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# Fairtrade International Requirements for Assurance Providers

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**Version 1.1**

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Contact for comments and information: [assurance@fairtrade.net](mailto:assurance@fairtrade.net)



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## Introduction

The purposes of the 'Fairtrade International Requirements for Assurance Providers' are:

- a) To document requirements so assurance providers can operate in a consistent and controlled manner.
- b) To provide transparency so the Fairtrade International certification scheme has credibility with stakeholders.

Upon request Fairtrade International may approve variations to these requirements in writing if an assurance provider can demonstrate to Fairtrade International that the variation meets the requirement's intent in an equivalent way, and Fairtrade International standards' requirements are met (see Fairtrade International Oversight Procedure for details of the procedure for approval of variations).

## Normative documents

The following documents contain provisions, which, through reference in this text, become part of the Fairtrade International Requirements for Assurance Providers.

- a) All of the Fairtrade International Standards and other normative documents.
- b) ISO/IEC 17065:2012 Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services.

## Terms and definitions

**Assurance:** Demonstrable evidence that specified requirements relating to a product, process, system, person or body are fulfilled (from ISEAL Assurance Code). In this document the term assurance includes all the steps that lead up to and including decision taking on compliance against a Fairtrade Standard (such as audit planning, auditing and evaluation of audit results).

Although fundamental for the activities of assurance providers, all financial activities related to assurance such as invoicing and fee application, are not considered assurance in these requirements.

**Assurance Provider:** any organisation, or part of it, that is allowed by Fairtrade International to perform *assurance* against Fairtrade standards. Their activities are regulated by these Fairtrade's Requirements for Assurance Providers in compliance with ISEAL Assurance Code.

**Audit:** Systematic documented process for obtaining records, statements of fact or other relevant information and assessing them objectively to determine the extent to which specified requirements are fulfilled (from ISEAL Assurance Code).

See ISEAL Assurance Code and ISO17065 for other definitions.

## Scope of application

Fairtrade International's Requirements for Assurance Providers (RAPs) are set out in four parts and apply to the various actors involved in assurance provision as below:

Part	Who this applies to
Part A – General certification requirements	Mandatory for all assurance providers
Part B – Trader certification requirements	Mandatory for assurance providers certifying traders
Part C – Producer certification requirements	Mandatory for assurance providers certifying producers
Part D – Requirements for auditors and assurance personnel	Mandatory for all auditors and assurance personnel

Assurance providers may also issue licences to use the Fairtrade marks, and approve products and promotional materials in association with this activity. If so, they will also need to conform to the Fairtrade International Requirements for Licensing Bodies.

Assurance providers may subcontract part of their activities such as auditing to other bodies; however assurance decisions cannot be subcontracted and can only be taken by the assurance provider that is approved by Fairtrade International to perform assurance. Subcontracted bodies must also meet the relevant requirements in this document and approved assurance providers will be responsible for the fulfilment of these requirements by their subcontracted bodies.

## Responsibility for these requirements

Fairtrade International's Oversight Committee has responsibility for this document, and will periodically review it. Any substantial change to this document will be consulted with affected Assurance Providers and approved by the Oversight Committee.

# Part A: General requirements for assurance providers

## 1 Scope

Part A of Fairtrade International's Requirements for Assurance Providers sets out the activities that all assurance providers shall undertake in carrying out certification and/or auditing to any of the Fairtrade International's standards and normative documents.

## 2 General requirements for assurance providers

### 2.1 Oversight

- 2.1.1 All assurance providers shall be approved by the Fairtrade International Board. The scope of approval shall be:
  - 2.1.1.1 Standard-specific, specifying if the assurance provider can certify against all or only a selected number of standards.
  - 2.1.1.2 Geographic, specifying the countries or regions in which the assurance provider may operate.
- 2.1.2 Assurance Providers are subject to regular verification and confirmation by the Oversight Committee of their compliance with these Requirements for Assurance Providers (see Fairtrade International Oversight Procedure for details).
- 2.1.3 An assurance provider shall only award certificates within scope of their approval.
- 2.1.4 An assurance provider shall recognize that certificate holders that have been certified by other Fairtrade International approved assurance providers conform to relevant Fairtrade International standards.
- 2.1.5 An assurance provider shall recognize other schemes that have been accepted by Fairtrade International, in accordance to Fairtrade International Recognition SOP and listed in Annex A.
- 2.1.6 An assurance provider shall notify Fairtrade International of any changes to its ownership, organizational structure or constitution within five calendar days.

