Unit of the RTRS in collaboration with E4tech in February 2018</p> <p>The document was formally endorsed and approved by the Executive Board Members on 17th of April, 2018 and approved by the GA on 31st of May, 2018.</p> <p>The document was formally endorsed and approved by the Executive Board Members on 25th of April, 2019 and approved by the GA on 12th of June, 2019.</p> <p>This document was reviewed by the Technical Unit of the RTRS in collaboration with E4tech during 2019.</p> <p>The document was formally endorsed and approved by the Executive Board Members on November 6th, 2019 and pending approval of GA before entering into force.</p>
Mandatory implementation of the current version	XXX

This is a public document of the Round Table on Responsible Soy Association (RTRS), for any comments regarding the content of this document or the RTRS Standard please contact the:

RTRS Technical Unit

technical.unit@responsiblesoy.org

and cc: info@responsiblesoy.org

The next review is scheduled for May 2023 at the latest. Earlier reviews might be scheduled upon decision by the Executive Board or as required by ISEAL membership requirements.

The RTRS official languages are English, Spanish and Portuguese, however in case of any inconsistency between different versions of the same document, please refer to the English version as the official one.



Index

Introduction.....	3
Scope.....	3
Definitions	3
Changes from previous version of this document	4
Accreditation System.....	4
General Accreditation Requirements for Certification Bodies	5
Module A. Operational and Assessment Requirements for Certification against RTRS Principles and Criteria for Responsible Soy Production	11
Modulo B. Additional Requirements for Certification against the RTRS EU RED Compliance Requirements for Producers	19
Annex 1. RTRS Lead Auditor Qualifications; for Certification against the RTRS Standard for Responsible Soy Production.....	22
Annex 2. Assessment report for certification against the RTRS Standard for Responsible Soy Production,	23
Annex 3. Requirements for Certification Bodies for the development of Regional Interpretations of the RTRS Standard for Responsible Soy Production	25
Anexo 4. Public Summary Report; for certification against the RTRS Standard for Responsible Soy Production.....	28
Anexo 5. Progressive entry level for the P&C Certification	29



RTRS Accreditation and Certification Procedure

I. Introduction

The Round Table on Responsible Soy Association (RTRS), is a global multi-stakeholder organization on responsible soy. www.responsiblesoy.org.

The principal objective of RTRS is to “promote the growth and the use of responsible soy through co-operation with the supply chain and open dialogue between its stakeholders”.

The methods used by the RTRS to deliver its objectives include:

- (a) The development of a standard for responsible soy production and associated mechanisms for verification of responsible soy production. The RTRS Standard for Responsible Soy Production was developed during 2007-2010, is presented as a series of Principles, Criteria, Indicators and Guidance, and is designed to be used by soy producers to implement responsible production practices, and by certification bodies for field verification. No public claims relating to compliance with the RTRS Principles and Criteria can be made without independent, third party certification, carried out by a certification body that has been authorized by RTRS, and according to RTRS certification requirements.
- (b) The development of a Chain of Custody Standard, which describes requirements related to the control of RTRS certified soy, soy derivatives and soy products along the supply chain, including flows of material and associated claims. The RTRS Chain of Custody Standard was developed during 2010, and is presented as a series of auditable requirements designed to be used by organizations in the soy value chain to demonstrate implemented systems for control of RTRS certified soy, soy derivatives and soy products. No public claims relating to compliance with this standard can be made without independent, third party certification, carried out by a certification body authorized by the RTRS, according to RTRS certification requirements.

In preparing this document, the RTRS recognises that there is a considerable variation in the scale, technical knowledge and organization of producers and supply chain operators throughout the world and so it is imperative that access to certification is given to all growers and supply chain operators in a pragmatic and affordable way.

This document was designed and continuously improved with the aim to fully comply with ISEAL Assurance Code.

II. Scope

This document sets out:

- (a) The requirements for a certification body to be approved by the RTRS as being a competent body capable of undertaking assessments and issuing certificates of conformance against the RTRS Standard for Responsible Soy Production Version 2.0. (Accreditation requirements).
- (b) The way in which certification shall be carried out by such certification bodies. (Certification requirements).

This assurance document will be reviewed not less than once every five years and not more than once every three years unless exceptions are identified or unless the RTRS Executive Board or General Assembly determines otherwise.

As part of the review of this document, RTRS will continuously monitor the efficiency of the oversight mechanism and adapt it accordingly.

III. Definitions

Applicable RTRS standard is used to mean the set of RTRS Principles, Criteria and Indicators being used for assessment by the Certification Body. This includes both:

Standards for Soy Production: either the relevant National Interpretation or (where no national interpretation exists) the Certification Body Interpretation of the RTRS Principles and Criteria for Responsible Soy Production.



ROUND TABLE ON RESPONSIBLE SOY ASSOCIATION (RTRS)

UTOQUAI 29/31 | 8008 ZURICH, SWITZERLAND

Standards for Chain of Custody: the RTRS Chain of Custody Standard general requirements and associated module(s).

Note: For purposes of this standard, the term (i) “organization(s)”, “operation(s)”, “unit(s)”, “production unit(s)”, “grower(s)”, farmer(s) and “producer(s)” refer to any natural person, corporation, company, general partnership, limited partnership, limited liability partnership, joint venture, proprietorship, limited liability company, or other entity or business organization or vehicle, trust or unincorporated organization which produces soy –whether individually or through group schemes-; (ii) “related organizations” refers to (a) with respect to natural persons, any individual which is a family member (child, stepchild, parent, stepparent, spouse, sibling, mother-in law, father-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law, or sister-in-law, and any person sharing a person’s household), employee, executive officer, director, partner or auditor of such organization; or (b) with respect to corporations, any corporation directly or indirectly controlling, controlled by, under common control with, or otherwise affiliated to or auditor of, such organization; and “control system” refers to a documented set of procedures and processes that defines how the multi sites and groups are structured; ensures that records are maintained; records internal assessments of production units and explains the responsibilities of both the production units and the control system staff.

IV. Changes from version of this document

Version 3.2

VI	2.2.1 2.2.3 2.2.2.5.2
Module A	A 1.1.3 A 1.1.5 A 1.1.6.1 A 1.1.6.2 Table A A 1.1.6.3 A 1.1.6.4 A 2.6.4 A 2.6.5.1
Module B	B 1.1.1
Annex 4	3 4
Annex 5	New annex, and modification of the categorization indicator 1.3.2

March 2011: Minor changes in the format, not in the content.

Version 4.0

Update in accordance to ISO/IEC 17065

Addition of Table A, in A.1.1.6.2

V. RTRS Accreditation System



1. Approval of certification bodies by the RTRS

Oversight

- 1.1.1. Any certification body that wishes to conduct compliance assessments and issue RTRS certificates shall comply with the requirements laid out in this procedure. An individual cannot be approved as a certification body.
- 1.1.2. The scope of the accreditation shall specify for each certification body the geographical area (country(s) or region(s)), and the type of certification (responsible soy production or supply chain) for which they are accredited.
- 1.1.3. In absence of endorsed independent accreditation bodies, the RTRS Secretariat is in charge of the oversight of certification bodies and auditors through the evaluation and monitoring of compliance with the requirements laid out in this procedure. The RTRS Secretariat shall ensure adequate resources and competences are used for oversight, either internally or through the hiring of external experts.

Accreditation Body (AB) requirements

- 1.1.4. Only accreditation bodies which have been formally endorsed by RTRS may accredit certification bodies (CB) to carry out compliance assessments and award certificates for RTRS Responsible Soy Production.
- 1.1.5. The accreditation body shall be operating in accordance with the requirements of ISO 17011:2017 and shall be independent from the Certification Body assessed.
- 1.1.6. Accreditation bodies may be National Accreditation bodies, or International Accreditation bodies.
- 1.1.7. Accreditation Bodies shall have trained staff on RTRS Standards and Procedures.
- 1.1.8. National Accreditation bodies shall be:
Signatory Members of the International Accreditation Forum, Inc. (IAF), and members of the IAF Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (MLA), having been admitted to the MLA as signatory members in either the QMS (quality management system) MLA or Product MLA category.
- 1.1.9. International Accreditation Bodies shall have full membership of the International Social and Environmental Accreditation and Labelling Alliance (ISEAL) and/or fully comply with applicable requirements of ISEAL Assurance Code.
- 1.1.10. RTRS Secretariat will assess the performance of the assurance system on an annual basis, update the classification of risks and inform the improvements.
- 1.1.11. The RTRS shall evaluate annually the performance and continued conformity of the Accreditation Body with the following requirements:
 - 1.1.11.1. Audit reports from the Accreditation Bodies shall be sent to RTRS and will be verified.
 - 1.1.11.2. Up-date meetings shall be performed in an annual basis between AB and RTRS.

