

# Roundtable Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) Certification Requirements

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**Revision History**

Rev No	Revision Date	Author	Approved by	Page No	Sec. No	Brief Description of Change
1	Feb 2020	Nicholas Cheong	Todd Redwood	-	-	New Issued
2	Mar 2020	Nicholas Cheong	Todd Redwood			Change of document title to RSPO Certification Requirements

**Related Documents**

Document Number	Title
RSPO Certification System for Principles & Criteria	RSPO Certifications Systems for Principles & Criteria June 2017 endorsed by the RSPO Board of Governors on 14 <sup>th</sup> June 2017
RSPO Supply Chain Certification System (including micro users)	RSPO Supply Chain Certification Systems adopted by the RSPO Board of Governors on 21 <sup>st</sup> November 2014 (Revised 14 <sup>th</sup> June 2017)

## **1 Introduction**

This recognition booklet is designed to assist your organization on the requirements for certification to RSPO Principle & Criteria, RSPO Supply Chain Certification standards and other RSPO associated standards throughout the BSI Group.

## **2 Accreditation Status**

Certification to this standard is accredited by Assurance Services International (ASI).

BSI Services Malaysia Sdn. Bhd. holds accreditation for the RSPO SCCS, RSPO P&C (Single Site & Group) Worldwide Scope. This scheme follows the requirements of RSPO Principle & Criteria Certification Systems - 14 June 2017; RSPO Supply Chain Certification Systems - 14 June 2017; ISO 17021-1 and ISO 17065:2012.

BSI Services Malaysia Sdn. Bhd. is member of the BSI Group of Companies is the legal entity that is responsible to ASI for all the RSPO Certification activities provided to its clients and/or clients of its affiliate BSI offices (all affiliate and BSI Services Malaysia Sdn. Bhd. will be referred as BSI unless stated)

## **3 The Certification Process**

The following section outlines the steps that apply during the BSI certification process for RSPO P&C and RSPO SCCS.

BSI reserves the right to provide its clients and those that request quotations with marketing and technical information relating to standards, training and compliance services.

### **3.1 Initial Inquiry**

BSI will respond to either verbal or written expressions of interest from organizations interested in one or more of our programs. If your organization is located near one of BSI's offices, an advisory visit may be arranged to discuss your recognition requirements and how BSI can help your organization achieve them.

BSI will also, on request and receipt of a BSI Service Request Form, prepare a proposal tailoring our services to your organization's needs. The proposal includes a copy of the BSI Standard Terms and Conditions. This document (RSPO Certification Guidebook) is an addendum to the Standard Terms and Conditions and outlines additional contractual requirements that your organization is required to follow to ensure certification, once achieved, is maintained.

### **3.2 Application for Certification and Assessment**

Receipt of your organization's Application form (or authorized acceptance of a valid BSI proposal), along with the accompanying payment of the non-refundable application fee (or invoicing instructions) together with this document forms the contract between your organization and BSI.

Your requirements will be entered into our database and a Client Manager will be appointed to look after your certification or assessment requirements. The Client Manager will be your primary point of contact with BSI and is responsible for ensuring that our certification/assessment services are delivered to your organization in the most effective manner possible.

### **3.3 Client Contact**

As soon as practicable after receipt of your signed application/proposal, a BSI Client Manager (or nominated representative) will contact your organization. The Client Manager will seek to establish a working relationship between your organization and BSI, and to confirm your recognition requirements in terms of the certification or assessment services, standards or codes of practice, locations, and activities and/or products to be included in the scope of certification.

The Auditor (or nominated representative) will seek to gain an appreciation of the structure of your organization and the activities being conducted. In particular the Auditor will:

- Seek an appreciation of the nature and scope of the organization's activities, structure and location(s), including any activities for which confirmation is being excluded; and
- Determine the status of system documentation and implementation including organizational policies, objectives and targets.