### 2.2 Implications of cancellation of approval

- 2.2.1 When an assurance provider's approval is withdrawn or terminated, it may not sign new certification contracts, conduct any audits or issue certificates and shall immediately follow all steps specified by the Board of Fairtrade International.

### 2.3 Conformity to ISO/IEC 17065 and Fairtrade International requirements

- 2.3.1 All assurance providers shall conform to the requirements of ISO/IEC 17065 and all other Fairtrade International requirements relevant to the scope of approval.

## **2.4 Submission of reports, data and requests to Fairtrade International**

- 2.4.1 Assurance Providers shall provide reports, data and requested information to Fairtrade International as defined by the Oversight Committee.
- 2.4.2 Assurance providers shall use the form and method of submission of information defined by Fairtrade International.

## **2.5 Certification contract**

- 2.5.1 The assurance provider's contract for certification shall include requirements where:
  - 2.5.1.1 The client agrees to allow Fairtrade International to have access to observe any audit carried out by the assurance provider for purposes of evaluating the assurance provider's performance.
  - 2.5.1.2 The contract for certification can be terminated in the event of fraud or misrepresentation by the client.

## **2.6 Use of confidential information in audits**

- 2.6.1 Where an assurance provider receives credible confidential allegation information from Fairtrade International, workers, suppliers, buyers or other stakeholders, and this information, by its nature, cannot be provided to the client as the information provider's identity would be revealed, the assurance provider shall:
  - 2.6.1.1 Not disclose that confidential allegation to any party except those within the assurance provider who have a need to know, or as required to do so by law.
  - 2.6.1.2 Not use that confidential allegation during an audit in any way that may allow the client to identify the individual(s) or organisation(s) who provided the information.
  - 2.6.1.3 Not use that confidential allegation as evidence of non-conformity unless the information can be verified as being correct by other means.
  - 2.6.1.4 Use the confidential allegation to identify which areas of the client's operation should be investigated.

## **2.7 Information for clients**

- 2.7.1 The assurance provider shall ensure clients have access to current versions of:
  - 2.7.1.1 All relevant Fairtrade International standards, compliance criteria and other requirements relevant to their scope of certification.
  - 2.7.1.2 Information about the certification process, which shall contain all information set out in sections 2.8 to 2.13 inclusive.

- 2.7.2 The assurance provider shall support clients' understanding of relevant standards. This is done regularly as part of audits and, where necessary, outside audits.
- 2.7.3 This support shall be limited to:
  - 2.7.3.1 Translation of the standard to colloquial or locally relevant terms.
  - 2.7.3.2 Real examples of compliance of other certified clients, respecting confidentiality and ensuring it is understood as an example.
  - 2.7.3.3 Information contained in supplementary documents to the relevant standard published by Fairtrade International and available in the web page.

## **2.8 Eligibility for certification**

- 2.8.1 Assurance providers shall consider that a client is eligible for Fairtrade certification if it meets the following criteria:
  - 2.8.1.1 Has signed a certification contract.
  - 2.8.1.2 Has paid corresponding fees according to the assurance provider's fee schedule.
  - 2.8.1.3 Its activities match the scope of a Fairtrade standard.
  - 2.8.1.4 Demonstrates conformity with nominated Fairtrade Standards and relevant policies,
  - 2.8.1.5 Has closed all open major non conformities from previous Fairtrade certifications, if any, unless no longer relevant.

## **2.9 Timing and intensity of audits**

- 2.9.1 The certification process shall only begin following the acceptance of a client's application for certification by a Fairtrade International approved assurance provider.
- 2.9.2 Certificates shall have a maximum of four-year validity from the date of the initial certification, subject to continuing satisfactory performance.
- 2.9.3 The assurance provider shall undertake a risk assessment of the client to determine audit frequency. The assurance provider shall consider risk factors including but not limited to high premium amounts received/ paid, high volumes traded, complex structure or ongoing structural changes, high number of non-conformities including majors, credible allegations, new products or complex trade chains.

