**Purpose -** To establish and maintain a system, which ensures that the procedure for certification is known to all Go4Agri staff and its clients interested and is undertaken in a uniform impartial way.

**Scope –** NPOP, EU 2018/848 and COR. The procedure applies to all clients who would like to have a certification from the GO4AGRI within the scope of certification of GO4AGRI.

**Responsibility**

1. CEO has the overall responsibility for the implementation of this procedure.
2. All managers, evaluators, reviewers, certifiers, accounts department have the responsibility for the compliance of this procedure.

**Procedures -**

1. **Contact/ Request** GO4AGRI- Interested client (farmers/Grower groups /processors /traders /Apiculturist /wild harvesters/ animal husbandry operators /input manufacturers) can contact through any means for an application package and a with minimum details, which must include,
   1. Name and address of the interested party.
   2. Scope/ categories requested for
   3. The crops/products grown/made/processed/ traded/manufactured.
   4. Total area of the farm in hectare/ capacity as applicable
   5. Exact location of the operations
   6. Number and area of the members in case of grower group certification
   7. Previous certification status and if denied/ withdrawn by any.
2. GO4AGRI **sends Application package and quotation for its certification services**- (Please refer GO4AGRI schedule of fees for more details on quotation) the application package consists of the following.
   1. Copy/ link of Applicable standard
   2. FMO06-Initial Application with Annex to application for Grower Group.
   3. FMO06- Application
   4. FMO07-Certification License Agreement
   5. FMO08- Organic Management Plan (As applicable to the scope)
   6. PRO03- Certification Procédure
   7. FMO05- Schedule of Fees
   8. FMO09- Sanction Catalogue
   9. FMO10- GMOs listed and NON-GMOs Declaration
3. **Filled in Application form reaches** GO4AGRI - Duly filled in and signed application form and associated forms and documents reach GO4AGRI office by post/courier/hand or Email (For Email applications signatures will be collected once comes for the inspection, Scan copy of the signed pages is also acceptable) along with advance for inspection and certification by Demand Draft / cheque payable to GO4AGRI (Cheques subject to realization), Wire transactions (NEFT/RTGS/IMPS) / Other online payment methods with proper receipt is acceptable.
4. In case the quotation is already sent as per the details received over the phone or other alternatives**.** A copy of the certification agreement will be given to the client. In case the quotation is not sent the Application is reviewed and if it qualifies to proceed for certification process, then offer/quotation is prepared and will be informed to client. If the offer is acceptable the certification agreement is executed and the registration process proceeds.
5. **Review of Application to verify capacity of Go4Agri to carry out it’s certification:**

The application is reviewed to verify that Go4Agri has capacity, for example accreditation for the scope of audit or not, based on which the request may either be declined, or may proceed to the next steps.

For example, if an operator applies for Livestock (Cat B) as per EU 2018/848, Go4Agri do not have a capacity to certify that. Because, as per EU 2018/848, the present applied scope doesn’t have it. They are only applying for scope of Category D, and E. Also, for EU equivalence only category A and F applies.

An authorized evaluator/ initial reviewer will do this, and co-ordinate with the marketing team.

1. **Registration process:** On receiving the filled in application packet, or application, certification agreement and the advance, and verifying that we have capacity to certify the project, the client will be issued with a registration number within a month as per **PRO04- Clients Registration Procedure** and will be communicated to the applicant **FMO11- Letter of Registration**. The Registration proceeds only after the Review.
2. **Review process:** The application package will be reviewed. The review of application includes the review of organic plan and all associated documents which is part of the application package. The review of application can be assigned to any inspector auditor who can do inspection for that scope.
3. Man-day calculation: while inspection planning, man-days for inspection are to be calculated based on various factors, but not limited to, number of sites, subcontracted operation, length of year inorganic, complexity of the system, complexity of the products, number of products, etc.
4. Scheduling Inspection: In consultation with the operator and considering the requirements of normative documents, GO4AGRI fixes the inspection / audit dates. Note: GO4AGRI reserves the right that along with the inspector auditor coming for the inspection/ audit there may be observers, verifying auditors or any other relevant persons from accreditation bodies and other relevant authorities. In no way inspection will be carried out before the registration process is completed. (Exception in case of CB transfer) T**he producer should maintain evidence for compliance of requirement of applied standards and regulations. Non availability of evidence may result in certification not possible until the evidence is provided for the compliance.**
5. **Knowledge of client**: The client seeking certification will have to be in possession of and full fill the requirements indicated in NPOP or the other relevant standards as applicable i.e. COR standards and EU 2018/848 and it’s delegated acts: **(These are the Reference/Normative documents and are the guide)**

NPOP Update version available in: [www.apeda.gov.in](http://www.apeda.gov.in) , follow link <https://apeda.gov.in/apedawebsite/organic/ORGANIC_CONTENTS/National_Programme_for_Organic_Production.htm>

Any updates in the normative documents will be communicated to clients through letters/ emails by GO4AGRI.