### **3.4 Contract of Services**

Prior to entering into a contract, BSI shall check the RSPO website to confirm that you or your parent organization is an RSPO member or has applied to be an RSPO member. BSI shall check with RSPO Secretariat if the membership status of the client is in doubt. Your organization must be a member of the RSPO before it can undergo a certification assessment against the RSPO and all other relevant standards. In the case of RSPO P&C, BSI shall check with the RSPO Secretariat for any outstanding liabilities.

BSI Services Malaysia Sdn. Bhd, a member of the BSI Group of Companies is the legal entity that is responsible to ASI for all the RSPO Certification activities provided to its clients and/or clients of its affiliate BSI offices.

BSI Services Malaysia Sdn. Bhd. had authorized member of the BSI Group of Companies through BSI Accreditation Compliance Agreement to provide RSPO certification services under the BSI agreement and contract with you.

Additional to the BSI Standard Terms and Conditions, the Accreditation Body (AB) - ASI has:

- Rights to access your premises as well as documents, records deemed necessary by the BSI or ASI.
- Rights to conduct regular or short notice (minimum of two weeks) compliance assessments and witness assessments

### **3.5 Pre / Gap Assessment (Optional)**

A Pre-Assessment often proves an invaluable tool in determining system implementation, particularly for new systems that are still in the early stages of development. This one-off assessment includes the identification of gaps against the requirement of the nominated Standard or Code of Practice. At the

conclusion of the Pre-Assessment you will receive a report which highlights any gaps as well as options for next steps on your path to certification.

### 3.6 Certification Audit

The purpose of the Certification Audit is to establish whether your organization's RSPO management system has been implemented and complies with the relevant standard by examining actual practices, documentation and records and comparing them against the organization's policies and procedures. The audit process is, effectively, an undertaking to establish that your documented policies and practices are understood by your personnel and have been effectively implemented.

The Audit will be led by appropriately qualified and experienced Auditors and, where required, Witness Auditors, Observers and/or Technical Specialists acting as advisers to the audit team may also be present. These specialists bring current specialized knowledge of the activities being audited to the audit team and ensure that the audit provides a relevant and practical review of aspects critical to the business.

BSI assessors use RSPO checklists to complete your assessment. These checklists form the basis of the report.

### 3.7 Certification Audit Report

At the conclusion of the audit, the audit team will prepare a written report on the audit findings and the audit team leader will present these findings to your organization's senior management at the exit meeting.

The audit findings include a summary of the overall compliance of your system with the requirements of the relevant standard(s) or codes of practice. The final summary report will be subsequently provided after completion of the Audit and closure of any non-conformance.

For RSPO P&C summary report, the summary report shall be finalized within 30 days of the site assessment of the audit, for cases with no major NCs observed. For cases with major NCs, the full report will be finalised within two weeks of the closure of the last major NC, but no later than two weeks following the 90-day closure period.

For RSPO SCC summary report, the summary report shall be finalized and forwarded to RSPO Secretariat within 14 days of closure of the last non-conformance or if there is no non-conformance, within 14 days of the closing meeting.

The summary report will include the following information;

- Summary of the evaluation activity undertaken.
- Objective evidence and information of your organizations compliance to the RSPO P&C or RSPO SCCS or RSPO associated standards.
- Lists any non-compliances and/or non-conformances identified.
- List any stakeholders' comments.
- If applicable production and sales of palm oil and palm oil product

Non-conformities will be discussed with your team during the Auditor's visit and outlined at the exit meeting. If you are unclear regarding the meaning of anything in your report, please contact your BSI Client Manager.

If non-compliances and/or non-conformances have been raised during your organisations' assessment BSI will provide guidance on the steps that are needed to take place to continue to certification. Such guidance

may include timeframes for close out or requirement for re-assessment. BSI cannot provide guidance on how to close out non-compliances and/or non-conformances.

It is your organization's responsibility to respond to the non-compliances and/or non-conformities detailed in your audit report by the designated time frame. Failure to do so may result in suspension or cancellation of your certification.