### **Initial audit**

- 2.9.4 An on-site initial audit, assessing conformity with each applicable compliance criteria, shall occur:
  - 2.9.4.1 For producers, as soon as possible after the application is accepted and before a permission to trade can be issued.
  - 2.9.4.2 For traders within six months of their application being accepted.

### **Re-certification audit**

- 2.9.5 Prior to the end of each certification cycle, the assurance provider shall undertake a full on-site audit of conformity.
- 2.9.6 The certification cycle shall not be longer than three years.
- 2.9.7 The assurance provider shall not extend the validity of a certificate unless there are exceptional or unforeseen circumstances, which must be recorded.

### **Surveillance audits**

- 2.9.8 If the certification cycle is longer than a year, there shall be at least one surveillance audit within each certification cycle, usually about 15 months from the date of the initial or latest re-certification audit. The assurance provider defines, according to their risk assessment, if surveillance audit is on site or desk-based.
- 2.9.9 The assurance provider may utilize a reduced checklist during surveillance audits to verify that the customer complies with a minimum of Major and Core requirements

### **Follow-up audits**

- 2.9.10 Follow up on-site audits shall take place as needed to review and close out non-conformities raised during any type of audit.
  - 2.9.10.1 Where possible, the assurance provider shall undertake desk based review instead to close out of non-conformities.

### **Unannounced audits**

- 2.9.11 The assurance provider shall undertake an on-site unannounced audit if:
  - 2.9.11.1 New and reliable information becomes available that may indicate fraud or critical deviations from the standard. ,
  - 2.9.11.2 The client is randomly selected for an unannounced audit.
- 2.9.12 The scope of the unannounced audit can be limited to the critical deviations informed, if applicable.
- 2.9.13 The assurance provider will define, based on a risk analysis, a minimum number of on-site unannounced audits to be carried out in a year.
- 2.9.14 On-site unannounced audits shall have no prior notice unless it is absolutely necessary where they can have a 12 hour prior notification, in this case the reasons for the prior notification must be recorded.

## **2.10 Permission to trade**

- 2.10.1 The assurance provider may issue a permission to trade to applicants for certification as follows:
  - 2.10.1.1 For producers: if there are no major non-conformities raised at the initial audit.
  - 2.10.1.2 For traders: once the certification fee has been paid in full and the certification contract has been signed.

- 2.10.2 The permission to trade issued by the assurance provider shall be valid for a maximum of nine months from the date of issue.
- 2.10.3 The assurance provider shall not issue a permission to trade to a trader if that trader commenced Fairtrade business prior to the issue of a permission to trade.

## **2.11 Sanctions**

- 2.11.1 When the assurance provider detects a non-conformity against the relevant Fairtrade standard(s) and compliance criteria it shall raise a non-conformity report (NCR) which shall direct the client to take corrective action.
- 2.11.2 The assurance provider may grade non-conformities according to a pre-established categorization and may raise an observation to point out a potential non-conformity so the client may take preventive action.
- 2.11.3 The assurance provider may withdraw permission to trade if non-conformities with major compliance criteria are raised during the initial audit.

### **Suspension**

- 2.11.4 The assurance provider may suspend a certificate for a period of up to six months if:
  - 2.11.4.1 Non-conformities with major compliance criteria are raised at any time during the certification cycle.
  - 2.11.4.2 If the client did not propose appropriate corrective actions within the defined timeframe.
  - 2.11.4.3 If objective evidence of corrective actions being undertaken has not been submitted to the assurance provider within the defined timeframes.
  - 2.11.4.4 If the assurance provider does not accept that corrective actions were effective based on the evaluation of the objective evidence provided by the client.

### **Withdrawal or decertification**

- 2.11.5 The assurance provider may withdraw the certificate of a suspended client if:
  - 2.11.5.1 The client did not propose appropriate corrective actions within the defined timeframes.
  - 2.11.5.2 Objective evidence of corrective actions and corrections being undertaken has not been submitted to the assurance provider within the defined timeframe.
  - 2.11.5.3 The assurance provider does not accept that corrective actions were effective based on the evaluation of the objective evidence provided by the client.
- 2.11.6 The assurance provider may withdraw a certificate without prior suspension:
  - 2.11.6.1 If there is a breach of the certification contract by the client.

