



**DEPARTMENT OF STANDARDS MALAYSIA
SCHEME FOR THE ACCREDITATION OF CERTIFICATION BODIES
(The ACB Scheme)**

ACB-MALAYSIAN SUSTAINABLE PALM OIL (MSPO)

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**STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION REQUIREMENTS
FOR CERTIFICATION BODIES
OPERATING
OIL PALM MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATION
UNDER THE
MALAYSIAN SUSTAINABLE PALM OIL (MSPO)
CERTIFICATION SCHEME**

Authority to Issue

Director General
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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document specifies the requirements for stakeholder consultation by accredited Certification Bodies (CBs) operating oil palm management certification programme under the Malaysian Sustainable Palm Oil (MSPO) Certification Scheme.
- 1.2 All CBs accredited by the Department of Standards Malaysia (Standards Malaysia) shall comply with the requirements of this document.

2. PURPOSE

- 2.1 The purpose of this document is to prescribe the methodology to ensure that the CB carries out stakeholder consultation that is sufficient to provide an assurance that the requirements of the certification standard for oil palm management under the MSPO Certification Scheme have been complied with by the management unit.
- 2.2 The document also provides clarification to the CBs and stakeholder groups as to the nature and extent of stakeholder consultation required during the audit of the management unit.
- 2.3 Stakeholder consultation is one of the means of verification of the requirements listed in the standards. Stakeholder engagement is the process of engagement with the relevant stakeholder groups to gauge the level of compliance against the requirements stipulated in the MSPO certification standards.
- 2.4 Both national and local stakeholders can provide relevant information as to the management unit's compliance with the requirements of the standards in terms of the social, environmental, occupational, safety, health or quality aspects. These stakeholder groups shall include relevant parties directly affected by the management and operations in the management unit that is being audited by the CB.

3. NORMATIVE REFERENCE

- 3.1 The following referenced document is indispensable for the application of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.
- ISO/IEC 17021-1 – Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems – Part 1: Requirements.

4. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- 4.1. The CB is required to ensure that the relevant stakeholder groups have been identified prior to and during the initial and recertification audit.
- 4.2. The CB shall consult the relevant stakeholder groups which can provide related information as to an applicant's compliance with the environmental, social and economic requirements of the MSPO certification standards for oil palm management under the MSPO Certification Scheme.
- 4.3. The CB shall develop and document its methodology for conducting stakeholder consultation. The methodology should include the following:
- a. the stakeholder groups consulted are appropriate to the scale, intensity, complexity and impacts of the oil palm management unit being audited;
 - b. the stakeholder groups have the opportunity to present their points of view to the auditor(s) in confidence; and
 - c. the information and opinions given by consulted stakeholder groups are substantiated with documented evidence and evaluated objectively.

5. IDENTIFICATION OF STAKEHOLDER GROUPS AND INFORMATION FOR STAKEHOLDER GROUPS PRIOR TO AND DURING THE AUDIT OF THE MANAGEMENT UNIT

- 5.1. The CB shall have procedures to identify the relevant stakeholder groups that are likely to have information related to the audit for certification, and/or that may be able to put the CB in contact with other relevant stakeholder groups.
- 5.2. The CB shall aim to ensure that any stakeholder group that has information related to the compliance of the oil palm management unit with the requirements of the MSPO certification standards, from relevant parties are considered.
- 5.3 During the audit of the management unit, the stakeholder groups to be contacted directly by the CB shall include, but not limited to:
- a) Relevant government departments and agencies that are involved with respect to land and other plantation related matters at the national, regional or management unit level;
 - b) NGOs that are active in respect of social or environmental aspects of management in and around the vicinity of the oil palm plantation to be audited, as appropriate;
 - c) Representatives of indigenous peoples and local communities that are staying in and around the vicinity of the oil palm plantation to be audited, as appropriate;
 - d) Labour organisations and plantation workers' unions; and
 - e) Contractors who provide services to the management unit operations to be audited.

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- 5.4 The CB shall contact relevant stakeholder groups at the scale of organisation and its operation as follows:
- a) For large management units (each estate exceeding 500 ha), organisations which operate at the national level and/or state level in the vicinity of the oil palm plantation;
 - b) For smaller management units (estates below 500 ha), only local organisations, interest groups or individuals;
 - c) For palm oil mills, organisations which operate at the national level and/or state level in the vicinity of the palm oil mills.
- 5.5 The communication/consultation made between the CB and the stakeholders should be in a language understood by the stakeholders.
- 5.6 The CB shall take necessary step to inform the stakeholder groups identified in para 4.3 above on the following at least 30 days before the start date of the initial and recertification audit:
- a) that an audit for oil palm management certification is due to take place;
 - b) the start and end dates of the audit;
 - c) the name and location of the management unit, and the total area of the oil palm plantation to be audited;
 - d) that the CB is seeking the views and opinions of the stakeholder groups with regard to any oil palm management issue related to the management unit so as to determine the level of compliance of the management unit with the requirements of the certification standard;
 - e) how the stakeholder groups may contact the CB in confidence to let the CB know of their views and opinions;

