**Purpose -** To establish responsible and effective complaint handling and resolution procedures in a transparent manner to the satisfaction of internal and external customers.

**Scope -** The procedure will cover all complaints that may be received from direct customers (Clients), indirect customers (Customers of Client, user of the produce) and consumers the end use of the produce and from the members associated with the group certification.

**Responsibility - CEO** is responsible for attending till final resolution and corrective action on all customer complaints.

**Procedures –**

**Scope of Complaints:**

Complaints can be made by any person or organization and may be submitted against, but are not limited to:

1. Go4Agri’s operations or procedures.
2. Conduct of auditors, certification staff, or the Certification Committee.
3. Audit processes or procedures conducted by Go4Agri auditors.
4. Misuse of certification status, including misuse of scope or logo.
5. OFIS irregulatory notifications for EU (should be handled through OFIS portal wherever necessary)

**Complaint Submission Process:**

Complaints must be made in writing, detailing the complainant’s information (e.g., name, address, organization) and the nature of the issue.

* For complaints involving the accreditation body, the CEO will acknowledge receipt within one working day.
* Other complaints, received by the administrative team or via the Go4Agri website, are forwarded to the CEO, who will then acknowledge receipt within one working day.

**Detailed Procedure**

1. The Certification Manger would first attend to all written complaints received and a receipt for the same will be issued either by giving a signed copy of the complaint letter or by a reply to the email if the complaint is by way of email.
2. The complaint will be registered in the complaint register maintained for the purpose.
3. After preliminary understanding of the nature of complaint Certification Manger appoints an investigator to have investigation on the complaint and submit report to CEO.
4. The Complainant may be called to present the issue to the CEO if needed.
5. The CEO investigates the issue by studying all related records and documents for review and comes up with his decision.
6. The decision will be communicated to the Complainant.
7. Then the CEO would conduct the root cause analysis. Technical experts in the relevant area will be associated with the process.
8. The complaint would be evaluated based on findings of the root cause analysis. The customer would be furnished with a written explanation along with supporting documentation for resolution of the complaint.
9. For all complaints related to Certification Procedure Laps – In-house meeting shall be called for and discussed to resolve the complaints.
10. If the complaint is against the CEO, the Certification Committee will nominate two people who will enquire about the complaint in the same manner above.
11. To ensure that there is no conflict of interest, personnel who have provided consultancy for a client, or been employed by a client, will not be used by GO4AGRI to review, or approve the resolution of a complaint for that client within 12 months following the end of the consultancy or employment. If the CEO is having any conflict of interest, then another person, quality manager or certification manager or inspection manager who is not having any conflict of interest will investigate this instead of the CEO.
12. Only a written complaint will be entertained, and this **PRO06-Complaint Procedure** will be given to customers, or anyone interested as required.
13. The detail regarding complaints is recorded in **FMO13- Complaints Handling form.**
14. All complaints shall be closed within 20 working days from the date of receipt of the complaint, based on the complexity this may extend to 30 working days in rare circumstances.
15. If the complainant is not satisfied with the decision, they can make an appeal to the CB or make complaint to the accreditation body within 30 days of decision.
16. A Root cause analysis of this complaint will be done and will be recorded in **FMO14** – **RCA & Decision-making Form** so that correction and corrective action can be planned to avoid recurrence.
17. **Investigation report shall record at least:**

1) Which control authority(-ies) and/or control body(-ies) are/were in charge of the investigation?

2) Describe cooperation between the different operators and competent authority(-ies) or, where appropriate, control authority(-ies) and/or control body(-ies) involved, in the different countries involved (if any).

3) Which investigation methods/procedures have been used?

* For instance, have the operators concerned been submitted to a specific control? And also have the operator conducted and submitted the internal investigation report?
* Unannounced inspection to the concerned unit/operation to investigate the matter (if need arises)
* Have samples been taken and analysed?

4) What is the outcome of the investigation?

* What are the results of the inspections: and analyses (if any)?
* Has the origin of the non-compliance/suspicion of non-compliance/other problem raised been cleared up?
* What is your assessment of the seriousness of the non-compliance/suspicion of non-compliance/other problems raised?
* Recording the outcomes.

5) If applicable, has the origin of the contamination/non-compliance/suspicion of non-compliance/other problem raised and the responsibility of the actors been clearly identified and established?

* Comment on the origin of the contamination/non-compliance/other problem raised and the responsibility of the actors, for example, but not limited to:
* Does the investigation confirm the identification of un-authorized products by Go4Agri'? What is the origin of contamination? Does it confirm that it was done at the certified location your certified operator? If not, what is the origin (supplier/ transport/ packaging, etc.), and how is it communicated to the relevant CB of the source of contamination is under the control of another certification body? Was it accidental or intentional? What actions are taken by Go4Agri for the same? \*

6) Have the operators identified been involved in other non-compliance/suspicion of non-compliance/other problem raised cases in the last 3 years?

* Comment on the operators identified in other non-compliance 'suspicion of non-compliance/other problems in the last 3 years.

\*These are just a few examples; similar approach shall be taken for all kind of complaints.

**It should also include:**

**- measures taken, for example, and:**

1) What preventive and corrective measures have been taken (e.g. as regards the distribution/circulation of the product on the Union market and third-country markets)?

2) What actions in case of non-compliance/suspicion of non-compliance/other problem raised were taken on the operators and or the products concerned? (1)

* Mode of actions (written form, warning, etc.)?
* Was the certification of the producer/processor limited, suspended or withdrawn?
* Date of entry into force of the actions (if any) (DD/MM/YYYY)
* Duration of the actions (if any) (in months)
* Control authority and/or control body which adopted and applied the actions (if any)

3) Are additional inspections planned at the operators concerned?

4) What other measures are the control authority or control body planning to prevent the occurrence of similar cases?

* **Outcomes of the investigation**

In cases, where a non-conformance is substantiated against a certified client, a complaint investigation may result into various actions, including, but not limited to:

* Asking further corrective actions in defined timelines
* Reduction of the scope
* Suspension for a defined time-period and specific conditions
* Withdrawal/ Revoke of the certification, etc.

These decisions are communicated immediately to the client and not less than within 2 working days. The decision of Go4Agri can be appealed by the affected client, the policy remains same as described earlier in this document.

2. Where a non-conformance is substantiated against Go4Agri’s staff or audit processes, it may result into the revising of it’s policies, and retraining it’s staff. Where needed, strict actions will be taken against the intentional and severe violation of code of ethics.