

Confidentiality Policy

Our certification procedures aim to maintain the trust of our clients that commercially sensitive and other types of confidential information received from them or from other sources will not be revealed to unauthorised parties. Any Preferred by Nature staff or contractors who are found in deliberate breach of our confidentiality rules will be removed from participation in Preferred by Nature's activities. Preferred by Nature reserves the right to initiate legal action against any party in breach of a confidentiality agreement.

All Preferred by Nature personnel is required to sign a confidentiality agreement with Preferred by Nature where they agree to maintain complete confidentiality in terms of all client documentation, interviews, conversations, and any information related to the certification audit process pertaining to the organisation/source being evaluated. Auditors shall not distribute copies of any documents or reports or discuss the content of these reports with other parties unless specifically authorised by Preferred by Nature's Executive Director. All documents, data and other evidence provided to, or collected by, the auditor in conducting an audit must be returned to Preferred by Nature or the client or be destroyed. When in doubt about the confidential nature of information, auditors should refer questions or public requests for information directly to their supervisor.

The confidentiality principles do not apply to information which is already public and/or which is required to be publicly available under the rules of the applicable certification scheme, regulation, law or contractual arrangements. Preferred by Nature public information includes, but is not limited to:

- information found in the public summary sections of the audit report (the client can always review and comment on the report prior to publication),
- information provided by the client for use on the certification related websites (e.g. certified products, species, area),
- information that is available in the public domain.

When we are required by law or contractual arrangements to release confidential information, the client or person concerned will, unless prohibited by law, be notified of the information provided.

Preferred by Nature aims to follow the best practices in relation to IT security and applies reasonable security measures to safeguard all electronic client information and communication.