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17.0. Procedure For Maintaining, Extending, Suspending And Withdrawing of Certification.

1. Purpose

This procedure intends to establish a system for certification decision, grant extension of scope, modification / amendment /changes / renewal / reduction / suspension / withdrawal and transfer of certification related to organic standards / schemes in compliance with ISO 17065: 2012 and NSOP Standard.

2. Scope

The procedure is applicable to organic certification as per NSOP standards.

3. References

ISO -17065:2012

NSOP

4. Responsibilities

COO


5. Procedure of issue / grant of certificate

5.1 Criteria for grant of certificate

- Certification committee shall be sole responsible for authorization for approving grant of certification, suspension, reduction / extension and withdrawal of certificates based on the recommendations of the technical reviewer, auditor's recommendations and his own independent assessment.
- Certificates may be granted to sites which have had an audit against per NSOP standards and / or that meet (s) the following criteria as minimum-
- The audited site has met the requirements of that standard within the scope of certification sought.
- The site shall also have provided evidence of completion of major and minor non-conformities and a corrective action plan for the major and minors and these have been reviewed by technical reviewer .
- The client has a farm and / or manufacturing facility and / or trading facility for primary production, and / or processing and / or sale of organic commodities. Additionally, the audited client (to whom certificate is to be issued) is mandatorily a legal entity

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or is legally responsible (for example, audited organization is legally incorporated company under companies act).

- The client shall have completed at least one cycle of internal assessment to indicate the effective implementation of the system.
- Scope / activities of client are covered under accredited scope of MS Agroland Services Pvt. Ltd.
- The assessment was conducted by qualified competent Auditors/ Technical reviewer.
- The information provided by the Auditors is sufficient with respect to the certification requirements and the scope for certification. The auditor has reviewed, accepted, and verified the effectiveness of correction and corrective actions for all nonconformities that represent.
- Failure to fulfill one or more requirements of the Organic standard or a situation that raises significant doubt about the ability of the client's system to achieve its intended outputs may lead to the non-certification of the client.
- All completed documentation required for certification shall be maintained. The implementation period of applicable organic standard shall be as per the standard requirements.


5.2 Certification Decision

Upon successful review of the audit pack and corrective evidences by Technical reviewer, Technical Review Report along with following supporting documents are placed before certification committee for its review and decision-

- Audit report.
- Comments on the nonconformities and, where applicable, the correction and corrective actions taken by the client.
- Confirmation of the information provided to the MS ASPL used in the application review.
- Confirmation that the audit objectives have been achieved.
- Recommendation whether or not to grant certification, together with any conditions or observations.

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- MS Agroland Services Pvt. Ltd. shall make decisions on renewing certification based on the results of the recertification audit, as well as the results of the review of the system over the period of certification and complaints received from users of certification.

If the MS ASPL is not able to verify the implementation of corrections and corrective actions of any major nonconformity within 6 months after the last day of registration audit, the MS ASPL shall conduct another registration audit prior to recommending certification. The audit documentation, documentary evidence supporting corrective actions, registration audit and annual audit report, confirmation of the information provided in the application review and auditor’s report on corrective actions is assessed by the certification committee, and a decision will be made on whether a certificate should be issued. Certification committee shall take the minimum criteria documented in clause 6 of this procedure into account while granting/declining of certificate. The decision of committee meeting regarding the grant or decline shall be recorded on the Certification Decision Report. If the certification committee grants its decision for issuance of certificate, the decision along with certification decision meeting record shall be passed to administration for preparation of certificate.

Should certification not be granted outstanding issues will be identified and reported back to the site for further evidence to be provided that corrective actions have been completed and verified.

Should the site not follow this up then the audit report will be issued and the status of ‘**Not Approved**’ will be recorded.

5.3 Preparation/Drafting and Release of Certificate


The administration / Operation team shall prepare the certificate and print the certificate. If required, the draft certificate shall be referred to COO, CM or Quality Manager to avoid mistakes on the certificate.