- 2.11.6.2 If the client has the same major non-conformity raised in two consecutive audits.

### **Voluntary decertification**

- 2.11.7 Assurance providers shall cancel a certificate upon request of the client.

## **2.12 Exceptions**

- 2.12.1 Assurance providers shall have a written procedure to grant exceptions against the Fairtrade standards to be applied consistently across exceptions.
- 2.12.2 Assurance providers shall record all exceptions granted and report them to Fairtrade International as defined by the Exceptions Committee (for food composite product exceptions defined in section 2.2 of the Trade Standard) or the Oversight Committee (for any other exceptions).

## **2.13 Allegations, complaints and appeals**

### **Allegations and complaints**

- 2.13.1 The assurance provider shall have a written procedure to manage allegations and complaints.
- 2.13.1.1 All allegations and complaints shall be made to the relevant assurance provider in the first place. Only if the complainant is not satisfied with how their allegation or complaint is handled by the assurance provider may they complain to Fairtrade International (see Oversight Procedures for details on the process).

### **Appeals**

- 2.13.2 Clients who disagree with a certification or evaluation decision may appeal that decision to their assurance provider.
- 2.13.3 Appeals shall be submitted within a minimum of seven calendar days following receipt of the certification or evaluation decision.
- 2.13.4 The assurance provider shall make a decision as to the appeal within a maximum of 45 days of receipt of the appeal.
- 2.13.5 While an appeal is being decided the certification decision that is appealed against shall be maintained and not put on hold.
- 2.13.6 If a certificate holder disagrees with how an appeal is handled they may complaint to Fairtrade International (see Oversight Procedures for details on the process).
- 2.13.6.1 Fairtrade International cannot modify any certification decision, including and appeal decision made by an assurance provider, it can however take action with the assurance provider to correct mistakes made, if any.

## **2.14 Miscellaneous provisions**

## **Interpretations**

- 2.14.1 Assurance providers shall respond and provide explanations to clients who require interpretation of any of Fairtrade Standards.
- 2.14.2 Assurance providers who require interpretation should ask Fairtrade International.

## **Use of translators**

- 2.14.3 Assurance providers shall try to minimize the use of translators in audits by matching auditor and client language skills when possible.
- 2.14.4 If translators are used the assurance provider must guarantee that translators are impartial, unbiased and unprejudiced.

## **2.15 Changes affecting certification**

- 2.15.1 Assurance providers shall implement the changes in Fairtrade Standards affecting certification as per the timelines described in the respective standard.

## **2.16 Publicly available information**

- 2.16.1 Assurance providers submit the necessary information to enable Fairtrade International to make the following information publicly available:
  - 2.16.1.1 Name of certificate holder.
  - 2.16.1.2 Address and contact details.
  - 2.16.1.3 Scope of certification.
  - 2.16.1.4 Up to date certification status.

## **3 Structural requirements**

No requirements additional to ISO/IEC 17065.

## **4 Resource requirements**

### **4.1 Personnel**

- 4.1.1 All personnel performing assurance activities, including carrying out audits, shall meet the requirements set out in Part D of the Fairtrade International Requirements for Assurance Providers.

## **5 Process requirements**

### **5.1 Processes**

- 5.1.1 Assurance providers shall ensure that all processes follow the descriptions set out in the information provided to clients in sections 2.8 to 2.13 inclusive.

- 5.1.2 Necessary processes (or part of process) that are not defined in these requirements shall be defined by the assurance provider and applied consistently.

## **5.2 Confirmation of scope**

- 5.2.1 After receiving an application for certification, the assurance provider shall review all information that is available to it, and shall determine the scope of audit required. The scope is defined as:
  - 5.2.1.1 The Fairtrade standards that are applicable;
  - 5.2.1.2 The activity being undertaken;
  - 5.2.1.3 The products being handled; and
  - 5.2.1.4 The location(s) covered by the certificate (if relevant).