### 3.7.1 RSPO P&C non-compliances and/or non-conformances

Non-conformities are categorized as Major and Minor. Opportunity For Improvement (OFI) may be raised. For initial certifications where major non-compliances remain outstanding after twelve months, a full re-assessment is required. For major non-compliances raised during surveillance and re-certification audits shall be closed successfully within 90 days, or the certificate will be suspended, and subsequently withdrawn if the major non-compliances are not addressed within an agreed timeframe as set between BSI and you, not longer than six months from the last day of the audit.

Minor non-compliances will be raised to major if they are not addressed by the time of the following surveillance audit.

The timeline for non-compliances is accounted from the date of the closing meeting.

If there is recurring major non-compliances on the same indicator in successive surveillance audits will automatically lead to immediate suspension of the certificate. This suspension shall be lifted when the non-compliances are successfully addressed.

If there is recurring minor non-compliances on the same indicator in successive surveillance audits will automatically be raised to major.

If there are five or more major non-compliances within one Principle being observed in an Annual Surveillance Audit or in a re-certification audit, this will lead to immediate suspension from the RSPO P&C certification.

### 3.7.2 RSPO SCCS non-compliances and/or non-conformances

Non-conformities are categorized as Major. Opportunity For Improvement (OFI) may be raised. All non-conformances shall be addressed to the satisfaction by the organization before certification is granted by BSI. For Initial certification, if non-conformances are not satisfactorily addressed within three (3) months of the initial certification audit, a full re-audit shall be required.

Non-conformances raised during surveillance audit against a certified organization are serious and the integrity of the RSPO Supply Chain Certification is at risk. A maximum of one (1) month is to be given to the certified organization to address the non-conformance. The CB shall assess the effectiveness of the corrective and/or preventive actions taken within 14 days after submission of the proposed corrective actions. Should the non-conformance not be satisfactorily addressed within the one (1) month plus 14 days timeframe, the certificate shall be suspended and subsequently terminated if the non-conformance is not addressed within an agreed timeframe as set by CB and client, not longer than three (3) months from the last day of the audit. A full re-audit shall then be necessary.

Where objective evidence indicates that there has been a demonstrable breakdown in the supply chain caused by the certified client's actions or inactions, and that oil palm products have been or are about to be shipped which are falsely identified as RSPO certified product, then immediate action shall be taken by



BSI, and the RSPO Supply Chain certification shall be suspended until such time that the situation has been addressed. It is a requirement that BSI informs RSPO Secretariat within 24 hours of the decision to suspend certification.

### 3.8 Audit Cycle

The first annual surveillance audit within twelve (12) months of the certificate issue date, but not earlier than eight (8) months after the certificate issue date. The subsequent annual surveillance audits shall be undertaken within twelve (12) months of the license expiration dates, but not earlier than eight (8) months after the expiration date.

A request for time extension of up to a maximum of three (3) months may be approved by the RSPO Secretariat. If a surveillance audit is not conducted within the required timeframe, unless due to the actions of the CB itself, the CB shall notify the organization and the RSPO Secretariat that the certificate is suspended, until the surveillance audit has been undertaken and the certification decision has been approved by RSPO Secretariat. The surveillance audit shall then be undertaken within six (6) months of the suspension date, otherwise an initial certification audit shall be carried out.

### 3.9 Certification Decision

After confirmation that any necessary corrective actions have been taken, which may involve a follow up visit by the BSI Assessor, the findings and recommendations made in the audit report are subject to an extensive review process prior to certification being granted. For RSPO P&C prior granting the certification and finalization on review, an external peer review process will take place for any initial certifications, extension on scope and re-certifications and this may take up to three weeks.