VI. General Accreditation Requirements for Certification Bodies

2. Application and Approval Process for CBs

2.1. Registration and application

- 2.1.1. The CB shall make a formal request to the RTRS Secretariat for preliminary recognition by the RTRS as an applicant CB.
- 2.1.2. The CB shall supply to the RTRS the required documentation (as requested to them by the RTRS) for review and approval for preliminary recognition by the RTRS.
- 2.1.3. If approved by the RTRS, the CB shall sign a contract with the RTRS authorizing it to commence the application for accreditation by an RTRS-endorsed accreditation body.



- 2.1.4. The RTRS Secretariat shall confirm preliminary recognition to the CB and provide a complete list, with contact details, of all approved Accreditation Bodies. The CB shall pay half of the Recognition fee to the RTRS.
- 2.1.5. During the preliminary recognition period the CB shall conduct the RTRS audit with the AB as a witness in order to achieve the full recognition.
- 2.1.6. The RTRS-endorsed accreditation body shall communicate its decision to grant or reject accreditation of the CB within 8 months of the date of signing the contract for preliminary recognition by the RTRS.
- 2.1.7. After a CB is granted with a successful accreditation decision (within the 8 months of the preliminary recognition period) made by an RTRS-endorsed Accreditation Body (AB) the CB shall send to the RTRS Secretariat a complete application form to request a full recognition status and pay the second half of the Recognition Fee to the RTRS.

2.2. Accreditation and surveillance

Core competency requirements

- 2.2.1. The certification body shall comply with the requirements of ISO/IEC 17065 and with the additional requirements specified in this procedure.
- 2.2.2. The CB shall fully comply with applicable requirements of ISEAL Assurance Code

Other requirements

- 2.2.3. The certification body shall be a member of the RTRS.

Approval

- 2.2.4. A CB shall demonstrate that it has developed all of the required, documented procedures as specified in ISO/IEC 17065 and in this document.
- 2.2.5. A CB shall demonstrate that it has at least one (1) auditor who meets the requirements for RTRS lead auditors for the modules they are seeking accreditation (Annex 1).
- 2.2.6. For each of Soy Production accreditation applications, as part of the approval process AB staff shall carry out at least one (1) witnessed assessment, where AB staff shall accompany the CB on a field or site assessment using the relevant RTRS standard. The purpose of witnessing the CB performing field /site audits of their clients is to collect objective evidence to assist in the determination of CB staff competence including:
 - 2.2.6.1. Verification on site of the effectiveness of the CB's documented system and procedures, especially with regard to the assignment of competent audit teams;
 - 2.2.6.2. Observation of the CB's audit teams, as they perform an audit, to evaluate whether they:
 - Conform with the CB's own documented system and procedures,
 - Conform with the requirements and recommendations of ISO/IEC 17065 and of this and other relevant RTRS standards or guidance.
- 2.2.7. CBs which meet all the requirements should be provided with accreditation confirmation by the AB.

Surveillance and monitoring

- 2.2.8. The Accreditation Body shall conduct annual surveillance evaluations of CBs. Evaluations shall ensure that the CB complies with the requirements in this procedure, including but not limited to:
 - a) The management system of the CB;
 - b) The competence of assurance personnel;
 - c) The process implemented by the CBs for audits, surveillance and monitoring of claims.
- 2.2.9. Surveillance evaluations shall include a review of the performance of CBs and auditors in the field and, if required, witness audits.
- 2.2.10. Surveillance evaluations shall take into account the scope of certification assessments undertaken by the CB, including the size of organizations certified and the geographical scope of work.
- 2.2.11. RTRS shall be entitled to participate, upon prior notice and at its own cost, in assessments or surveillance evaluations carried out by ABs.



2.3. Contract with RTRS

- 2.3.1. Once a CB has been successfully accredited, it shall submit the accreditation confirmation and will pay the second half of the accreditation fee to the RTRS who will then issue a contract to allow the CB to undertake RTRS certification (unless such contract was formerly executed in the case of RTRS preliminary recognition).
- 2.3.2. The CB shall send at least one appropriate senior representative (either a certification programme manager or an experienced lead auditor) to the annual CB meeting of the RTRS and have a mechanism to ensure that all information from the meeting is communicated to all lead auditors and others involved in RTRS certification within the CB.

2.4. Sanctions

- 2.4.1. The RTRS may withdraw the right to act as an RTRS certification body if the CB:
 - 2.4.1.1. Fails to close out a major non-conformance identified during an accreditation visit and thus loses its accredited status;
 - 2.4.1.2. Fails to meet the terms of the contract with RTRS.
- 2.4.2. The relevant RTRS committee will be responsible for dealing with these non-conformities.
- 2.4.3. CBs shall be subject to sanctions –including suspensions of permits to operate - if in violation of the requirements and policies of the RTRS. These sanctions will be defined by the relevant RTRS committee.

3. Systems and Procedures Requirements

3.1. Mechanisms for complaints and grievances

- 3.1.1. The CB shall develop procedures for dealing with complaints and appeals that are open to any interested party.
- 3.1.2. The CB shall publish summary information on its web site about the procedures for submitting complaints and appeals and about the CBs procedure for handling such complaints or appeals.
- 3.1.3. The summary information shall be available in English and additionally in the principal languages of the countries where the CB is carrying out RTRS certification assessments.

3.2. CB independence, impartiality and integrity

- 3.2.1. The CB shall maintain a written policy and procedures for avoidance of conflict of interest.
- 3.2.2. Procedures for identifying and managing conflicts of interest shall include provision for a specific independent committee, of at least 3 individuals, set up by the certification body. A single mechanism for several certification schemes can satisfy this requirement.
- 3.2.3. The independent committee shall:
 - 3.2.3.1. Meet at least annually;
 - 3.2.3.2. Be independent of the financial control of the organization;
 - 3.2.3.3. Be independent of certification decision making;
 - 3.2.3.4. Formally review the certification body's performance with respect to independence;
 - 3.2.3.5. Formally record its discussions and recommendations, and the CB's response to them.
- 3.2.4. Records of the conflict of interest committee's discussions, recommendations and consequent corrective actions shall be maintained for at least 10 years.
- 3.2.5. Certification bodies and members of assessment teams shall have maintained independence from the organization or related organizations for a minimum of five years to be considered not to have a conflict of interest. Independence in this context means not having been employed in or by the organization being assessed or undertaking any consultancy activities or other service provision, except for certification or verification activities.
- 3.2.6. The CB shall not offer assessment or surveillance audits for any organization to which it has provided management advice or technical support related to the scope of RTRS certification, or with whom it has any relationship, which creates a threat to impartiality.



3.2.7. The CB procedures shall include the contractual obligation for all personnel including sub-contracted personnel such as consultants (e.g. interpreters, technical experts) contributing to certification decisions to disclose in writing to the CB all possible and actual conflicts of interest, at the time that the conflict of possibility of conflict becomes evident.

Note: a relationship that threatens the impartiality of the CB can be based on ownership, governance, management, personnel, shared resources, finances, contracts, marketing and payment of a sales commission, or any other inducement for the referral of new clients etc. (See IAF definition of 'related body').

3.3. Client application and contract

3.3.1. The CB shall enter into a contractual agreement for certification services with an operation seeking or holding certification against the relevant RTRS standard, and maintain a record of such agreement before proceeding with any service provision.

3.3.2. The contractual agreement shall specify the certification scope, duration and costs relating to the assessment procedure, and outline the rights and obligations of the CB and of the client. This shall include:

3.3.2.1. Relevant provisions on confidentiality and declarations of interest.

3.4. Information provision to certificate holders

3.4.1. The CB shall ensure that any operation seeking or holding certification against the requirements of an RTRS standard are provided with all necessary information concerning the RTRS as a whole, the relevant standard against which they will be assessed, and all contractual documentation.

3.4.2. The CB shall have a procedure to ensure that any change to either the RTRS requirements or to the CB's own requirements is systematically communicated to all certificate holders, including the date by which full implementation is required.

3.5. Certificate information

3.5.1. RTRS does not issue certificates itself. Independent certification bodies carry out the audits that lead to RTRS certification. At the same time, the Certification Bodies are Accredited by approved Accreditation Bodies. Ultimately, RTRS Secretariat is responsible for the correct implementation of the assurance system.