## **5.3 Audit planning**

- 5.3.1 The assurance provider shall provide a plan for evaluation activities to auditors involved in an audit prior to them commencing the audit. The plan shall:
  - 5.3.1.1 Be individually tailored for each audit.
  - 5.3.1.2 Follow the assurance provider's procedures for evaluation activities.
- 5.3.2 The audit and evaluation activities planned must be sufficiently rigorous to allow the assurance provider to determine that the client is in conformity with the Fairtrade International standard(s) for which scope is applied for at the time of the audit.
- 5.3.3 The assurance provider shall appoint one or more qualified auditors to act as the audit team, ensuring that the client scope and auditor scope are matched.
  - 5.3.3.1 Where more than one auditor is assigned, one of the audit team members shall be nominated as audit team leader.

## **5.4 Audit dates**

- 5.4.1 Except in the cases of unannounced audits, the assurance provider shall and the client agrees on a date to perform the audit, that is suitable for both, but always where the client is in operation. Days where Fairtrade product in the premises (where relevant) should be favored.

## **5.5 Audit evidence**

- 5.5.1 Audit evidence relevant to the audit objectives, scope and criteria, including information relating to interfaces between functions, activities and processes shall be collected by appropriate sampling and shall be verified.
  - 5.5.1.1 Only information that is verifiable may be considered as audit evidence.

NOTE: verifiable does not only mean there is written evidence of it. Information that can be sufficiently cross-checked from different sources with no written evidence can be considered verified. This is of special importance for auditing social requirements.

## **5.6 Certification decision and certificate issue**

- 5.6.1 The assurance provider shall within 10 days from the date it is issued update the relevant database so Fairtrade International can keep information up to date.
- 5.6.2 The assurance provider shall make sure that when changes to the information contained on a certificate are made that they update the relevant database within 10 days of changes occurring so Fairtrade International can keep information up to date.

## **5.7 Suspension, cancelation or withdrawal of certification**

- 5.7.1 An assurance provider may suspend, withdraw or cancel a certificate for a contractual reason, such as non-payment of fees.
- 5.7.2 An assurance provider may suspend, withdraw or cancel a certificate for any of the reasons set out in Section 2.11 Sanctions.
- 5.7.3 If a certificate is withdrawn or cancelled the assurance provider shall:
  - 5.7.3.1 Instruct the client to:
    - a) Cease claiming to be Fairtrade certified.
    - b) Cease all use of the Fairtrade brands and marks, subject to any allowance in License agreements to continue to dispose of goods bearing the FAIRTRADE mark, after certification is withdrawn.
    - c) Identify and advise all customers who have been purchasing Fairtrade products from them in writing that their certification has been withdrawn.
  - 5.7.3.2 Inform Fairtrade International of this fact within seven days.
- 5.7.4 If a certificate is suspended the assurance provider shall:
  - 5.7.4.1 Instruct the client to:
    - a) Identify and advise all customers who have been purchasing Fairtrade products from them in writing that their certification has been suspended.
    - b) Meet the relevant compliance criteria that limit trading during a suspension period.
    - c) Provide objective evidence of the effectiveness of the corrective actions for the non-conformities with the sufficient time, as defined by the assurance provider, to close them out before the suspension period ends.
  - 5.7.4.2 Inform Fairtrade International of this fact within seven days.
- 5.7.5 Following suspension, the assurance provider shall verify that, in the assurance provider's opinion, the client has correctly identified the root cause of the non-conformities that were the cause of the suspension, that the corrective actions have been effective and that the lifting of suspension is justified.

- 5.7.6 The verification shall be done either via a follow up audit or a desk based review, as relevant for the case.

## **5.8 Certification documentation**

- 5.8.1 The assurance provider shall issue a certificate which shall contain:
- 5.8.1.1 The date of issue of the certificate
  - 5.8.1.2 The legal name and registered address of the certificate holder.
  - 5.8.1.3 The FLO ID of the certificate holder
  - 5.8.1.4 A description of the scope of the certificate, including the specific standard(s) and product categories.
  - 5.8.1.5 A schedule listing all site(s) covered by the certificate where relevant.
  - 5.8.1.6 A statement referencing the Fairtrade International's or the assurance providers' website as the authoritative source of information on the validity of the certificate as well as its scope.
  - 5.8.1.7 The signature of the individual(s) that the assurance provider assigned this responsibility.
  - 5.8.1.8 A statement confirming that the named organization and products conform to the requirements of the relevant Fairtrade International Standard(s) for the scope of certification.