### 3.10 Certificates

When your organization has achieved certification, BSI will provide you with a Certificate as a statement that your organization has achieved certification to the relevant standard(s) with validity of five (5) years. The certificate should be displayed where it will be seen by customers and potential customers. The certificate will include important data such:

- Name and location of the certified unit
- Name of supply base (for RSPO P&C)
- RSPO membership name and number
- Certified area by name and size (for RSPO P&C)
- Certified volume CSPO and CSPK (for RSPO P&C)
- Supply Chain model
- Date of certification and expiry
- Scope of certification
- Certification number
- Standard for which certification has been granted

When copies or elements of the certificate are used in tenders or offered to potential or existing customers, the certificate should be accompanied by the scope of certification document (if issued separately) as it is important for them to understand the scope of activities for which certification has been granted (see 'scope' below).

Incorrect use of the certificate can result in a customer being misled as to the extent of your organization's certification. Clients are obliged to ensure that BSI has been formally notified of the latest address, ownership, changes to key management responsibilities, major management system changes and capability information so that the certificate maintains its currency. Failure to do so may compromise your organization's certification status.

All original certificates remain the property of BSI Services Malaysia Sdn. Bhd. and must be returned on request.

### **3.11 Scope of Certification**

The scope of certification fully details the scope of your organization's certification in terms of:

- Names and addresses of all locations covered by the certification;
- Achievement of certification to the relevant standard(s) or code(s) of practice;
- The capability statement (range of products, services, and activities) for each location covered by the certification and;
- Any specific exclusions from the scope of certification

Clients are obliged to ensure that BSI has been formally briefed in a timely manner when any variations occur. Clients should not wait until the next scheduled assessment to notify BSI. Failure to do so may compromise the organization's certification status.

### **3.12 Suspension of certification**

In the event that your organization is unable to comply with the requirements of the relevant standard, BSI may refuse to grant certification or suspend your current certificate. Suspension may also occur when RSPO Secretariat may instruct BSI to suspend or withdraw a certificate. In such cases, BSI will implement the request within five days.

The decision to refuse certification, and the grounds for that decision, will be communicated to your organization in writing.

When an organization's certification is suspended the organization shall, for the period of suspension or refusal:

- Withdraw and cease to use any advertising or promotional material that promotes or advertises the fact that the organization is certified.
- Cease from making any certified product claim from the suspension date and inform your supply chain clients within three (3) business days.
- Ensure that all copies of certificates and scopes of certification are removed from areas of public display.
- Cease to use the RSPO Trademark logo on stationery and other documents including media and packaging that are circulated to existing and potential clients, or in the public domain.

The organization shall advise BSI in writing of action taken with respect to the requirements listed above;

- BSI shall advise the organization in writing of the certification processes that will need to be completed to restore certification; and
- During the period of suspension the organization shall continue to pay all fees levied by BSI.

When your organization is ready to reinstate certification an audit may required to be undertaken to ensure that continuous compliance to the RSPO requirements / standards.

### **3.13 Cancellation of certification**

When an organization's certification is cancelled, the organization shall immediately:

- Cease any advertising and promotional activities that promote the fact that the organization holds certification.
- Withdraw and cease to use any advertising and promotional material that promotes the fact that the organization holds certification.
- Cease to use relevant RSPO Trademark logo in any way to promote the fact that the organization holds certification and
- Cease from making any certified product claim from the termination date and inform your supply chain clients within three (3) business days.
- Return all certificates and pay outstanding fees.

### **3.14 Variations to certification**

Your organization is required to advise BSI if there are any significant changes to your organization or the product.

Variations to certification may originate from:

- Variations to the scope of certified product
- Major nonconformities
- Voluntary withdrawals
- Withdrawal of certification by BSI
- Change of certification scope
- Change of ownership
- Change of management
- Change of company name
- Change of ABN etc.

BSI will determine if the degree of change is significant to require an additional assessment or if the changes can be assessed at the next schedule audit or if the product requires re-assessment.