3.5.2. At minimum, the certificate issued shall contain the following information

- a) Certificate Number
- b) Certified organization: name and address, city and country
- c) Certification Body: name and address, city and country
- d) Scope of Certification: Name of the standard used for the assessment and version, operation sites (e.g. farms, processing units, storage units, etc.) included in the certificate, use of non-GMO soy and chain of custody system;
- e) Whether the certificate is valid for EU RED compliance;
- f) Validity of the certificate: Valid from mmddyyyy until mmddyyyy
- g) In case of multisite or group certification: list and details of additional sites owned by the organization
- h) Logo of the RTRS, used according the rules of the use of the logo of the RTRS document.

3.5.3. The allocation of certificate numbers shall follow the following system:

3.5.3.1. RTRS certificate numbers shall be unique and shall be comprised of 3 or 4 component parts, as shown in the below table:

Component of Certificate Number	How the component shall be written	Notes
Reference to the certificate being for RTRS responsible soy	RTRS	Obligatory first element of all certificates



ROUND TABLE ON RESPONSIBLE SOY ASSOCIATION (RTRS)

UTOQUAI 29/31 | 8008 ZURICH, SWITZERLAND

Unique CB abbreviation or acronym	e.g. SGS, KPMG, CU	To be agreed with RTRS at the time of contract signing
Acronym corresponding to RTRS standard against which compliance is assessed	AGR (RTRS Standard for Responsible Soy Production)	Obligatory element of all certificates
Acronym corresponding to "Annex 1 - Chain of Custody Requirements for Producers" of the RTRS standard	COC	Obligatory element of all certificates
Additional code referring to whether operations are compliant with EU RED biofuel requirements, with the non-GMO requirements, or with non-Paraquat requirements, or with a combination of these.	BFLS (biofuels)(where the EU RED compliance requirements for producers/processors standard has additionally been complied with); NGMO (where the non-GMO requirements have been complied with; NPQ (where the non-Paraquat requirements have been complied with); NGMO/NPQ (where both non-GMO and non-Paraquat have been complied with)	Only required if additional modules are complied with
Unique sequential number	e.g. 0012	Corresponding to the number the certificate issued by the CB Each CB shall have a series for AGR certificates (starting at 0001)

3.5.1.2. Some examples:

- RTRS-SGS-AGR-0001
- RTRS-SGS-AGR-BFLS-0002, RTRS-SGS-COC-BFLS-0001

3.6. Control of claims

3.6.1. CB certification procedures shall include mechanisms to ensure compliance of certified organizations with the RTRS Use of the Logo & Claims Procedure.

3.7. Transfer of Certification

3.7.1. The transfer of certification is defined as the recognition of an existing and valid product certification, granted by one accredited certification body, (hereinafter referred to as the "issuing certification body"), by another accredited certification body, (hereinafter referred to as the "accepting certification body") for the purpose of issuing its own certification.

3.7.2. Only certifications which are issued by certification bodies accredited by the time of transfer shall be eligible for transfer. Organizations holding certificates that are not issued by such certification bodies shall be treated as new certifications and will require a full and initial audit.

3.7.3. Certifications under suspension or withdrawal or having major nonconformities open, are not eligible for this transfer process and shall be considered as new certifications, requiring an initial and full audit.

3.7.4. In cases of requests for transfer of certification, the accepting certification body will request and review all the relevant information of the certificate holder including:



- 3.7.4.1. Expiry date of existing certification
 - 3.7.4.2. The reason for seeking transfer
 - 3.7.4.3. Any complaint received and action taken, during or after the last visit of the issuing certification body
 - 3.7.4.4. Any current engagement by the organization (prospective client) with regulatory bodies in respect of legal compliance
 - 3.7.4.5. Scope of current certification
 - 3.7.4.6. Stage in the current certification cycle. Current surveillance frequency and date of the last visit of the issuing certification body
 - 3.7.4.7. The status of the existing certification (e.g., suspended, in good standing, etc.)
 - 3.7.4.8. The previous audit report and public summary and a copy of the certificate of the issuing certification body.
- 3.7.5. The review process for eligibility has to be carried out by a competent person from the accepting certification body. The review process shall cover all the aspects in point 3.7.4 and its findings and conclusions will be documented.
- 3.7.6. The transfer of certification is allowed at any stage of the certification cycle and the approved certifications are transferred at the present stage in the certification cycle, with the accepting certification body certificate valid from the time of the transfer to the expiration date of the present certification of the issuing certification body. Upon issuance of a new certification, the accepting certification body shall immediately inform it to the RTRS.
- 3.7.7. A proposal is then issued to the prospective client in accordance with point 3.3

4. Costs

- 4.1. All costs for recognition with the RTRS shall be agreed in advance between the RTRS and the CB and paid by the CB.
- 4.2. All costs for accreditation shall be agreed in advance between the AB and the CB and paid by the CB.
- 4.3. All costs for certification shall be agreed in advance between the CB and the certification applicant and paid by the certification applicant.
- 4.4. The issuing CB shall not charge extra costs beyond the originally agreed upon certification to the certificate holder if this decides to switch or transfer the certification.

VII. Monitoring of the RTRS Assurance System

5. Scope and Objectives

- 5.1. This monitoring procedure aims to ensure the integrity and robustness of the RTRS Assurance system through a systematic monitoring of its performances, identification of potential weaknesses and continuous improvement through corrective actions.
- 5.2. This monitoring procedure applies to all the elements forming the RTRS Assurance system, namely:
 - 5.2.1. Compliance of farms, processing units and any supply chain operators with RTRS standards and policies;
 - 5.2.2. Compliance of certification bodies with relevant requirements in this document;
 - 5.2.3. Compliance of accreditation bodies with relevant requirements in this document;
 - 5.2.4. Training, evaluation and monitoring of auditors and accreditors;
 - 5.2.5. Monitoring of certificates, claims and grievances in relation to the assurance system.



- 5.3. The RTRS shall use data collected in relation to the above processes to evaluate the performance and the robustness of the RTRS Assurance System and identify any risk to its integrity. Mitigation actions shall be implemented and monitored whenever such risks exist.
- 5.4. The RTRS Secretariat shall share the results of the monitoring procedure with RTRS Members on an annual basis.

6. Data Sources

- 6.1. The RTRS Secretariat shall continuously collect data in relation to the monitoring of the RTRS Assurance System, including but not limited to:
 - 6.1.1.1. Audit reports, including number and nature of non-conformities and corrective actions;
 - 6.1.1.2. Statistics about certified farms and supply chain operators, including volumes of soy and derived products, number of sites, number of employees;
 - 6.1.1.3. Statistics about certification bodies, including number of audits performed, number of trained employees, monitoring of certified farms and supply chain operators, number of certificates issued, suspended and withdrawn (With justifications for suspension or withdrawal), number of grievances received over audit-related issues and actions undertaken to address grievances;
 - 6.1.1.4. Statistics about accreditation bodies, including number of audits performed, number of trained employees, monitoring of certificate bodies, number of accreditations issued, suspended and withdrawn (With justifications for suspension or withdrawal), number of grievances received over accreditation-related issues and actions undertaken to address grievances;
 - 6.1.1.5. Any additional data or statistics in relation to the RTRS assurance system.

7. Information Management System

- 7.1. The RTRS Secretariat shall maintain an Information Management System to store and analyse data in relation to the RTRS Assurance System, as defined in the above section.
- 7.2. The Information Management System shall be designed and implemented to guarantee the confidentiality of data in relation to the RTRS Assurance System.

8. Data integrity

- 8.1. The RTRS Secretariat shall implement a Quality Assurance (QA) process to verify the integrity of data collected in relation to the RTRS Assurance System.
- 8.2. The QA process shall analyse the integrity of data by evaluating the following aspects:
 - 8.2.1. **Validity.** The data shall be a valid measurement of the expected outcome.
 - 8.2.2. **Reliability.** The data shall come from reliable and verified sources. The data collection process shall remain consistent over time and documented.
 - 8.2.3. **Precision.** The data shall have the right amount of details to ensure they provide the expected information. Margins of error and potential biases shall be analysed and documented.
 - 8.2.4. **Integrity.** The RTRS Secretariat shall ensure that data are collected independently and cannot be modified to an extent that could make the results biased or incomplete.
 - 8.2.5. **Timeliness.** Data shall be provided in a timely fashion and within a reasonable delay by assurance providers. Provided data shall be as recent as possible.
- 8.3. The RTRS Secretariat shall evaluate data against the above criteria to reduce estimation errors, biases, transcription errors and processing errors.
- 8.4. Data failing to comply with any of the above criteria shall be documented and used so that any potential error or bias is minimised. Whenever required, data may be modified by the RTRS Secretariat to account for potential uncertainty or bias in the analysis.



