Fair Rubber e.V.

Audit Procedure

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Amendment History

Version	Date	Description	Approved By
1.0	31/03/2023	Initial adoption under name of “Fair Rubber Audit System”, included policy and procedural aspects	General Assembly
2.0	14/08/2026	Differentiation between policy and procedure and following recommendations of ISEAL Code v 1.1	Board

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1. Purpose

This Procedure defines the operational steps for planning, conducting, evaluating, and following up on audits within the Fair Rubber certification system.

2. Scope

This Procedure applies to:

a) audits at supplier partners;
b) certification decisions based on audit outcomes;
c) follow-up and corrective action processes.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1. Certification Assistant

The Certification Assistant is responsible for:

a) coordinating audits with the certification body;
b) maintaining audit schedules and risk factor classifications;
c) receiving and reviewing audit reports;
d) communicating with supplier partners;
e) preparing cases for the Certification Committee, by reviewing audit findings and recommendations and considering status of corrective actions.

3.2. Certification Body

The certification body is responsible for:

a) Providing trained staff with one year work experience in forestry or agricultural sector OR experience in the execution of audits (at least 10 audits)
b) planning and conducting audits in accordance with the agreed protocol;
c) identifying non-compliances and corrective actions;
d) following up on implementation of corrective actions from earlier audits
e) preparing clear and documented audit reports;
f) submitting findings and recommendations to Fair Rubber within an agreed timeframe.

3.3. Certification Committee

The Certification Committee is responsible for:

a) evaluating audit findings and recommendations;
b) evaluating supplier responses and corrective action plans;
c) taking final certification decisions within a reasonable timeframe
d) taking final decisions of the risk factor

4. Audit Planning

4.1. Audit Scheduling

Audits are scheduled by the certifier based on:

a) the applicable risk factor category;
b) the audit cycle;
c) any additional risk indicators.

4.2. Preparation

The Certification Assistant ensures that:

a) relevant documentation is provided to the certification body;
b) audit scope and timelines are agreed.

5. Audit Execution

Audits are conducted:

a) on-site at supplier partner level;
b) against the Fair Rubber Standard;
c) using the agreed audit protocol and reporting format.

6. Audit Findings and Reporting

6.1. Non-Compliances

Audit findings may include:

a) minor non-compliances;
b) major non-compliances;
c) observations and recommendations
Recommendations to address non-compliances found

6.2. Reporting

The certification body submits the non-conformity report within 10 and the audit report within 25 working days to:

a) the supplier partner; and
b) the Fair Rubber Secretariat.

7. Risk Factor Assignment

Following the audit, the Certification Assistant assigns or confirms the supplier's risk factor category based on:

Risk Factor 1 (3-year interval)

- maximum of five (5) minor non-compliances;
- documented efforts to address findings;
- full annual premium documentation;
- regular quarterly sales reporting to Fair Rubber e.V.

Risk Factor 2 (2-year interval)

- up to ten (10) minor non-compliances;
- reporting and premium documentation are not consistently complete.

Risk Factor 3 (1-year interval)

- low audit performance, including major non-compliances, more than 10 minor non-compliances
- insufficient reporting or premium documentation.

8. Corrective Actions

8.1. Corrective Action Plans

Supplier partners receive from the Certification Body:

a) formal confirmation of audit completion;
b) a list of required corrective actions;
c) a deadline for every non-compliance by when it needs to be solved

NCs need to be addressed and solved within a certain deadline as indicated in the corrective action plan – following the logic that major NCs will have to be solved within a shorter timeline then minor NCs; whereas major NCs must be solved within 3-6 months, minor NCs can have longer timelines that go up to the next following audit (according to risk factor set).

8.2. Follow-Up

Corrective actions are monitored by the Certification Assistant via:

a) desk-based review; or
b) follow-up audits, where required.

Major NCs shall always be given first priority. Not keeping the given deadline can end up in a suspension of the certification. The suspension may be lifted when the NC is closed.

Where minor NCs are not solved three times in a row, these will become major NCs with a shorter timeline and stronger consequences if not followed.

All such decisions are taken by the certification committee.

9. Certification Decision

The Certification Committee:

- reviews audit results, corrective actions, and supplier remarks;
- decides on certification status;

- documents the decision.

The supplier partner receives:

- a formal notification of the certification outcome (i.e. certificate);
- confirmation of any outstanding action points.

In cases where an audit cannot be passed successfully, a renewal audit can be agreed after some time (3-6 months depending on the severeness of the non-compliance – decided by the certification committee). Until a new audit is successfully passed, the certification is suspended and the certificate loses its validity.

10. Combination with Other Certification Systems

Where audits are combined with other systems:

- Fair Rubber reviews available audit results from those systems;
- additional audits are conducted for the remaining Fair Rubber requirements;

11. Record Keeping and Documentation

The Certification Assistant maintains records of:

- audit reports;
- certification decisions;
- corrective action tracking.

Records are retained in accordance with governance and legal requirements.

12. Review and Continuous Improvement

This Procedure is reviewed periodically to ensure continued alignment with:

- The Fair Rubber Standard;
- The Audit Policy;
- System learning and assurance of best practice.

End of Procedure Document