The certificate shall carry the following information –

- Name and address of the company / operation to which the certificate is issued.
- Scope of certification e.g. Products / technologies / elements of the operation assessed.
- Exclusions (to scope) where applicable
- Certificate number
- Date of initial certification
- Date of reissue (if applicable)

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- Expiry Date of Certificate
- Authorizing signature of COO (or nominated personnel in absence of COO)
- Accreditation Mark (e.g. Logo)
- MS Agroland Services Pvt. Ltd. Certification Mark (i.e. Logo)

Certificates will be issued with an expiry date of years from the date of assessment and will be maintained provided the conditions stated in 6.4 of this procedure is kept being maintained. In case where COO is not physically available to sign on the certificate, a nominated authority (as authorized by COO) shall resume the authority of signing the printed certificates.

Invoiced certification charges shall have to be cleared by the audited organization before printed and signed certificate is updated on database and released to client organization representative. MS Agroland Services Pvt. Ltd. database shall be updated against the holder's name with Certificate number, the date of issue, the scope and category of assessment. Following update of the MS Agroland Services Pvt. Ltd. database, the certificate (along with audit report) shall be forwarded to audited organization representative at contact address recorded in the file. MS Agroland Services Pvt. Ltd. shall retain ownership of the certificate and in any eventuality of suspension, withdrawal and reduction in scope, the client shall have to mandatorily send back certificate (in original) MS Agroland Services Pvt. Ltd. as per the policy and terms of contractual agreement.

5.4. Continuation or Maintaining Certificate

Certified clients shall be allowed to maintain certificate based on continued demonstration of effective management system in all respective assessments and in the events of changes / modification or extension of scope.


5.5. Extension and Modification in Scope of Certificate

5.5.1 Extension or Modification in Scope of certificate on request

Certified clients, desirous of extension in scope certificate in the current scope certificate, shall apply to MS Agroland Services Pvt. Ltd. administrator / operation team. Such application shall be then reviewed by certification committee for merits in consultation with the audit team for the last assessment. Such reviews shall be undertaken to determine the condition (e.g. Documentary evidence, additional audit etc.) for extension of scope. This can also be done during the next planned surveillance audit.

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Following the grant of extension in scope, Issued certificate (in original) shall be recalled back from the audited client and a revised certificate shall be issued in place in accordance to procedure documented in clause 6.1 and 6.2 of this procedure.

5.5.2 Modification in the Scope Certificate due to change in management system - Changes to management system shall be reviewed by certification committee which will further evaluate the need for reassessment of a certified client in the event of changes significantly affecting the organization's Management System (such as the legal, commercial, organizational status or ownership, organization and management (e.g. key managerial, decision-making or technical staff), contact address and sites, scope of operations (process change) under the certified management system and major changes to the management system and processes.

Following the grant of modification in scope, Issued certificate (in original) shall be recalled back from the audited client and a revised certificate shall be issued in place in accordance to procedure documented in clause 6.1 and 6.2 of this procedure.

5.5.3 Modification due to changes in Certification requirements/process

When the Accreditation Body revises the requirements of certification body, MS Agroland Services Pvt. Ltd. shall follow transition plan as notified by Accreditation Body for the changeover with agreed time frame.


Quality Manager shall send due notice of any changes it intends to make in its requirements for certification to its client and to the accreditation body. The views expressed by interested parties are considered before deciding on the precise form and effective date of such changes. Based on the publication of the changed requirements, MS Agroland Services Pvt. Ltd. shall verify that each client carries out any necessary amendments to its procedure within reasonable time. Based on the changes expected Quality Manager shall decide the actions like a special audit as per documented procedure after successful completion of the audit, decisions would be taken according to clause 6.1 and 6.2 of this procedure.

5.4 Issuance of Certificate in case of Recertification

Upon completion of recertification audit, technical review shall take place and process for the certification decision. The certificate shall be issued on satisfactory completion of the process as outlined in audit process and also additional fulfilling the conditions stated in MS Agroland Services

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Pvt. Ltd. Quality Manual. This recertification shall be for an additional three years . Original certification date shall remain same. Current certification date shall be on or after the date of recertification decision is taken. Certification expiry date will be three years after the date of recertification.

6. Procedure for Suspension, Withdrawal and Reduction in Scope of Certificate

6.1 Procedure for suspension of Certificate

MS Agroland Services Pvt. Ltd. shall suspend certification in cases where–

1. Clients certified Organic has persistently or seriously failed to meet certification requirements for effectiveness of the management system,
 2. Certified client does not allow surveillance or recertification audits to be conducted within 3 months of due date,
 3. In the events of complaints
 4. Certified client voluntarily request for a suspension.
 5. Non-payment issues
 6. Misuse of Accreditation Body or MS Agroland Services Pvt. Ltd. 's certification Marks/logos.
- suspensions shall be authorized by certification committee and clients shall be notified in writing with reason and implication of suspension.