9. Governance

- 9.1. The monitoring of the RTRS Assurance System shall be ensured by the RTRS Secretariat under the supervision of the RTRS Executive Director.
- 9.2. The data Quality Assurance process shall be conducted by a senior staff of the RTRS Secretariat and results signed off by the RTRS Executive Director.
- 9.3. The RTRS Secretariat shall inform the Executive Board of the outcome of the monitoring procedure, in particular if any risk to the integrity of the RTRS Assurance System is detected, as well as any mitigation action. The Executive Board may request to participate in the monitoring procedure.



Module A. Operational and Assessment Requirements for Certification against RTRS Principles and Criteria for Responsible Soy Production

This module applies to certification bodies wishing to undertake certification at farm-level against the RTRS Standard for Responsible Soy Production (Version 2.0).

The General Requirements (Section VI of this document) shall be fulfilled in addition to the requirements of this module.

A1. Operational Requirements

A 1.1. Documented procedures

- A 1.1.1. The CB shall implement all specific requirements for responsible soy production certification to certify single, multiple or group farm production units.
- A 1.1.2. The CB shall develop documented procedures for carrying out the assessments and determining compliance with the RTRS standards (s).
- A 1.1.3. The CB procedures shall be consistent with specifications defined in ISO 19011: 2011 Guidelines for quality and / or environmental management systems assessment and all the requirements of this document.
- A 1.1.4. The CB procedures shall include an appropriate range of effective methods to collect objective evidence of compliance with the applicable RTRS field standard including document review, field visits and interviews with staff and directly affected stakeholders.
- A 1.1.5. The CB procedures shall include a specific procedure to determine the number of man-days required for the main assessment and surveillance assessments. This shall take into account various factors including size and complexity of operations, geographical distance between sites, complexity of social and environmental context. The procedure shall also include how time should be distributed between sites and/or evidence gathering methods. For group and multisite certification, also refer to RTRS Group and Multi-site certification requirements for CBs.
- A 1.1.6. The in-situ audit time for single site audits, will be estimated considering the following requirements:
 - A 1.1.6.1. Area of the unit of certification, defined as (see A.1.2.1), “The unit of certification shall be the farm on which soy is cultivated and is delimited by the farm boundaries. This includes fields where soy is cultivated, but also all non-soy growing areas, non-cultivated areas, infrastructure and installations and other areas that form part of the farm”.
 - A 1.1.6.2. The first thing that shall be considered, when calculating the man-days, is the area of the unit of certification. The following table (table A) provides the minimum man-days for in-situ audit certifications (not considering travel time) for single farms (not multi-sites or group certification), for initial certification audits, re-certifications and surveillance certification audits.

Table A

Number of hectares from the Single Unit of certification	Main audit	Re-certification audit	Surveillance audit
1 – 2.500 h	1,5	1,5	1
2.501 – 5.500 h	2	2	1,5
5.501 – 9.000	2,5	2,5	2
9.001 – 13.000	3	3	2
13.001 – 17.000	3,5	3,5	2,5
> 17.000	4	4	2,5



ROUND TABLE ON RESPONSIBLE SOY ASSOCIATION (RTRS)

UTOQUAI 29/31 | 8008 ZURICH, SWITZERLAND

A 1.1.6.3. Additionally the aspects which may increase the number of man-days required for soy production assessments include¹ have to be considered in the estimation of the man-days and added to the time allocated in the table above:

- Difficult access and long travelling distances (to get to the farm and in the farm). Travel time shall be estimated and added on top of the recommended assessment time. The estimation of the travel time, should be part of the audit report.
- Difficult stakeholder context: Additional man-days may need to be considered in a very difficult context or where there are multiple and dispersed stakeholders; e.g., remote indigenous communities. This estimation of additional man-days should be part of the audit report.
- Significant number of complaints: Complaints either received during the public consultation process carried out by the CB or by the company under certification, need to be fully investigated. Appropriate additional time shall be allocated to investigate all relevant complaints received. This estimation of additional man-days should be part of the audit report.
- New country/region: When a certification assessment is performed in a country/region for the first time, additional time may be allocated to ensure that the audit team is provided with enough time to investigate and evaluate compliance with unforeseen issues.

A 1.1.6.4. The audit report of the Certification Body has to clearly explain how all these factors were considered and detail how the final time audit in terms of man-days were estimated.

A 1.1.6.5. Aspects which may decrease the number of man-days required (only applicable for Initial Certification and Re-certification audits) and need to be taken into account when budgeting for soy production management assessments (the highest deduction allowed is 20% for 2 or more the options below):

- Individual farm certification with less than 500 hectares.
- Family farms production.
- Little subcontracted labour.

A 1.2. The units of certification

A 1.2.1. The unit of certification shall be the farm on which soy is cultivated and is delimited by the farm boundaries. This includes fields where soy is cultivated, but also all non-soy growing areas, non-cultivated areas, infrastructure and installations and other areas that form part of the farm.

A 1.2.2. The CB may offer one of more of the following types of RTRS certification:

Type of Certification	RTRS standard(s) to be used for compliance assessment.	
Individual farm certification- single farm, on a single site	RTRS Standard for Responsible Soy Production: National Interpretation endorsed by the RTRS or regional interpretation developed by the CB (see A 1.2.3)	
Individual farm certification – multiple sites		RTRS Group and Multi-site Standard
Groups of farms		

A 1.2.3. Where there is no RTRS endorsed National Interpretation of the RTRS Standard for Responsible Soy, certification bodies using the Generic RTRS Principles and Criteria for Responsible Production shall carry out a local adaptation of the standard, prior to first use of the standard in any country. This shall follow the procedure outlined in Annex 3.

Note: A full list of RTRS-endorsed National Interpretations is available from RTRS.

A2. Assessment Requirements

A 2.1. Assessment teams and auditors

¹ Cross reference: See also A.2.1.2 and A.2.1.3.1



ROUND TABLE ON RESPONSIBLE SOY ASSOCIATION (RTRS)

UTOQUAI 29/31 | 8008 ZURICH, SWITZERLAND

- A 2.1.1. Teams for main assessments and annual surveillance assessments shall be composed of a lead auditor and sufficient team members. Collectively the team members shall be able to cover all of the elements of the RTRS standard. Including, but not limited to:
- A 2.1.1.1. Legal compliance including all areas covered by the applicable RTRS field standard (e.g., legal experience related to land rights or conservation of native vegetation);
 - A 2.1.1.2. Social issues including community relations, labour rights and health and safety (e.g., experience of field work with local communities or auditing SA8000, or OHSAS 18001).
 - A 2.1.1.3. Environmental issues including biodiversity, water and pollution (e.g., experience with ecology, plant/animal biology, organic agriculture, ISO 14001 or environmental management systems).
 - A 2.1.1.4. Good agricultural practices including expertise on integrated pest management, pesticides and fertiliser use, soil and water management etc.
 - A 2.1.1.5. If the optional RTRS non-GMO and/or RTRS non-Paraquat modules are being assessed, team members should also have adequate knowledge and experience in these subjects.
- A 2.1.2. The team shall include team member(s) that are fluent in the main languages relevant to the location where the assessment is taking place, including the languages of any potentially affected parties such as local communities.
- A 2.1.3. The lead auditor should ideally be fluent in the main language relevant to the location where the assessment is taking place. Where this is not possible an independent translator shall be included in the team.
- A 2.1.3.1. When using a translator in this situation this translator shall not count as part of the audit team for purposes of person-day requirements, and an additional 20% of person-days in the field shall be added for the main assessment.
- A 2.1.4. The CB shall define the minimum competencies of lead auditors and the requirements for members of assessment teams. The CB shall ensure that lead auditors:
- A 2.1.4.1. Are fully and appropriately qualified and meet the RTRS minimum requirements for competencies and qualifications (Annex 1).
 - A 2.1.4.2. Have demonstrable skills in leading assessment teams including adequate briefing and management of team members to ensure they participate effectively in the assessment.
 - A 2.1.4.3. Have a sound knowledge of the relevant RTRS standard and of the RTRS certification requirements.
- A 2.1.5. The lead auditor shall be responsible for ensuring that the assessment or surveillance assessment is conducted in accordance with requirements stated in this document and other relevant RTRS policies or requirements.
- A 2.1.6. The CB shall retain a record of the experience and training of lead auditors, and a clear justification for qualifying as a lead auditor. This shall be made available to the AB and to RTRS on request.
- A 2.1.7. The CB shall register all lead auditors on the RTRS database of lead auditors within one month of carrying out their first lead assessment.
- A 2.1.8. All assessment team members shall have:
- A 2.1.8.1. Expertise in one or more subject area relevant to the RTRS requirements.
 - A 2.1.8.2. An adequate understanding of their role as team members in collecting and reviewing objective evidence of conformance and non-conformance with the requirements of the RTRS standard.
- Note: CBs shall have a procedure for adequately briefing team members, including an information pack clearly setting out their role and responsibilities.
- A 2.1.9. The CB shall have a system in place for the regular monitoring lead auditor performance.

