

1. Abstract

This document defines the AGX Compliance Protocol v1.0, a modular open standard for verifying legal, ethical, and traceable artisanal and small-scale gold production.

It establishes technical, legal, and operational requirements for conformance, with an emphasis on practical implementation in field environments across Africa.

The protocol supports actors from mine to export, including miners, aggregators, assayers, vault operators, exporters, and government regulators.

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3. Conformance Language

The key words MUST, MUST NOT, REQUIRED, SHALL, SHALL NOT, SHOULD, SHOULD NOT, RECOMMENDED, MAY, and OPTIONAL are to be interpreted as described in RFC 2119.

These terms define the level of obligation attached to a given requirement within the protocol. Compliance actors must follow all MUST statements to be considered conformant.

4. Scope

This protocol applies to artisanal and small-scale gold operations operating within jurisdictions that seek to align with internationally recognized responsible sourcing and export standards.

The protocol covers:

- Legal and identity verification (KYC)
- Gold documentation and traceability (chain of custody)
- Field-level training and certification
- Export readiness and buyer-side verification
- Government and third-party audit integration

5. Normative References

- OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Supply Chains of Minerals from Conflict-Affected and High-Risk Areas, Annex II
- LBMA Responsible Gold Guidance v9
- planetGOLD Standard Operating Procedures Toolkit
- UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights
- ISO 9001: Quality Management Systems
- RFC 2119: Key words for use in RFCs to Indicate Requirement Levels

6. Definitions

AGX-Certified Gold — Gold that has passed all protocol requirements from sourcing to export.

Miner — An individual or organized group engaged in gold extraction using artisanal or small-scale methods.

Aggregator — A party that consolidates gold from multiple miners and submits parcels for custody or export.

Field Officer — A certified agent responsible for onboarding, verification, and compliance reporting.

Assayer — An approved party responsible for evaluating gold purity and weight.

Exporter — A licensed entity authorized to export gold.

Vault Operator — A secure custody provider.

Certificate of Conformance — Document issued by AGX to verify compliance.

QR Trace ID — Scannable identifier linking parcels to origin, actors, and custody history.

7. Protocol Architecture

7.1 Legal & Identity Compliance

Actors **MUST** complete identity verification, registration, and legal documentation via AGX systems or field agents.

7.2 Chain of Custody

All gold parcels **MUST** be logged at every stage using AGX-issued tools including QR codes, tamper-evident packaging, and custody transfer forms.

7.3 Certification & Training

Actors **MUST** complete role-specific training and receive certification before participating in verified trade.

7.4 Data Verification & Auditability

All data (KYC, custody logs, export docs) **MUST** be retained for audit and regulatory access. Offline tools **MUST** synchronize when possible.

8. Compliance Criteria

Defined per actor type (miner, aggregator, assayer, exporter, vault), with clear MUST-level obligations for KYC, documentation, ESG screening, and custody compliance.

9. Roles & Responsibilities

Each actor has specified duties in the AGX system. Examples:

- Miners: source documentation, KYC, certification
- Aggregators: custody tracking, secure packaging
- Vaults: inventory, physical security, audit trail
- Exporters: export docs, customs interface
- Field Officers: registration, witness custody

10. Certification & Verification

Defines process for KYC, training, issuance of AGX badge/QR, audit flagging, appeal process, public registry listing.

11. Implementation Guidance

Outlines phased deployment approach, minimum viable setup, offline/low-tech tools, field rollout strategy, and integration with government systems.

12. Change Log

Version 1.0 – May 2025

- First release of AGX Compliance Protocol v1.0
- Structured as Linux Foundation–style open specification
- Supports paper and digital toolsets
- Ghana and Guinea pilot deployments underway