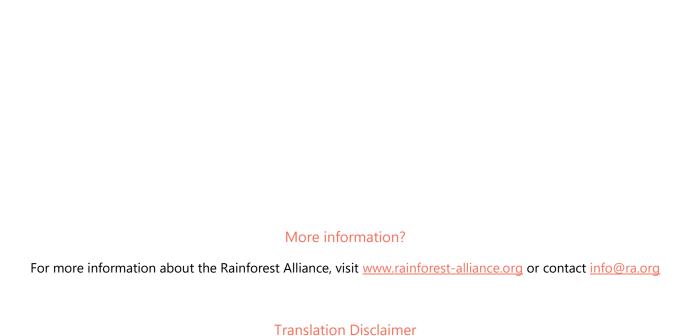# GUIDE FOR THE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION SYSTEM

2017 Rainforest Alliance Sustainable Agriculture Standard

Version 1.0

The Rainforest Alliance works to
conserve biodiversity and ensure
sustainable livelihoods by transforming
land-use practices, business practices,
and consumer behavior.

More information?

For more information about the Rainforest Alliance, visit www.rainforest-alliance.org or contact info@ra.org

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1. Introduction

The Rainforest Alliance is a growing network of people who are inspired and committed to work together to achieve its mission of conserving the biodiversity and ensuring sustainable livelihoods. For more information about Rainforest Alliance, visit our website: http://www.rainforest-alliance.org.

This document is a guide for the performance evaluation system of individual farms, groups and multi-sites and it is aimed to Certification Bodies and to all operations participating in the Certification program.

2. 2017 Rainforest Alliance Standard for Evaluating the Performance System

The 2017 Rainforest Alliance Sustainable Agriculture Standard is comprised of four areas of impact, plus a fifth area for the cattle production scope. Each area of impact is made up by a combination of Zero tolerance criteria, critical criteria and continuous improvement criteria, explained as follow:

- **Zero Tolerance Criteria:** Rainforest Alliance acknowledges five critical criteria with 'Zero Tolerance'. Nonconforming with any of such criteria with zero tolerance will result in the refusing or immediate cancellation of the certificate, without the chance of a verification audit.
- **Critical Criteria:** The critical criteria cover the environmental, social and labor aspects of higher priority and risk. The operations must comply with all the critical criteria applicable at all the time, as a requirement for granting or maintaining the certificate.
- **Continuous improvement criteria:** Constitute the continuous improvement criteria, which require that the operations increment through time its compliance across the performance levels: Level C, Level B and Level A.

Regardless the type of criteria, these are always assessed as follows:

Compliance status	Conditions
Conformity	The audited operation complies with the requirements of the criteria.
Non-conformity (NC)	The audited operation does not comply or partially complies with the requirements of the criteria.
Not applicable (N/A)	The items of the criteria are not included in the scope of the audit.

The 2017 Certification Rules establish that for approving a certification or control audit, the audited operation must comply with:

a. All the applicable critical criteria
b. The compliance requirements for the Continuous Improvement Criteria, corresponding to its year within Rainforest Alliance performance system, according to the following table:

Year	Minimum Compliance Percentage per Level and Year		
	Level C	Level B	Level A
Year 0	50%	-	-
Year 1	65%	-	-
Year 2	80%	-	-
Year 3	100%	50%	-
Year 4	100%	65%	-
Year 5	100%	80%	-
Year 6	100%	100%	50%

Additionally, since within the certification system there are three types of organizations, an assessment system was developed suited for the specific characteristics of each audited operation. Such systems are explained as follows:

2.1. Performance Evaluation System for Individual Farms

In this model, the audited farm is assessed against all the applicable criteria within its scope and the checklist is completed accordingly. The compliance results are estimated at the Critical Criteria Level, Level C, Level B and Level A; as follows:

$$Conformance \% = \frac{Criteria\ met}{Applicable\ criteria} x100$$

Table 1. Rules for the Compliance with the Continuous Improvement Criteria

For example, for a farm being audited against all the compliance levels, the scores for each level is calculated as follows:

Level	Compliance calculation
Critical Criteria (CC)	$Compliance \% = \frac{CC\ Met}{CC\ Applicable} x100$
Level C Criteria	$Compliance \% = \frac{Level\ C\ Criteria\ Met}{Level\ C\ Criteria\ Applicable} x100$
Level B Criteria	$Compliance \% = \frac{Level\ B\ Criteria\ Met}{Level\ B\ Criteria\ Applicable} x100$
Level A Criteria	$Compliance \% = \frac{Level\ A\ Criteria\ Met}{Level\ B\ Criteria\ Applicable} x100$

If the audited farm complies with the 100% of the applicable critical criteria and the requirement established in the Rules for the Compliance with the Continuous Improvement Criteria (Table 1) for its respective year within the system, a certificate for a single farm is issued.

2.2. Group Performance Evaluation System (Not includes Multi-sites)

In this model, the facilities of the group administrator (GA) as well as those of each farm member selected for sampling are audited. Each audited operation is assessed against all the applicable criteria within its scope and the checklist is completed accordingly; for example, the audit scope of a group administrator includes the infrastructure, staff and other areas of human activities directly linked with the management of the certificate, and when applies, the GA is audited against the criteria related to natural ecosystems, processing areas, agrochemical management or any other element related to the impact areas that are directly managed by the GA.