A 2.2. Proposals to undertake a certification assessment

- A 2.2.1. CBs shall have a procedure setting out how proposals to undertake certification assessments are developed, including:
- A 2.2.1.1. The information that shall be provided by the certification applicant.
 - A 2.2.1.2. A methodology to ensure that adequate time is budgeted for preparation, consultation, document review, field visits, reporting and certification decision and for adequate expertise within the team.



A 2.2.1.3. Recording the date of registration of the producer for certification.

A 2.2.2. The CB has a procedure to communicate clearly both the cost of the assessment and the potential for additional costs if major non-conformities are identified and assessment of adequate close-out is required.

A 2.2.3. The requirements of the Annex 1 - Chain of Custody Requirements for Producers of the Production Standard shall be part of the audit process.

A 2.3. Pre-assessment

A 2.3.1 Pre-assessment visits are not obligatory. Certification bodies may offer them as part of their service.

A 2.3.2 A pre-assessment visit may comprise of only one lead auditor.

A 2.3.3 The format and style of a pre-assessment report are at the discretion of the CB and their client. It is recommended that the report is in the same style as for the main compliance assessment report and should include full details of any non-compliance found during the assessment.

A 2.4. Public consultation and preparation for main compliance assessment

A 2.4.1 Two weeks prior to the assessment the CB shall publish their intention to carry out an assessment of the operation, including the scope of the assessment, on their website and inform the RTRS (for publication on the RTRS website).

A 2.4.2. The announcement shall be made in the principal language of the country where the assessment will take place and (if different) one of the three RTRS official languages and shall state details of the entity or entities to be assessed, their location, assessment dates and contact details of the entity and the certification body with an invitation to submit comments on subjects such as:

A 2.4.2.1. Legal requirements;

A 2.4.2.2. Social issues including interaction with local communities, labour relations and health and safety;

A 2.4.2.3. Environmental issues including environmental protection and pollution;

A 2.4.2.4. Good agricultural practices;

A 2.4.2.5. Any other issue, both positive and negative that may be considered of relevance to the assessment.

A 2.4.2.6 Issues relating to other agricultural production units owned by the organization not included in this assessment.

A 2.4.3 The CB shall inform the date of audit to the RTRS before the audit is performed.

A 2.5. Main compliance assessment

An assessment is a systematic, independent and documented process for obtaining and evaluating objective evidence to determine the extent to which the unit is in compliance with the applicable standard.

A 2.5.1. Compliance assessments shall determine conformity or non-conformity with each indicator of the applicable standard (s).

A 2.5.2. Multisite and group schemes: The internal control system of the organization or group shall be assessed for compliance in accordance with the RTRS Group and multi-site certification standard and a sample of the group members shall be assessed for compliance against the appropriate RTRS Standard for responsible production. [Note: details on calculation of sample size are provided in the RTRS Group and Multi-site certification requirements for CBs]].

A 2.5.3 The timing of the assessments shall be freely set by the certification body. Assessments shall take place during periods when farming operations are taking place, and should take place wherever possible during the most critical periods of production (e.g., planting, spraying and harvesting).

A 2.5.4. Assessments shall include, but shall not be limited to areas of potential environmental and social risk. They shall include an assessment of the management systems and procedures (where required by the applicable RTRS standard) and the effectiveness of the implementation of those management systems and procedures covering all aspects of the applicable standard.

A 2.5.5. During the certification assessment, the area and type of vegetation of all voluntary reserves of native vegetation (above the legal requirement) shall be recorded.



ROUND TABLE ON RESPONSIBLE SOY ASSOCIATION (RTRS)

UTOQUAI 29/31 | 8008 ZURICH, SWITZERLAND

- A 2.5.6. During assessments, free and safe access to the processing units is required. If this access to the units is not possible due to *force majeure* (circumstances beyond the control of the certification applicant) such as inaccessible roads, flooding, etc. and / or if its access is not safe for the auditor due to for example civil war or terrorist activities, then the assessment is not possible. The certification body shall try its utmost to perform the assessment at a later stage or to obtain the required information through alternative means.
- A 2.5.7. No client shall be evaluated by the same auditor on more than three consecutive evaluations (including surveillance audits).

Opening meeting

- A 2.5.8 The assessment shall start with an opening meeting during which the lead auditor shall inform the certification applicant about the certification process, agree logistics for the assessment, confirm access to all relevant documents, field sites and personnel, and agree on the timing of the closing meeting.

Documents and records

- A 2.5.9 The auditor shall identify and assess management documentation and a sufficient variety and number of records at each operation selected for evaluation to make direct, factual observations to verify conformity with all the indicators of the applicable RTRS standard for which documents are a necessary means of verification.
- A.2.5.9.1 The auditor shall collect and verify the data requested by the "RTRS Data Collection Sheet V1.0". The information contained in this Excel Sheet, will be used by RTRS in an anonymous way for statistical purposes in accordance with ISEAL Impact Code's requirements.

Selection of sites for evaluation

- A 2.5.10. Auditors should select sites for inspection based on an evaluation of the critical points of risk in the management system and potential social and environmental risks identified.
- A 2.5.11. The auditor shall visit a sufficient variety and number of sites within each operation selected for evaluation as to make direct, factual observations as to conformity with:
- A 2.5.11.1. The organization's documented systems and procedures; including annual summaries of the volume of RTRS certified soybeans harvested and supplied to customers.
- Note: Additional guidance on the control of volumes produced and sold and sanctions for over-selling or over-delivering will be developed by the RTRS in a document apart.
- A 2.5.11.2. All the indicators of the applicable RTRS standards for which inspection is a necessary means of verification, over a range of conditions under management by the applicant operation.
- A 2.5.12 The CB shall have a procedure which ensures that for each assessment the lead auditor records how sites were chosen.

Interviews with directly affected stakeholders

- A 2.5.13 The auditors shall interview a sufficient variety and number of people affected by or involved in the farm operation to make direct factual observations as to conformity with:
- A 2.5.13.1 The organization's documented systems and procedures;
- A 2.5.13.2. All the indicators of the applicable RTRS standard, for which consultation is a necessary means of verification.

Closing meeting

- A 2.5.14. The assessment shall end with a closing meeting during which the lead auditor informs the certification applicant of the main findings of the assessment, including any minor or major non-conformities identified (see A.2.10.), and confirms the next steps in the process.

A 2.6. Peer review and reporting

- A 2.6.1. The certification body shall document the findings and conclusions of all evaluation activities prior to review and decision making in a certification report.



ROUND TABLE ON RESPONSIBLE SOY ASSOCIATION (RTRS)

UTOQUAI 29/31 | 8008 ZURICH, SWITZERLAND

- A.2.6.2. The main compliance assessment report shall follow the requirements for reporting with regard to content and format, shown in Annex 2. The information contained in this report will be confidential and will not be shared.
- A.2.6.3. Draft certification reports shall be provided to the certification applicant for review to identify any factual errors or misinterpretations.
- A.2.6.4. The CB shall provide all the reports and supporting documentation of the assessment to the RTRS within 60 days from the closing date of the audit for initial audits and within 90 days for surveillances audits.
- A.2.6.5. The CB shall provide to their clients the audit report with performance insights.

Peer reviews

- A.2.6.6. CBs shall have a system for internally reviewing draft certification reports to ensure consistency and quality of certification decision making, and reporting.
- A.2.6.7. The internal peer review process for certification reports shall include the following requirements:
 - A.2.6.7.1 The report shall be reviewed by at least one (1) person, who has not been involved in the evaluation process. This independent peer reviewer shall have the experience and technical knowledge necessary to assess the adequacy of the report and the validity of the proposed certification decision;
 - A.2.6.7.2 The peer reviewer(s) shall operate according to clear terms of reference, which include the requirement to comment explicitly on:
 - (a) The adequacy of the field work as the basis for making a certification decision;
 - (b) How the person-days were calculated, and how sites were chosen;
 - (c) The clarity of presentation of the observations as the basis for a certification decision;
 - (d) Whether the proposed certification decision is justified by the observations presented.
- A.2.6.8. All peer reviewers shall be given adequate training or explanation about their terms of reference and the expected output to ensure the quality and consistency of peer reviewing.

