



Step Who

## PREPARATION FOR CERTIFICATION

1

### Organization of a 4C Unit

- ME Study the 4C Certification System <sup>1</sup>
- ME Accept responsibility for the farmers group, or, the 4C unit <sup>2</sup>
- ME Identify all participants of the 4C unit, together with the farmers<sup>3</sup>
- ME Illustrate the flow of coffee within the 4C unit <sup>4</sup>
- ME Communicate to all BPs the sustainability and certification requirements of the 4C Certification System <sup>5</sup>
- ME Obtain the acceptance of participation in the 4C unit by all BPs<sup>6</sup>
- ME Diagnose the compliance level of all BPs to the 4C Code of Conduct <sup>7</sup>
- ME Confirm the exclusion of UAPs in the 4C unit
- ME Implement the principles of the 4C Code of Conduct within the 4C unit
- ME Design an IMS for the 4C unit <sup>8</sup>
- ME Implement the IMS within the 4C unit <sup>9</sup>

## CERTIFICATION PROCESS

2

### Application for a 4C Audit

- ME Select a 4C Services approved CB<sup>10</sup>
- ME Fill in the application documents and send them to the selected CB<sup>11</sup>
- CB Register the application in the 4C portal
- ME Confirm the application in the 4C portal
- 4C Services Validate the application process in the 4C portal
- CB Evaluate and approve the application documents
- CB Assess risk and prepare the audit plan
- CB Register the audit plan in the 4C portal
- 4C Services Validate for on-site audit in the 4C portal

3

### On-site 4C Audit

- CB Audit the ME's and BPs' compliance to the 4C Code of Conduct onsite using the 4C pertinent documents<sup>12</sup>
- ME Prepare the IP and present it to the CB either at the closing meeting or in the following days
- CB Evaluate the IP either at the closing meeting or in the following days

## Notes

(1) 4C Code of Conduct, 4C Certification Regulations, the 4C Commercial Guidelines, and the 4C Communication Guidelines.

(2) A 4C Unit is inclusive and covers all types of single / groups of farmers and any type of coffee production / process facility.

(3) Participants in a 4C Unit are called BPs.

(4) The FC illustrates the flow of coffee in the unit.

(5) The requirements in the 4C Code of Conduct include, the IMS, 10 UAPs, 27 principles and the 4C certification regulations.

(6) Mutual commitment is required and should be evidenced.

(7) The ME does periodic self-assessments of compliance of itself and its BPs to the 4C Code of Conduct.

(8) The requirements for the IMS of the 4C System are described in the 4C Certification Regulations.

(9) The basic level of IMS is accepted during the first cycle (3 years) in the 4C System. Thereafter, the intermediate level is required.

(10) An updated list of approved CBs is available on 4C Services website.

(11) 4C certification application document templates are available in 4C Services website (BPM, FC, IP).

(12) Pertinent documents are the latest version of the 4C audit report template, evidence, BPM, FC, and IP. These last three are audited during onsite audit and corrected where necessary.

# 4C Certification – Step by Step



Step	Who	
4		<b>Audit Report Evaluation</b>
	CB	Evaluate and approve the audit report and IP together with all pertinent documents and evidences <sup>13</sup>
5		<b>Certification Decision</b>
	CB	Recommend to 4C Services a certification decision and upload in the 4C portal all pertinent documents and information <sup>14</sup>
	4C Services	Validate the certification decision in the 4C portal

## MAINTENANCE OF THE CERTIFICATE

6		<b>Continuous Improvement</b>
	ME	Define and measure sustainability improvement actions according to the 4C Code of Conduct
	ME	Apply the IP within the 4C unit
	ME	Measure the results and impact of the IP
	ME	Prepare for a follow-up audit, if required <sup>15</sup>

7		<b>Annual Update – end of year 1</b>
	ME	Send to 4C Services an updated set of documents <sup>16</sup>
	4C Services	Evaluate and approve the AU1
	ME	Receive an approval from 4C Services

8		<b>Annual Update – end of year 2</b>
	ME	Send to 4C Services an updated set of documents <sup>17</sup>
	4C Services	Evaluate and approve the AU2
	ME	Receive an approval from 4C Services

9		<b>Application for Renewal of Certificate</b>
	ME	Restart from step 1

(13) If necessary, the evaluator at the certification body will contact the ME to obtain further details or clarification.

(14) A positive decision results in a 4C certificate, which is valid for 3 years, and may be subject to a follow-up audit at some point during the 3-year cycle. The negative decision results in no certificate.

(15) A follow-up audit requires a new application for an audit. Restart on step 2. If the follow-up audit fails, the 4C certificate is suspended.

(16 & 17) BPM, FC, and IP if it was requested at the time of receiving the certification decision.

## ABBREVIATIONS

<b>AU1</b>	<b>Annual Update 1</b>
<b>AU2</b>	<b>Annual Update 2</b>
<b>BP(s)</b>	<b>Business Partner(s)</b>
<b>BPM</b>	<b>Business Partner Map</b>
<b>CB</b>	<b>Certification Body</b>
<b>FC</b>	<b>Flow Chart</b>
<b>IMS</b>	<b>Internal Management System</b>
<b>IP</b>	<b>Improvement Plan</b>
<b>ME</b>	<b>Managing Entity</b>
<b>UAPs</b>	<b>Unacceptable Practices</b>