COR operation manual and SFCR are available online. (<https://inspection.canada.ca/en/food-labels/organic-products>, <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/regulations/SOR-2018-108/page-20.html#h-846236>)

EU Organic regulations are available online. (<https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/farming/organic-farming/legislation_en#:~:text=Since%201%20January%202022%2C%20Regulation%20%28EU%29%202018%2F848%20of,Regulation%20%28EC%29%20No%20834%2F2007%20of%2028%20June%202007>)

1. **Inspection**: GO4AGRI accomplishes inspection and all non-conformities/non-compliances are listed in the report. A copy of the report, which is duly signed, by the evaluator and the client. The report copy is handed over to the client. The non-conformances detected can be closed by providing the proof by way of documents, records, photos, etc. or if requirement is there for a further visit by the CB evaluator to the site which will be chargeable as per the scale of fees for the man days needed for follow up inspections. See PRO 10 for detailed Inspection Procedure.
2. **Invoicing**: GO4AGRI sends the final invoice.
3. Certification Review
   1. Go4Agri will review the audit report and supporting documents against the audit done.
   2. Go4Agri will inform the operator of any non-compliance identified with the corrective action requirements
   3. Operators need to follow the procedure PRO 12 to address the non-conformances.
4. Certification Decision: Based on the compliance verification, Go4Agri makes a certification decision-
   1. If an operator makes a false statement regarding its production system or does not respond to the requirements that are still non-compliant. Go4Agri will issue a written notice of denial of certification.
   2. If an operator can operate in accordance with its plan and after the correction of all non-conformities, then Go4Agri's decision to certify a product and/or packaging and labeling activities will be taken. Operator will be provided with a certificate that confirms the certification of the organic product and/or certification of packaging and labeling activities of the organic product. Refer to the procedure for Organic Certificate for details.
   3. The date of Certification issuance will be the date of certification decision.
   4. Validity of scope: The certification of a product, once issued, shall remain valid as follow:
      1. For COR Certificate of Compliance: unless suspended or cancelled by Go4Agri according to the requirements of the SFCR and is subject to the annual renewal.
      2. For COR packaging & labeling certificate and attestation of certificate, document expires at the end of 12 months or when cancelled by Go4Agri Certification Private Limited.
      3. For EU: 1 year and is subject to maintenance of certification process as described further.

NOTE: Recommendations for a certification decision based on the review is documented within CDR (FMO023a), unless the

review and the certification decision are completed concurrently by the same person.

1. The operator must pay the balance of the final invoice within 30 days after inspection.
2. Operator **fulfills conditions** and settles non-conformities within one month in case of already certified and 3 months in case of new applicants, or as per the sanctions procedure. All non-conformances detected against the ICS in case of Group certification (GG not applicable for EU 2018/848) must be closed within the time allotted. (Note-100% compliance all applicable clauses of operation with no major N/C , Minor N/C and/or Critical NC. Preventive action plan submitted is acceptable to complies with the requirement to get scope certificate for the relevant audit criteria) If the non-conformities are not closed within the stipulated time of one month or less based on the severity of the non-compliance appropriate sanctions according **FMO09-Sanction Catalogue** will be initiated. In the case of a certified client suspension will result and in the case of a new client initial inspection will follow.

**Note: - Minor N/C means this will not have any impact on the integrity of product.**

1. GO4AGRI verifies the action taken on the non-conformities, which may include a surveillance visit of the operation. In case of non-fulfillment of conditions, the sanctioning system will be invoked.
2. In case a surveillance visit is needed, in consultation with the client the same will be conducted and will be subsequently charged. The file will be forwarded for review and certification only after the settlement of all outstanding dues.
3. **Issuing Certificate:** GO4AGRI issues the certificate, which is not later than one monthafter the fulfillment of all-necessary inspections, closing non-conformities, and settlement of all dues amounting to 100% of the final contract value. The certificate will be issued according to the rules of NPOP /applicable Standard, (The certificate generated from the trace net). For other schemes the certificate will be issued by the GO4AGRI as per the respective approved template. Along with the certificate a letter mentioning the requirement for the correction of minor non-compliances within a specified timeline is also given. The certificate is not transferable, even on change of owner ship initial inspection is needed and continuation of Organic status will be decided by the accreditation body (For NPOP - APEDA). In case of any sanction, suspension withdrawal of certificate the information will be given to the affected parties. **Note: If the client is operating with any other CB the information will be given to that CB too**. **The information will be communicated to APEDA within 30 days. For COR or EU, the same client cannot be certified with two CBs at a time.**

The certificate will be issued to the registered producer either by Post/Hand and proof of the same will be retained, any differences noticed must be brought to the notice of CB within 7 days of Certificate generation. (As a trace net requirement: Is there any differences or correction in scope certificate will be entertained by Trace net team or help desk within 7 days of issue of scope certificate.) If the difference is because of the failure from CB side the Amended certificate will be issued within 14 days without any charges, if the failure is because of an error in data provided by the clients. The Amended certificate will be issued within 28 days and will be chargeable as per the **FMO05, FMO05a, FMO05b- Schedule of Fees**. Any changes which need to be changed in the trace net may need more time than mentioned above and must get permission from APEDA.