Public summary report

- A.2.6.9. A publicly available summary of information about the performance of each certified organization with respect to each criterion shall be produced. This shall not contain commercially sensitive information.
- A.2.6.10. The content and format of the public summary shall follow the requirements given in Annex 4.
- A.2.6.11. The first public summary report shall be published on the CB's website and the RTRS database of registered certificates before a certificate is issued.
- A.2.6.12. Subsequent annual updates shall be made publicly available within 60 days after the on-site closing meeting at the end of the surveillance assessment.
- A.2.6.13. Annual update shall include at least the information included in the Public Summary Update Template (Annex 4).

A 2.7. Awarding and maintenance of certificates

Awarding of certificates

- A.2.7.1. A certificate shall only be issued after a positive formal certification decision has been taken by the designated certification decision making entity.
- A.2.7.2. The certification decision shall be made by a person or a group of people qualified for this task from the certification body, and different from the auditor (s) that carried out the assessments, based on the report, peer review comments and the successful close-out of any major non-conformity identified during the main assessment (see Section A 2.10).
- A.2.7.3. The certification body shall ensure that a legally enforceable certification agreement is signed by the relevant parties prior to issuing a certificate.
- A.2.7.4. The CB shall register each new certificate in the RTRS certification database and in its own list of certified organizations.



- A 2.7.5. The CB shall register the date of application for certification and the area of the property with voluntary reserves of native vegetation with the RTRS for reference by any PES scheme developed.

Maintenance and recertification

- A 2.7.6. A certificate shall be valid for 5 years with a requirement for an annual surveillance assessment to confirm continued conformance with the requirements of the standard during this period (see Section A.2.9).
- A 2.7.7. Prior to the end of the 5 year period, a full re-assessment shall take place prior to the issuance of a new certificate.
- A 2.7.8. In case of the identification of any non-conformity during a re-assessment audit the CB shall establish the time for the implementation of the corrective actions prior to the expiration of the certification.

NOTE: In exceptional cases, which shall be properly justified and registered the CB will allow the extension of the validity of the certificate for 30 days.

A 2.8. Partial certification

- A 2.8.1. Organizations with more than one management unit and / or having a controlling interest of more than 51% in more than one company will be permitted to certify individual management units and / or subsidiary companies only if:

A 2.8.1.1. The organization is a member of RTRS.

A 2.8.1.2. The organization has completed a self declaration form, which declares:

- (a) Their intention to comply with spirit of the RTRS principles and criteria in all the properties that are outside the scope of certification.
- (b) That all other management units and subsidiary company sites are in compliance with the law.

A 2.9. Surveillance assessments

- A 2.9.1. During the lifetime of the certificate the CB shall conduct, as a minimum, annual surveillance assessments.
- A 2.9.2. The CB may also make unannounced surveillance assessments.
- A 2.9.3. If the main assessment did not take place during harvest, then at least one of the surveillance assessments shall take place during this time.
- A 2.9.4. Each annual surveillance assessment will include a review of continuing compliance to the applicable standard. This shall include, but shall not be limited to:
- A 2.9.4.1. Implementation of any outstanding corrective action requests and continued implementation of any corrective action requests undertaken following previous assessment visits.
 - A 2.9.4.2. Any changes to the farm area included in the scope of the certificate including any expansion and boundary changes.
 - A 2.9.4.3. Changes to the certificate holder's management system.

Note: the CB shall specifically assess the capacity of the certificate holder's management system to manage any change in scope of the certificate, including any increase in number of group members, and in size, number and complexity of production sites within the scope of the certificate.
 - A 2.9.4.4. Complaints, including both those received and dealt with by the certificate holder and those about the certificate holder received by the CB.
 - A 2.9.4.5. Records of monitoring required by the standard (e.g., agrochemical use, soil quality indicators) and other monitoring records used for demonstrating continual improvement.
 - A 2.9.4.6. Any changes required in response to changes in RTRS requirements or requirements of the CB.
 - A 2.9.4.7. Records of sales of RTRS certified product.
- A 2.9.5. The surveillance assessment shall always include a visit to a sample of field sites and to the office(s) or farm from where the operation(s) covered by the certificate are managed.



ROUND TABLE ON RESPONSIBLE SOY ASSOCIATION (RTRS)

UTOQUAI 29/31 | 8008 ZURICH, SWITZERLAND

A 2.9.6. A report will be completed in the same format as that for the main compliance assessment report and as laid out in Annex 2.

A 2.10. Nonconformities

A 2.10.1. All nonconformities that are identified by the CB during an assessment shall be systematically recorded in the assessment report or associated checklists.

A 2.10.2. All nonconformities shall be classified as minor or major.

A 2.10.3. A nonconformity is considered minor if:

- (a) It is a temporary lapse, or
- (b) It is unusual / non-systematic, or
- (c) The impacts of the nonconformity are limited in their temporal and spatial scale, and
- (d) It does not result in a fundamental failure to achieve the objective of the relevant RTRS criterion or another applicable certification requirement.

A 2.10.4. A nonconformity shall be considered major if, either alone or in combination with further nonconformities, it results in, or is likely to result in a fundamental failure:

- (a) To achieve the objectives of the relevant RTRS criterion, or
- (b) In a significant part of the applied management system.

A 2.10.5. All nonconformities shall lead to Corrective Action Requests (CAR) to the certification applicant/certificate holder.

A 2.10.6. The certification body shall determine which non-conformities constitute a major nonconformity, using the definition in A.2.10.4. and considering the progress approach of A 2.10.12 and Annex 5.

A 2.10.7. The CB shall not issue a certificate of compliance or re-issue a certificate until any major non-conformity is closed out to the satisfaction of the certification body.

A 2.10.7.1. Where CARs for major nonconformities are closed out because an adequate plan is developed, there is evidence that the plan is being implemented in practice.

A 2.10.7.2. In circumstances where the non-conformity has been sufficiently addressed to no longer results in or is likely to result in a fundamental failure (see A.2.10.4), the certification body may close out the major non-conformity, and issue a minor non-conformity.

A 2.10.8. Major non-conformities raised during a surveillance assessment shall be closed out to the satisfaction of the certification body within 30 days of the CAR being raised. The CB may permit one further extension of 3 months, if implementation was not possible due to circumstances beyond the control of the operation manager.

A 2.10.8.1. Failure to do close out the non-conformity during the stated period will result in the suspension of the certificate for a maximum period of 60 days during which time no products may be sold as RTRS certified and no claims relating to RTRS nor RTRS logo-use permitted.

A 2.10.8.2. Failure to close out the major non-conformity after this suspension period will result in the certificate being withdrawn. In such a case a new main compliance assessment would be required.

A 2.10.9. Minor non-conformities shall be addressed in a timely manner as determined by the certification body. Failure to do so will result in a minor non-conformity being raised to a major non-conformity.

A 2.10.10. CBs shall require that the operation presents an action plan which describes how the non-conformities will be addressed. If the CB determines that the plan is adequate to address the non-conformities the CB shall accept plan and may proceed to issue the certificate.

A 2.10.11. Corrective Action Requests shall not be closed out if corrective action has not been fully implemented as requested.

A 2.10.12 Entry level and progressive approach for RTRS Principles and Criteria certification.

The RTRS has established a progressive entry level and a stepwise approach to facilitate producers to step into the RTRS certification in Annex 5.

A 2.10.12.1 The RTRS has classified the indicators in 3 different categories:



ROUND TABLE ON RESPONSIBLE SOY ASSOCIATION (RTRS)

UTOQUAI 29/31 | 8008 ZURICH, SWITZERLAND

Category
Immediate Compliance Indicators
Short – Term Compliance Indicators
Mid- Term Compliance Indicators

A 2.10.12.2 Progressive approach: See explanation and details in Annex 5.



Additional Requirements for Certification against the RTRS EU RED Compliance Requirements for Producers

This module applies only to those certification bodies wishing to offer certification against the requirements of the RTRS EU RED Compliance Requirements for Producers which is a standard designed to be used in addition to the RTRS Standard for Responsible Soy Production.