### **3.15 Reduction in Scope of certification**

When an organization's scope of certification is reduced, BSI shall issue revised certificates and scopes of certification as appropriate and the certified organization shall:

- Return all superseded certificates
- Ensure that use of the certification mark is adjusted to reflect the reduced scope of certification
- Ensure that all advertising and promotional activities and materials are adjusted to reflect the reduced scope of certification and
- Pay any fees that are applicable for the facilitation of this activity

## **4 Use of the BSI certification mark**

You are entitled to use the appropriate BSI 'Kitemark' whilst you maintain certification to this program with BSI. For a copy, please contact our BSI local support or visit [www.bsigroup.com](http://www.bsigroup.com).

Use of the logo is subject to Condition and rules of its application.

## **5 Use of RSPO Trademark Logo**

The usage of the RSPO Trademark logo shall comply with the latest RSPO Rules on Market Communications and Rules. BSI Client Manager will assess the correctness usage of the Trademark logo during the audits.

## **6 Standard Owner Information**

RSPO is the owner of these standards.

Additional information, including copies of the Standards may be obtained through their website at <https://www.rspo.org/>

It should be noted that RSPO or the AB may elect to contact client directly for feedback or discussion of audit information.

## **7 Confidentiality**

BSI will treat all information in accordance with the applicable Privacy Act.

## **8 Additional Obligations**

Following certification, there are a number of managerial responsibilities which your organization will need to observe to maintain BSI's certification. These include:

- Continued compliance with the relevant systems standard(s) or code(s) of practice;

- Compliance with the BSI Standard Commercial Terms and Conditions and obligations as specified in this document as well as other guidance documentation that may be specifically provided from time-to-time;
- Conduct of regular internal reviews of your system, with appropriate documentation of such reviews and of any subsequent corrective actions;
- Notification to BSI of any significant changes in the structure (key responsibilities and management system), ownership and operations of your organization to enable the impact of such changes on the certified ownership system to be evaluated; and
- Notification to BSI of any litigation or serious events or matters that relate to the scope of your certification.
- Meet the requirements of the Certification Agreement. This requires that your organization and products remain compliant with the scheme requirements at and the conditions of certification at all times.
- Fulfil the certification requirements, including implementing appropriate changes when are communicated by BSI in a time appropriate manner.
- Comply with all requirements under any relevant international standard, private standard or code of practice expressly governing the RSPO P&C Certification Systems; RSPO Supply Chain Certification Systems and other associated RSPO certification systems services including but not limited to:
  - i. Make all necessary arrangements to allow the evaluation and continuous assessment activities to take place to maintain your certification. This includes but is not limited to; Equipment, Product, Locations, Areas, Personnel and Sub-contractors.
  - ii. Making necessary arrangements for investigation of complaints;
  - iii. Making necessary arrangements for witness/compliance assessment by Accreditation Body.
  - iv. Making claims regarding certification consistent with the scope of certification; and
  - v. Reproducing copies of the certification to others where relevant, in its entirety or as specified in the certification scheme
- Maintain in place appropriate managerial and control procedures (including a customer complaints management procedure), providing evidence of such when requested by BSI or BSI Malaysia to ensure compliance with all standards, private standard or code of practice the Agreement
- Take appropriate action and documents the actions taken if there are any complaints;
- Immediately inform BSI or BSI Malaysia if there are any claims, complaints and changes of the Client that may affect the validity of the certificate issued to the Client or bring BSI Malaysia's reputation in disrepute.

## 8.1 Complaints

Your organization is required to keep a record of all known complaints. These records must be made available to the audit team and BSI when requested.

Your organization is required to demonstrate that you have taken appropriate action to address these complaints through investigation and correct any deficiencies found. These actions must be documented.

It may be necessary for BSI to conduct audits of certified clients at short notice or unannounced to investigate complaints, or in response to changes or as follow up. BSI shall describe the conditions under which such audits will be conducted.

## **8.2 Misleading Statement**

Your organization is not permitted to use its certification in a manner that could bring BSI or scheme owner into disrepute. This includes making misleading or unauthorized statements. If you are unsure if a statement could be misleading you are advised to contact BSI prior to making the statement. Statements include but are not limited to the use of the logo on non-certified product, advertising (including your website) and internal communication.