In case the non-conformances cannot be closed by the client due reason beyond the control of client a letter of non-compliance may be given to the client, this will be issued only on written request from client. The Letter of non-compliance is not meant to replace or avoid sanctioning of the client.

The India Organic Logo/ Company logo and/or COR logo and /or EU logo and any claims as organic certified by Go4Agri cannot be used unless the client is granted with license to Use certification mark (for NPOP) and certification and approval for other applicable certification schemes (EU and/or COR).

Other than the above-mentioned non-compliance letter, GO4AGRI will not issue any communication other than certificate to or about producer to demonstrate any Organic status unless it refers to sanctions.

1. The use of India Organic Trademark and Logo is governed by the NPOP Chapter-6. Use of EU logo should be as per EU 2018/848 standards. Use of COR logo shall be as per relevant COR regulations.

EU 2018/848 Organic Scope Certificate (OOC) will be issued using TRACES NT and as described under EU 2021/1698.

1. **Once the certificate is received and if any balance of the final invoice must be paid to** GO4AGRI**, then it has to be paid within one month, nonpayment of the outstanding may lead to suspension withdrawal of certificate without further notice. The suspensions will not be withdrawn until the fees are received by GO4AGRI.**

**Surveillance inspection** as per scheme requirement will be conducted by GO4AGRI. Unannounced inspection of 10% and additional 10 % of the certified client will be conducted by GO4AGRI. (PRO 10)

For NPOP GO4AGRI will inform the certificate holder in advance of the intended visit. This notification will normally not exceed 24 hours. In the exceptional case where it is impossible for the certificate holder to accept the proposed date (due to medical or other justifiable reasons), the certificate holder will receive one more chance to be informed of an unannounced inspection or audit. The certificate holder shall receive a written warning if the first proposed date has not been accepted. The client will receive another 24-hour notification of a visit. If the visit cannot take place because of non-justifiable reasons, a suspension of all products will be issued.

For EU, no prior information will be given regarding the unannounced inspections.

1. **Annual follow-up inspections are mandatory**. The GO4AGRI will normally follow up with client for the renewal and send application form before the next season 3 months before the expiry of certificates on request from client and the procedures # 3 to 16 will apply. And will reconfirm the registration of producer and the proposed products for the relevant scope before the expiry of certificate provided the client submit the application form and make advance payment. But it lies as the responsibility of the client that the renewal applications are submitted before the expiry of certificates. The follow-up inspection/subsequent inspection has to the carried out while the standing crop is there; it should be avoided during the off season when no activities are going on.

Each year, before the renewal inspections, the client shall notify the GO4AGRI of its schedule of production of crop products.

* **Other than the normal announced inspections the** GO4AGRI **will carry out additional and unannounced inspections on a risk-basis**.

1. **Changes affecting certification-** When the certification scheme introduces new or revised requirements that affect the client, the Company shall ensure these changes are communicated to all clients. GO4AGRI will also consider other changes affecting certification, including changes initiated by the client and shall verify the implementation of the changes by its clients and shall take actions required by the scheme for this one or all of the following may be undertaken.

The actions to implement changes affecting certification shall include, if required, the following:

evaluation; review; decision; Issuance of revised formal certification documentation to extend or reduce the scope of certification; issuance of certification documentation of revised surveillance activities (if surveillance is part of the certification scheme)

1. **Complaints-** If the client is not happy with any of the operations associated with inspection and certification of GO4AGRI a complaint can be made with GO4AGRI and the procedure for complaint is available on request.
2. **Appeals-** In case any decision taken by GO4AGRI is not agreeable to client and the client can make an appeal against that decision the appeal procedure is available on request.

**Note: - The reference documents mentioned in clause 10 of this document are the guide for NPOP certification or the relevant document of other Schemes. In case of any conflict, the information in the reference documents prevails over the information in this document and the updated version/the version valid at the time are to be followed.**

Any further details regarding the NPOP, EU 2018/848 & it’s delegated acts and/or COR or any other Schemes of certification are available on request.

Reference:

COR Policy for Conversion Period (PRO 28)