The RTRS EU RED Compliance Requirements for Producers is a standard for soy growers whose crop is entering the supply chain for biofuels with a market in the European Union (EU), and it addresses the sustainability requirements of the European Union Renewable Energy Directive (RED).

The General Requirements (Section VI of this document) and the requirements of Module A shall be fulfilled in addition to the requirements of this module.

B 1. Application and Approval process for CBs

B 1.1. Core Competency Requirements

B 1.1.1. Where certification bodies wish to offer certification services in which they assess farm production where actual GHG emissions data has been measured, monitored and recorded the certification body shall comply with the requirements ISO 14065: 2007, or justified equivalent and/or have experience of carrying out audits in conformity with ISO 14064-3: 20062 or equivalent.

B 1.1.1.1. Where certification bodies only offer certification services in which farmers use default values for GHG emissions in soy production, this is not required.

B 2. Assessment Requirements

B 2.1. Assessment Teams and auditors

B 2.1.1. Teams for main assessments and annual surveillance assessments shall include a team member or team members able to cover all of the elements of the RTRS EU RED Compliance Requirements for Producers including:

B 2.1.1.1. The measurement, monitoring and recording of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions data, and the calculation of GHG emissions in agricultural production.

B.2.2. Peer review and reporting

B.2.2.1. The CB shall document the findings of all assessment activities associated with compliance against RTRS EU Compliance Requirements for Producers in a report. This report may take the form of a section within the main report of compliance against the RTRS Standard for Responsible Soy Production.

B 2.2.1.1. The CB shall also include a summary of the findings in relation to this standard in the public summary report.

B 2.2.2. If an internal peer review of the draft report is required (as per parameters established in A 2.6.4 of this document) the scope of the peer review shall include the findings of the assessment against the RTRS EU Compliance Requirements for Producers.

B 2.3. Awarding of certificates

B 2.3.1. Any certificate issued (see A 2.7 of this document) shall include the scope of the certificate, referencing whether they are in compliance with the EU RED Compliance Requirements.

² ISO 14064-3:2007 –Greenhouse Gases – Part 3 : Specification with guidance for the validation and verification of greenhouse gas assertions (applicable to verification bodies).

ISO14065:2007 – Greenhouse Gases –Requirements for greenhouse gas validation and Verification Bodies for use in accreditation or other forms of recognition (applicable to verification bodies).



Annex 1. RTRS Lead Auditor Qualifications; for Certification against the RTRS Standard for Responsible Soy Production, Version 2.0

Minimum competencies/qualifications for a lead auditor as defined by RTRS are as follows:

1. Technical skills and qualifications

- 1.1. Successful completion of an RTRS-endorsed training course which covers an understanding of the RTRS principles, criteria, indicators and guidance, skills related to the specific requirements of the standard, and core process requirements for carrying out RTRS assessments³.
- 1.2. Successful completion of one of the following Lead Auditor training courses:
 - 1.2.1. ISO 9000, 14000, or OHSAS 18000 (minimum duration of 37 hours); or
 - 1.2.2. An ISO 19011 course (minimum duration of 24 hours).

Note: shall include a practical component. (e.g., cannot be entirely an on-line course).

- 1.3. Participation as an observer auditor under training, in a minimum of three RTRS assessments at different organizations, totalling a minimum of 10 days; of which at least two assessments shall be as the acting lead auditor under supervision.

Note: it is recognized that the lead auditors for the first RTRS audits will not be able to gain experience as RTRS audit team members. Therefore, for these initial audits the following requirement applies:

- 1.4. Has been the lead auditor for other similar standards which cover the full suite of social, environmental, technical and legal components for agriculture or forestry (for example the Round Table on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO), Sustainable Agricultural Network (SAN), Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), UTZ Certified, or equivalents for at least two (2) main assessment audits).

Note: RTRS may authorize accreditation bodies to accept lead auditor experience leading assessment of standards other than those listed in 1.4 above, as adequate experience for compliance with 1.4, as and when this includes assessment of social, environmental, technical *and* legal components of agricultural production or forestry. For example GlobalGap or ISO 14001 lead auditors will be allowed only if they can demonstrate experience and training in assessments against other standards with social requirements or are accompanied by experts in this field.

2. Formal qualifications

- 2.1. A minimum of post high (secondary) school diploma or equivalent (minimum course duration of 2 years) in a discipline related to the scope of certification or 5 years professional experience in one of the disciplines related to the standard being assessed (e.g., agronomy, ecology).

³ When new requirements are added to the RTRS Standard and procedures there shall be a training for CBs and Abs staff on those changes.



Annex 2. Assessment report; for certification against the RTRS Standard for Responsible Soy Production, Version 3.1

Assessment reports will include the following information and be presented in the following format:

1. Scope of the certification assessment

- 1.1. The RTRS Standard used for the assessment (Document name, date, version number).
- 1.2. Assessment type (Group, multi-site or individual production unit).
- 1.3. Location maps.
 - 1.3.1. Map to show geographical location.
 - 1.3.2. Map to show the production unit(s).
 - 1.3.3. Certification Bodies code for the certificate.
 - 1.3.4. Approximate tonnages certified.
- 1.4. Description of production unit(s) and /or group scheme and members as applicable.
 - 1.4.1. Name and address of operation or organization to be assessed.
 - 1.4.2. Contact person: name, position, address, email, phone numbers.
 - 1.4.3. General description of operation / group.
 - 1.4.4. Location of production unit(s) including:
 - 1.4.4.1. Location address (including province/state).
 - 1.4.4.2. GPS reference(s).
 - 1.4.5. Code for the certificate (in case of surveillance visit or re assessment evaluation).
 - 1.4.6. Statistics of production unit(s):
 - 1.4.6.1. Total farm area.
 - 1.4.6.2. Area under soy cultivation (hectares) total and per farm
 - 1.4.6.3. Estimated yield per hectare (kg/hectare).
 - 1.4.6.4. Estimated total annual production in tonnes total and per farm
 - 1.4.6.5. Province and city (or nearest city) where the farms are located.
 - 1.4.6.6. Biome of every certified farm.
 - 1.4.6.7. Complete " RTRS Data Collection Sheet V1.0" in the correspondent version.
 - 1.4.7. Details and justification of any sampling methodology.
- 1.5. Partial Certification.
 - 1.5.1. Assessment agenda.
 - 1.5.2. Assessment findings.
 - 1.5.3. List of all sites under the control of the organization, describing which ones are included in the scope of the certification and which ones are not included in it.
 - 1.5.4. Date of certificate issuance and scope of the certificate.

2. Assessment Process

- 2.1. Certification body.
- 2.2. Qualifications of the assessment team.



ROUND TABLE ON RESPONSIBLE SOY ASSOCIATION (RTRS)

UTOQUAI 29/31 | 8008 ZURICH, SWITZERLAND

- 2.2.1. Qualifications of the lead auditor,
- 2.2.2. Qualifications of the assessment team including consultants participating in the audit (e.g. interpreters and technical experts).
- 2.3. Assessment methodology.
 - 2.3.1. Details and justification of any sampling methodology.
 - 2.3.2. An explanation of the methodology applied to determine the number of days, sites to visit and assignment of time for the audit components.
 - 2.3.3. Assessment agenda including:
 - 2.3.3.1. Assessment dates.
 - 2.3.3.2. Sites visited.
 - 2.3.3.3. Main activities.
 - 2.3.4. Total number of person days spent on the field assessment.
- 2.4. Stakeholder consultation.
 - 2.4.1. Summary of how stakeholder consultation was organised.

3. Assessment Findings

- 3.1. Lead auditor's summary and recommendation for certification.
- 3.2. Full information of compliance by the certified producer against all indicators of the relevant standard.
- 3.3. Nonconformity registers, explanation of evidence received, and actions taken to close the NC.
- 3.4. Detail of issues raised during stakeholder consultation and the way each issue raised has been addressed by the certification body.
- 3.5. Certification decision.
- 3.6. Formal sign-off of the assessment findings.
 - 3.6.1. Acknowledgment of internal responsibility by the client.
 - 3.6.2. Signing by certification body.
- 3.7. Date by when next surveillance assessment should be carried out.



Annex 3. Requirements for Certification Bodies for the Development of Regional Interpretations of the RTRS Standard for Responsible Soy Production

1. Introduction

The RTRS certification system is designed to be accessible in all countries of the world. To do so the system shall avoid unintentional discrimination against soy producers in countries that have not yet developed an RTRS accredited National Interpretation of the RTRS Standard for Responsible Soy Production.