For each farm sampled, the compliance results are estimated at the Critical Criteria Level, Level C, Level B and Level A, as follows:

$$Conformance\ \% = \frac{Criteria\ Met}{Applicable\ Criteria}x100$$

For example, for a sample of member farms that are being audited against all the compliance levels, the scores per level will be estimated as follows:

Level	Farm 1	Farm 2	Farm 3	Farm 4
Critical Criteria (CC)	Compliance % CC	Compliance % CC	Compliance % CC	Compliance % CC
Level C Criteria	Compliance % Level C	Compliance % Level C	Compliance % Level C	Compliance % Level C
Level B Criteria	Compliance % Level B	Compliance % Level B	Compliance % Level B	Compliance % Level B
Level A Criteria	Compliance % Level A	Compliance % Level A	Compliance % Level A	Compliance % Level A

Additionally, for farm members sampled, the group tool identifies **Recurring Non-compliances,** in the event that NC are found in 20% or more of the sampled farms, for the same criterion.

For the case of the Group Administrator, the compliance results are estimated at the Critical Criteria level, Level C, Level B and Level A the same way as for the farm member; however, **Systemic Non-compliances** can be issued, as follows:

Systemic Non-Compliances

For the criteria specific for the "Group Administrator", which are identified in the group tool in blue color shading (refer to list in Appendix 1), the compliance of the farm members sampled has an influence in the score of the Group administrator, since this is responsible of the implementation. In this way, when the sample of farm members has a recurring NC for one of these criteria, the tool will **automatically** issue, in the GA tab, a Non-Compliance to the Group administrator named "Systematic Non-Compliance".

In the case that the member farm sampled needs a verification audit related to criteria specific for the Group administrator, the verification audit will include the double of the number of farms where the NC was found (according to the Rules for Planning and Conducting Audits, section 5.4g). The sample will include the Group administrator, only if this, as facility has a NC.

Once the Group administrator and each one of the farms meet with the 100% of the applicable critical criteria and with the requirements established by the Rules for the Compliance with the Continuous Improvement Criteria (Table 1) for its respective year within the system, a certificate for an enterprise named "Group administrator" is issued.

2.3. Multi-Site Performance Evaluation System

In this model, the facilities of the group administrator (GA) as well as those of each multi-site farm chosen for sampling are audited. Each audited operation is assessed against all the applicable criteria within its scope and the checklist is completed accordingly; for example, the audit scope of a group administrator includes the infrastructure, staff and other areas of the human activities directly linked with the management of the certificate, and when applies, the GA is audited against the criteria related to natural ecosystems, processing areas, agrochemical management or any other element related to the impact areas that are directly managed by the GA.

For each operation audited, the compliance results are estimated at Critical Criteria Level, Level C, Level B and Level A, as follows:

$$Compliance \ \% = \frac{Criteria \ Met}{Applicable \ Criteria} x100$$

For example, for a multi-site group that is being audited against all the compliance levels, the scores per level will be estimated as follows:

Level	GM	Multi-site 1 Farm	Multi-site 2 Farm	Multi-site 3 Farm
Critical Criteria (CC)	Compliance % CC	Compliance % CC	Compliance % CC	Compliance % CC
Level C Criteria	Compliance % Level C	Compliance % Level C	Compliance % Level C	Compliance % Level C
Level B Criteria	Compliance % Level B	Compliance % Level B	Compliance % Level B	Compliance % Level B
Level A Criteria	Compliance % Level A	Compliance % Level A	Compliance % Level A	Compliance % Level A

Once the Group administrator and each one of the multi-site farms audited meet with the 100% of the applicable critical criteria and with the requirements established by the Rules for the Compliance with the Continuous Improvement Criteria (Table 1) for its respective year within the system, a certificate for an enterprise named "Group administrator" is issued.

For the multi-site model, the systemic non-compliances does not apply, that means that the behavior of the multi-site farms sampled does NOT affect the Group administrator score.

Appendix 1. List of Criteria specific for Group administrators.

The criteria specific for the "Group administrator" are identified with blue color shading in the audit checklist.

Principle 1	Principle 2	Principle 3	Principle 4
CC 1.4	C-2.6	A-3.14	CC 4.4
CC 1.5		B-3.17	CC 4.8
CC 1.6		C-3.23	CC 4.9
C-1.7		C-3.24	CC 4.12
C-1.8		B-3.26	CC 4.13
C-1.9		B-3.36	CC 4.14
B-1.10		C-3.38	CC 4.16
B-1.11		A-3.42	CC 4.20
B-1.12		A-3.43	C-4.21
		B-3.44	C-4.22
		B-3.45	B-4.24
		A-3.46	B-4.26
			A-4.27
			C-4.28
			C-4.29
			B-4.30
			B-4.31
			A-4.32
			A-4.33
			C-4.36
			C-4.37
			C-4.41
			C-4.42
			B-4.44
			B-4.46
			A-4.47