- f) that the CB's audit team will make arrangements to enable the stakeholder groups to meet with the team during the audit of the management unit concerned, if necessary;
 - g) awareness of the management unit's mechanisms for the resolution of disputes with the management unit's stakeholders, complaints or grievances; and
 - h) that the source of any information provided will be confidential to the CB carrying out the audit of the management unit concerned. Any disclosure of the information provided shall be carried out with prior consent of the stakeholder group concerned.
- 5.7 The CB may employ appropriate means to inform the stakeholder groups of the information as specified in para 4.6 above. The examples of the way to inform the relevant stakeholders groups can be by:
- i. phone, e-mail or letter;
 - ii. website of the CB;
 - iii. notice published in the national, regional and/or local press where the audit of the management unit concerned is due to take place;
 - iv. local radio announcements;
 - v. announcement posted on notice boards for issues of public interest in and around the management unit;
 - vi. announcements in village shops or places of worship or local community halls; and
 - vii. announcement by the manager of the management unit concerned using existing and ongoing mechanisms for consultation between the management unit manager and local stakeholder groups.

6 CONSULTATION DURING AUDIT

- 6.1 During the stage 2 and recertification audit of the management unit, the CB shall carry out stakeholder consultation to ensure continued compliance with the requirements of the certification standards. However, stakeholders'

consultation during surveillance audit may be limited to those stakeholders who have raised concerns, complaints or disputes prior to the audit.

- 6.2 Consultation is conducted to obtain direct and factual feedback or observations with regard to the compliance of the management unit concerned with the requirements of the certification standard. The CB shall carry out such consultation as part of the audit of the management unit concerned. The consultation shall include a sufficient variety and number of people affected by or involved in the management of the management unit concerned to evaluate the range of situations relevant to the MSPO certification standard. As a guide, the audit may require consultation with the stakeholder groups as listed in **Appendix I**.
- 6.3 Consultation with the stakeholder groups shall be carried out in confidence, if requested.
- 6.4 The consultation techniques employed shall be appropriate to the stakeholder groups to be consulted. Examples of consultation techniques as well as stakeholder groups are as per Appendix 1.
- 6.5 Where concerns are raised by the stakeholder, the CB shall have mechanisms to inform the stakeholder that their concerns have been addressed.

7 EVALUATING THE INFORMATION AND FEEDBACK RECEIVED FROM CONSULTATION

- 7.1 Information provided by the stakeholder groups shall wherever possible be during the audit process. Examples of information could be in the form of photographs, site observation, newspaper articles, records of interviews etc.
- 7.2 Information provided by the stakeholder groups before and during the conduct of audit shall be evaluated objectively to determine whether it constitutes evidence of a non-compliance with any of the requirements of the certification standard.

- 7.3 The comments and feedback received after the completion of the audit shall be evaluated by the CB to assess the significance of the issue(s) raised on the management unit audited. The CB shall solicit a written feedback from the management unit concerned, if required.

8 REPORTING

- 8.1 The audit report for oil palm management certification of the management unit concerned shall include a comprehensive record of any evidence of compliance or non-compliance with the requirements of the certification standard.
- 8.2 The CB shall not identify individual stakeholders or stakeholder groups in the audit report without their prior informed consent.
- 8.3 The CB shall include in the audit report the information and comments received from, and concerns raised by, the individual stakeholders or stakeholder groups, together with the CB's response.

Appendix I – Examples related to Stakeholder Consultation (Informative)

1. EXAMPLES OF STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

The following list provides examples of some of the stakeholder groups that may need to be consulted to evaluate compliance with specific aspects of the certification standard for oil palm management used under the MSPO Certification Scheme.

- a) Plantation owner/manager
- b) Landowner
- c) Statutory bodies or other government departments/agencies with legal mandate over the management unit
- d) Related government departments/agencies
- e) Representatives/members of local community/indigenous people who have tenure and/or use rights in the management unit concerned
- f) NGOs that are involved and/or have an interest in respect of social or environmental aspects of management in the management unit concerned.
- g) Employees of the management unit and its contractors
- h) Labour organisations or unions of plantation sector/plantation workers
- i) Users and processors of oil palm plantation products (palm oil processing industry)
- j) Industry associations

2. EXAMPLES OF CONSULTATION TECHNIQUES:

- a) direct arrangements for individual or group meetings at the time of the audit;
- b) individual or group meetings arranged through the help of a local interest group or organisation;
- c) *ad-hoc* interviews with managers, employees, contractors, local communities and indigenous peoples during the field audits in the management unit concerned;
- d) structured interviews by telephone at the time of the audit; and
- e) contact by mail or e-mail with a request for written views and comments to a pre-determined set of specific questions.

*** End of document ***

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