Therefore, in areas in which there is not yet an RTRS-accredited National Interpretation of the RTRS Standard for Responsible Soy Production, certification bodies may carry out certification according to the generic international RTRS Standard for Responsible Soy Production. However, the CB shall first adapt this generic standard to account for the local conditions in the country or region in which they are to be used with input from local stakeholders. This annex describes the procedure that shall be followed by the CB.

The process of local adaptation by the certification body is not designed to be a substitute for the process of developing a National Interpretation. Nevertheless, it allows examples of RTRS certification in a country. Such examples can be useful tools for explaining and demonstrating the potential benefits as well as the limits of RTRS certification. The discussion and consultation surrounding the development and implementation of a locally adapted standard can act as a catalyst for the longer and more complex process of developing an RTRS national interpretation.

2. Scope and reference

- 2.1 The locally adapted standard shall specify the geographical area to which it may be applied.
- 2.2 The locally adapted standard shall include a version number and the date of finalisation.

3. Legal compliance

- 3.1 The certification body shall identify and include as annexes to the standard:
 - 3.1.1 A list of the national and local laws and administrative requirements which apply in the country or region in which the standard is to be used.
 - 3.1.2 A list of or reference to official lists of endangered species in the country or region in which the standard is to be used.

4. Process

- 4.1 The certification body shall complete a local adaptation of the RTRS generic standard, and publish the resulting locally adapted generic standard on its website in an official language of the country in which it is to be used (at least three (3) weeks prior to the main compliance assessment). The standard shall also be sent to RTRS at this time.
- 4.2 The certification body shall identify any aspects of the RTRS generic standard that may be in conflict with legal requirements in the area in which the adapted standard is to be used, and if such a conflict is identified shall evaluate it for the purposes of certification in discussion with the involved or affected parties. The certification body shall identify any aspects of the generic standard which specify performance thresholds lower than the minimum legal requirement in the country concerned. If any such differences are identified, the relevant thresholds shall be modified to ensure that they meet or exceed the minimum national requirements.
- 4.3 The certification body shall add specific indicators (with appropriate means of verification if required) and/or cross-references to the identified documentation to evaluate compliance with key requirements of the national and local laws, administrative requirements and multilateral environmental agreements related to the RTRS generic standard.
- 4.4 The certification body is not required to seek or develop a consensus with stakeholders regarding its modification of the standard, however, the certification body shall make meaningful accommodation of stakeholder concerns (see section 5 below).



ROUND TABLE ON RESPONSIBLE SOY ASSOCIATION (RTRS)

UTOQUAI 29/31 | 8008 ZÜRICH, SWITZERLAND

- 4.5 The certification body shall prepare a short report listing the main issues related to the standard where significant differences of opinion were expressed by stakeholders, and explaining the basis on which the CB made its decision in relation to these issues. The report shall be attached as an annex to the published standard.
- 4.6 The certification body shall modify or add to the indicators and/or means of verification of RTRS generic standard in order to:
 - 4.6.1 Take account of the national context with regards to soy production;
 - 4.6.2 Take account of national environmental, social and economic perspectives;
 - 4.6.3 Ensure that the standard is applicable and practical in the country concerned;
 - 4.7.4 Ensure that the standard is applicable and practical to the size and intensity of the farm(s) concerned;
 - 4.7.5 Address specific issues that are of general concern to any stakeholder group in the country concerned.

5. Stakeholder consultation for standard interpretation

- 5.1 The certification body shall seek broad stakeholder comment on the adaptation of the RTRS generic standard to the area in which it is planned to be used.
- 5.2 The certification body shall use consultation methods which are appropriate to the consulted stakeholder group(s).
- 5.3 The certification body shall contact the stakeholders, at least six weeks prior to main compliance assessment talking place.
- 5.4 Stakeholder consultation shall include at least the following:
 - 5.4.1 Any RTRS National Technical Group in the country;
 - 5.4.2 Any RTRS members in the country;
 - 5.4.3 National NGOs, representatives of local communities and Indigenous Peoples that may have interest in respect of social or environmental aspects of soy production, either at the national level, or at the sub-national level in the region where the farm is located.
 - 5.4.4 Representatives of farm workers.
 - 5.4.5 Economic stakeholders (e.g., other soy producers, suppliers, buyers, investors, representatives of soy producing or processing industries).
 - 5.4.6 Agricultural research and education institutions.
- 5.5 The certification body shall inform contacted stakeholders, in one of the official languages of the district in which the production unit is located:
 - 5.5.1 That the certification body is planning to carry out a compliance assessment of the identified production unit(s).
 - 5.5.2 That a draft of the standard to be used for the evaluation is available on the certification body's website or on request.
 - 5.5.3 That the standard may be modified to take account of stakeholder comments, and that comments and suggested modifications to the standard are welcome.
 - 5.5.4 How to submit comments.

Records

- 5.6 The certification body shall keep the following records:
 - 5.6.1 Lists of individuals/organizations (whether soy producers or not) invited to comment on the generic standard;
 - 5.6.2 Copies of all correspondence and/or comments received with respect to potential modifications of the generic standard;
 - 5.6.3 Copies of all national standards, draft standards or other sources of information taken into account in order to modify the generic standard.

6. Review and revision



ROUND TABLE ON RESPONSIBLE SOY ASSOCIATION (RTRS)

UTOQUAI 29/31 | 8008 ZÜRICH, SWITZERLAND

- 6.1 The certification body shall not be required to make further changes to the locally adapted standard used for an evaluation during the period of validity of the certificate except as necessary to bring it into compliance with any RTRS Policies subsequently approved by RTRS.

7. Replacement by an approved National Interpretation of the generic RTRS standard

- 7.1 When a National Interpretation is formally endorsed by RTRS, then this shall replace any locally adapted standards previously used by the certification body in the area to which it applies.
- 7.2 The certification body shall evaluate certificate holders against the requirements of the new standard at the next scheduled surveillance evaluation.
- 7.3 The certification body shall ensure that the certificate holder is in compliance with the requirements of the new standard by the 'standard effective' date specified on the standard.



Annex 4. Public Summary Report; for certification against the RTRS Standard for Responsible Soy Production, Version 3.1

The annex presents the minimum requirements for the content of an RTRS Public Summary Certification Report for Responsible Soy Production.

Summary Report Title Page

Name and contact details of the certification body including contact person, email and website
Date (Format: month/day/ year) on which the public summary was last updated
Name and contact details of the certificate holder and contact person
The name and/or location of the certified farm / production site(s) (including state/province and country)
The RTRS Certificate Number
The date of issuance and expiration of the certificate
Whether the scope of certification is RTRS, RTRS non-GMO and/or RTRS non-Paraquat
The sequential information on the evaluation results presented in the report (main assessment, 1 st surveillance assessment, 2 nd surveillance assessment, etc.)

Summary Report Content

The summary report shall be short and concise.

1. Scope of the certification assessment

- 1.1. Organizational information: Name / country /contact person.
- 1.2. Scope of the certification (specify against which standard(s) certification has been awarded) and whether it is RTRS, RTRS non-GMO and/or RTRS non-Paraquat
- 1.3. Type (single certificate or group certificate).
- 1.4. Location (longitude and latitude coordinates).
- 1.5. Size of farm certified: in hectares.
- 1.6. Tonnages of estimated soy to be produced per year.

2. Assessment process

- 2.1. The standard used for the assessment (including full title and version number and date of finalization) e.g., RTRS Standard for Responsible Soy Production: Argentinean National Interpretation Version 1.0 XX/XX/XXXX (Date).
- 2.2. Date on which the assessment was carried out.
- 2.3. Date on which certificate was issued, and date of next surveillance visit.
- 2.4. Name of Lead auditor and assessment team members including consultants participating in the audit (e.g interpreters and technical experts).
- 2.5. Short description of how the assessment was carried out (including number of days, audit methods used, etc.).
- 2.6. A general description of how stakeholder consultation was carried out.

3. Assessment findings

- 3.1. A summary of information about the performance of the certified organization with respect to each criterion in the RTRS standard. This shall not contain commercially-sensitive information.
- 3.2. Certification decision.

4. Public Summary Update Template

Annual updates to the public summary report shall include at a minimum:

- 4.1 The date of the surveillance assessment and a brief summary of the sites inspected;
- 4.2 A description of any significant changes in the management and/or production methods;
- 4.3 A summary of information about the performance of the certified organization with respect to each criterion in the RTRS standard. This shall not contain commercially-sensitive information.
- 4.4 An updated list of members/sites in a group multisite certificate, including new sites in the case of partial certification.
- 4.5 The updated certification decision.