## **6 Management system requirements**

### **6.1 Conflict of interest policy**

- 6.1.1 The assurance provider shall have documented and implemented a policy to prevent conflicts of interest. Conflict of interest is understood as an actual or perceived interest in an action that results in, or has the appearance of resulting in, a personal, organizational or professional gain. The policy shall contemplate how conflict of interest are identified, disclosed and prevented.

----- End of Part A -----

# Part B: Requirements for assurance providers certifying traders

## 7 Scope

Part B of the Fairtrade International Requirements for Assurance Providers is for assurance provider use when assessing traders against the Fairtrade Trade Standard.

## 8 General requirements

### 8.1 Scheme for small licensees

- 8.1.1 The assurance provider may develop a specific scheme for small licensees to increase small companies' access to Fairtrade, as long as overall credibility is not jeopardized.
- 8.1.2 The scheme for small licensee can include the following modifications vs. the regular scheme:
  - 8.1.2.1 Validity of permission to trade (2.10.2): the permission to trade issued by the assurance provider shall be valid for a maximum of three years from the date of issue. A second permission to trade may be issued for a maximum of three more years.
  - 8.1.2.2 Surveillance audit (2.9.9): small licensees shall have one off-site document based audit before the expiry of the first permission to trade and thereafter once within each six year certification cycle, usually in the third year.
  - 8.1.2.3 Timing of initial audit (2.9.5.2): an on-site audit shall take place before the expiry of the second permission to trade.
  - 8.1.2.4 Validity of certificates (requirement 2.9.2): small licensee certificates may have a maximum validity of six years.
  - 8.1.2.5 Duration of certification cycle (2.9.7): the certification cycle shall not be longer than six years.
- 8.1.3 Additionally to the requirements on information for clients (2.7.1.1 and 2.7.1.2) the assurance provider shall ensure clients have access to information about the small licensee certification process, including the definition of small licensee.

## 9 Structural requirements

No requirements additional to ISO/IEC 17065 and Fairtrade International Requirements for assurance providers Part A.

## 10 Resource requirements

No requirements additional to ISO/IEC 17065 and Fairtrade International Requirements for Assurance Providers Part A.

## 11 Process requirements

### 11.1 Planning - audit duration

- 11.1.1 The assurance provider shall calculate the duration of its initial, surveillance and re-certification audits using the requirements below, which shall be reflected in the procedures of the assurance provider.
- 11.1.2 The assurance provider shall plan sufficient time to review documentation, perform interviews and physically inspect the facilities and processes (where relevant).
- 11.1.3 The assurance provider shall adapt the duration of its audit to the type of operator the nature or the audit, the complexity of the process, the number of products, the volume of transactions and other relevant factors that may affect the time required for the audit.
- 11.1.4 The assurance provider shall plan time for opening and closing meetings, and periodic auditor's meetings where there is more than one auditor present.
- 11.1.5 Where translators are used, the assurance provider shall increase audit times for those sections of the audit where translators are necessary.

### 11.2 Site visit – sampling

- 11.2.1 A representative sampling method, either simple or stratified, shall be used to allow inferring the results of the audit to the whole population. Additionally judgment-based sampling can be used by auditors (guidance on this methods can be seen in ISO 19011 B3)
- 11.2.2 In all cases the sample shall be chosen by the auditor and not by the client.
- 11.2.3 The auditor shall at least review one sample of each supply chain of the client.

### 11.3 Final report

- 11.3.1 The final report shall include the evaluation of all applicable requirements in the Compliance Criteria List for Trader Certification.

## 12 Management system requirements for assurance providers

No requirements additional to ISO/IEC 17065 and Fairtrade International Requirements for Assurance Providers Part A.

----- End of Part B -----

# Part C: Requirements for assurance providers certifying producers

## 13 Scope

Part C of the Fairtrade International Requirements for Assurance Providers is for assurance provider's use when assessing producers against the relevant Fairtrade International producer standard(s).

## 14 General requirements

No requirements additional to ISO/IEC 17065 and Fairtrade International Requirements for assurance providers Part A.

## 15 Structural requirements

No requirements additional to ISO/IEC 17065 and Fairtrade International Requirements for assurance providers Part A.