If your organization is required to provide copies of their certification documents these must be reproduced in its entirety. Failure to do so may be misleading to the recipient as to the scope of certification.

## **8.3 Changes to Circumstances**

Your organization is required to advise BSI of any changes without delay to circumstances that may affect certification. Examples of such changes include but are not limited to;

- Authorized Representative
- Business name (Legal entity) and Trading Name (where applicable)
- Business number / reference
- Ownership
- Contact details
- Location, site addresses
- Business activity/ies, scope of certification (Products and Processes)
- System Management Number of employees, covering all shifts and sites
- Billing Details

## **8.4 Observers**

From time to time BSI requires an Observer to be in attendance at an audit. This may be related to training of new staff and witness assessment of existing staff. It is a requirement of certification that your organization allows these activities to occur. Failure to allow this activity to occur may result in cancellation of your certification.

BSI will, at all times, ensure that the use of observers is kept to a minimum and your organization will be advised prior to the assessment activity. The Observer does not take an active part in an assessment.

## 9 Complaints and Appeal

Appeals against certification decisions and / or complaints against service delivery levels may be raised with your Client Manager. If your disagreement have been unable to resolve either through your Client Manager or with the local management of your BSI office, you may appeal in writing within 21 calendar days from receipt of the decision to the Head of Compliance & Risk of the BSI office in your country or the country that your contract was contracted. The address of each office can be found on a country specific website through [www.bsigroup.com](http://www.bsigroup.com).

Regardless of country location, following the receipt of an appeal or complaint, selected BSI personnel will be appointed who are independent of the issue. Contact will be made to acknowledge receipt of the issue, outline the process, gather and verify additional data and information required. The results of the appeal or complaint decision will be communicated formally.

For receiving any official appeal and complaint about any issue relates to assessment outcome or certification status, BSI will:

- Forward the appeal/dispute to our appeal panel and respond as quickly as possible with a target of responding within 10 working days (if practicable).
- Investigate the complaint and respond as quickly as possible with a target of responding within 10 working days
- If it is not possible to respond to your dispute and appeal within 10 working days we will explain why and give you a date by which you can expect a full response

The Appeal Panel or Review Committee shall consist of three persons considered as experts in the area of technology or business relevant to the appeal. The Review Committee shall be constituted as follows:

- One person that is expert in the relevant area of technology or business; and
- Two people that are independent from the original decision making.

The appellant shall represent himself and no legal representation will be allowed unless approved by the Appeal Panel or Review Committee.

As an alternate to the Head of Compliance & Risk of the BSI office in your country or the country that your contract was contracted, a complaint or appeal against the service delivery by BSI or audit outcome can be raised to:

**Nicholas Cheong** – Global Food Scheme Manager (RSPO & GlobalG.A.P)

Email: [Nicholas.cheong@bsigroup.com](mailto:Nicholas.cheong@bsigroup.com)

and/or

**Todd Redwood** - Global Food and Retail Supply Chain Operations & Compliance Director

Email: [todd.redwood@bsigroup.com](mailto:todd.redwood@bsigroup.com)

**10 Specific Program FAQ's:*****What is the duration of a RSPO audit?***

The duration of a RSPO audit depends on your specific processes and products. It will vary with the size and complexity of your supply base and/or facility and the RSPO standard being audited. Please contact your local BSI office if you require guidance.

***Do Auditors need to be rotated for RSPO audits?***

Yes. RSPO have a restriction in place that one Lead Auditor may lead no more than 3 consecutive audits at the same management unit or organization, including if the lead auditor changes CB.

***How frequent can a certification transfer take place?***

Transfer of the certification of an organization between accredited CBs can take place at any time during the validity period of a certificate. Transfer is allowed only once within a certificate cycle (i.e. once within 5 years). If there is a need for a second transfer, a written permission from the RSPO Secretariat must be obtained through a request made by the company or the CB.