The standard period of suspension would be six months in which the client has to fulfill all conditions for revocation of suspension. On fulfillment of imposed conditions by the suspended sites within the six months timeline, the corrective action shall be reviewed by Quality Manager and pass his/her recommendation to revoke suspension or initiate withdrawal rules depending upon outcome of the review. In case of the failure on the part of the client to satisfy the conditions imposed for reinstatement of certification status, MS Agroland Services Pvt. Ltd. shall withdraw or reduce the scope of the certification based on the gravity of situation. Under imposition of suspension-

1. Client's management shall be rendered temporarily invalid
2. In the period of suspension, client shall refrain from further promotion of its certification (as per terms and conditions of the contract agreement)
3. Suspended status of the client shall be made publicly accessible (e.g. updated on website etc.)

6.2 Procedure for Withdrawal of certificate

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MS Agroland Services Pvt. Ltd. shall follow the documented procedure under 7.2 to effect the withdrawal process for certificate on following reasons–

1. Failure to resolve the issues (that have led to suspension of certification) in six months period,
2. Where entire management is impacted indirectly as result of the reduction in the scope.

The withdrawal of certificates may comprise of but may not be limited, to any of the following:

6.2.1. Routine circumstances:

Failure to maintain standards identified at the routine surveillance assessment and not corrected by submission of documentary evidence.

- Failure to allow a scheduled surveillance visit to be undertaken
- Voluntary withdrawal from the MS Agroland Services Pvt. Ltd. 's certification scheme.
- Failure to pay the appropriate certification fees as agreed prior to undertaking the assessment.

6.2.2. Extraordinary circumstances


Complaints regarding the failure of the company to comply with the requirements of the relevant standard

- Deliberate, misleading use of the Certificate
- Deliberate or misleading claims relating to the scope, or level of certificate held.
- The certified client requests a suspension of the certificate.
- Falsification of any nature.
- Failure to comply with terms of contractual agreement.
- COO shall have authority to authorize withdrawal of the certificate on the recommendation of certification committee . The decision shall be taken based on investigation of Quality Manager and certification manager. Based on need for decision requirement, quality manager and certification manager may advise.

COO to authorize for investigation audit based upon the outcome of such investigation, decision regarding the withdrawal may be initiated and client shall be notified of the withdrawal process. The client shall further be given specified time to take corrective action and certificate withdrawal process shall be initiated in the event of failure to respond with an acceptable programme for corrective action within the time period specified, or to consent to an assessment will lead to withdrawal of the

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certificate. In the event where certified site is already under suspension for the past six months, no further time shall be given further before initiation of withdrawal. Following withdrawal, the status shall be made public by updating the database. Issued certificate (in original) shall be recalled back and held in the file. The client shall right to appeal and shall be guided for filing appeal process upon request.

Where a client’s certificate has been withdrawn and there has been no rectification of issues within the specified time scale or their certificate has expired, then the only way for a client to reinstate their certificate is by arranging a re-audit.

6.3 Procedure for reduction in scope

Failure to resolve the issues (that have led to suspension of certification) in six months period shall result in reduction of scope of certification to exclude the parts not meeting the requirements. Such reductions shall be in line with the requirements of the standard used for certification. In case where reduction in scope is likely impact the entire organic, reduction shall not be permitted and in this eventuality withdrawal shall be initiated.

Certification committee shall have authority to authorize reduction of the scope of the certificate on the recommendation of certification manager and Quality Manager. MS Agroland Services Pvt. Ltd. shall correctly update the reduction in scope status upon request to any party. The reduction in status of the client shall also be made publicly accessible.

7. Transfer of Certification

For transfer of certification from MS ASPL to other certification body and from other certification body to MASPL define in the Procedure for transfer of operator – ASPL-QD-52

8. Records

Record Name	Responsibility	Location	Period
ASPL-ICD-31-Data base of certificates issued and withdrawn.	Quality Manager	MS Agroland Services Pvt. Ltd.	05 years
ASPL- ICD-10- Certification Decision Form	Quality Manager	MS Agroland Services Pvt. Ltd.	05 years

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