## 16 Resource requirements

No requirements additional to ISO/IEC 17065 and Fairtrade International Requirements for assurance providers Part A.

## 17 Process requirements

### 17.1 Planning - audit duration

- 17.1.1 The assurance provider shall calculate the duration of its initial, surveillance and re-certification audits using the requirements below, which shall be reflected in the procedures of the assurance provider.
  - 17.1.1.1 The assurance provider shall plan sufficient time to review documentation, perform interviews and physically inspect the facilities and processes.
  - 17.1.1.2 The assurance provider may use individual and group interviews. It is recommended that individual interviews last between 15 and 30 minutes and group interviews between 30 and 45 minutes.
  - 17.1.1.3 The assurance provider shall adapt the duration of its audit to the type of operator, the nature of the audit, the number or members and/or workers, the complexity of the process, the number of products, the volume of transactions and other relevant factors that may affect the time required for the audit.
  - 17.1.1.4 The assurance provider shall plan time for opening and closing meetings, and periodic auditor's meetings where there is more than one auditor present.
  - 17.1.1.5 Where translators are used, the assurance provider shall increase audit times for those sections of the audit where translators are necessary.

## 17.2 Site visit – sampling

- 17.2.1 A representative sampling method, either simple or stratified, shall be used to allow inferring the results of the audit to the whole population. Additionally judgment-based sampling can be used by auditors (guidance on these methods can be seen in ISO 19011 B3).
- 17.2.2 In all cases the sample shall be chosen by the auditor and not by the client.
- 17.2.3 The auditor shall calculate sample sizes for interviews using, at minimum table C1.

Number of members or workers	Number of persons interviewed
< 50	Minimum 10
50-100	Minimum 15
101-500	Minimum 20
501-1000	Minimum 25
> 1000	Minimum 30

Figure C1: Sampling tables for interviews

## 17.3 Final report

- 17.3.1 The final report shall include the evaluation of all applicable requirements in the Compliance Criteria List for Producer Certification relevant to the producer..

## 18 Management system requirements

No requirements additional to ISO/IEC 17065 and Fairtrade International Requirements for Assurance Providers Part A.

----- End of Part C -----

# Part D: Requirements for auditors and other assurance personnel

## 19 Scope

Part D of the Fairtrade International Requirements for Assurance Providers applies to all auditors used in producer or trader audits, whether they are employees or contractors, and all personnel involved in evaluation and certification decisions such review of audit reports, review of corrective actions and objective evidence, review of appeals and all permission to trade and certification decisions (assurance personnel).

## 20 General requirements

- 20.1.1 All auditors and assurance personnel shall conform to the requirements for qualification and competency as set out in this Part.
- 20.1.2 The assurance provider shall verify that qualification criteria have been met prior to engaging an individual as an auditor or assurance personnel, and shall periodically assess whether competency criteria have been met including periodic on-the-job evaluation (in the case of auditors this means witnessing audits).
- 20.1.3 The assurance provider organizes a periodic training and calibration program of auditors and other assurance personnel.

## 21 Qualification criteria

- 21.1.1 All auditors and other assurance personnel shall meet the qualification criteria set out in Table D1 or possess a demonstrable equivalent competence.

Area	Criteria
<b>Work experience</b> (applicable to auditors and other assurance personnel)	At least two years of work experience in a field related to the content of the standard being evaluated or in assurance of other schemes.
<b>Auditing experience</b> (applicable to auditors only)	<b>Contract auditor</b> Minimum of one year auditing or 100 audit days to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) one or more standards for a recognised certification or auditing body, or</li> <li>b) internationally recognised financial reporting standards.</li> </ul> <b>Staff auditor</b> As for a contract auditor or at least six months' work experience with assurance provider in the certification department on an Officer/ Analyst level
	<b>Assessors for on-the-job evaluation of auditors</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) At least 50 Fairtrade audit days performed. Auditors with a vast experience in auditing other schemes or experienced</li> </ul>

	assurance provider staff might be exempted from this rule. b) External auditors shall have had at least two evaluations by responsible managers over more than six months with excellent results. Staff members must have passed one evaluation with excellent results.
<b>Fairtrade system training</b> (applicable to auditors and other assurance personnel)	All scopes: Have received training on relevant Fairtrade standards and audit methodologies from the Assurance Provider. Producer audit scope: audit methodologies training shall include social interview techniques.

Table D1: Auditor and other assurance personnel qualification criteria

## 22 Competency criteria

22.1.1 All auditors and other assurance personnel shall meet the competency criteria set out in Table D2 as applicable.

Area	Criteria
<b>Language skills</b> (applicable to auditors only)	Shall be able to hold an interview in the language of the audit.
<b>Communication</b> (applicable to auditors and other assurance personnel)	Able to express ideas and concepts clearly; Able to express findings in written reports clearly and concisely.
	Able to interview individuals from workers/members to senior management /directors in a way that encourages their confidence and enables them to answer questions.
<b>Time management</b> (applicable to auditors only)	Capable of managing time before and during audits so audit plans are realized.
<b>Personal attributes</b> (applicable to auditors only)	Able to display the attributes of an auditor as set out in the ISEAL Assurance Code and additionally a commitment to the social and environmental goals of Fairtrade.
<b>Knowledge of Fairtrade system</b> (applicable to auditors and other assurance personnel)	Able to demonstrate knowledge of and competence in the application of Fairtrade International requirements.

Table D2: Auditor and other assurance personnel competency criteria

----- End of Part D -----

# Part E: Requirements for assurance providers certifying product specific standards

## E1: Textile standard

### 23 Scope

Part E of the Fairtrade International Requirements for Assurance Providers is for assurance providers' use when assessing operators against the Fairtrade Textile Standard.

### 24 General requirements

No requirements additional to ISO/IEC 17065 and Fairtrade International Requirements for assurance providers Part A and C.

### 25 Structural requirements

No requirements additional to ISO/IEC 17065 and Fairtrade International Requirements for assurance providers Part A and C.

### 26 Resource requirements

#### 26.1 Personnel

- 26.1.1 All auditors of Textile Standard shall meet the qualification criteria additional to those set out in Table D1 or possess a demonstrable equivalent competence.

Area	Criteria
<b>Textile industry training</b> (applicable to auditors only)	Auditors shall receive training and demonstrate knowledge of issues that are specific to the textile industry: how industry works, industry-specific environmental challenges, and significant social issues in the textile industry (gender and child labour) as well as identification of fraud and manipulation in the textile industry.

Table E1: Auditors additional qualification criteria for Textile Standard

### 27 Process requirements

#### 27.1 Planning - audit duration

- 27.1.1 Additional to criteria in part C, the following requirements shall be met:

- 27.1.1.1 The assurance provider shall ensure that at least some of the interviews of workers take place off-premises when feasible and advisable.

## **27.2 Planning - preparation**

- 27.2.1 The assurance provider shall contact local labour rights organizations and/or unions ahead of every audit to understand prevailing conditions in the area and be able to focus the audits on critical issues. This does not apply to unannounced audits

## **27.3 Site visit – use of information from other sources**

- 27.3.1.1 The assurance provider shall review the available information from first, second and third party audits of the company, as well as information from civil society organisation and unions when available, to be better informed about the situation in the company and be able to focus the audits on critical issues.

## **27.4 Site visit – effective worker’s participation**

- 27.4.1.1 The assurance provider shall manage to ensure the effective participation of workers representatives during the audits.
- 27.4.1.2 The assurance provider shall ensure that workers representatives know how to contact the assurance provider for any arising compliance issue in-between audits. Auditors leave the contact details of the assurance provider to the Compliance Committee.

## **27.5 Final report**

- 27.5.1 Additional to criteria in part C, the following requirements shall be met:
- 27.5.1.1 The final report shall include a root cause analysis of the non-conformities, proposed by the operator and confirmed by the assurance provider.

## **28 Management system requirements**

No requirements additional to ISO/IEC 17065 and Fairtrade International Requirements for Assurance Providers Part A.

----- End of Part E -----

## ANNEX A: Schemes recognised by Fairtrade International

The following schemes have been recognised by Fairtrade International as “certificate acceptance”

<b>Scheme</b>	<b>Scope</b>
<i>No scheme recognised yet.</i>	

The following schemes have been recognised by Fairtrade International as “equivalent status”

<b>Scheme</b>	<b>Scope</b>
<i>No scheme recognised yet.</i>	