



## **Section 5**

**QUALITY COUNCIL OF INDIA**

**India Good Agricultural Practices (IndG.A.P.) Certification Scheme**

**Requirements for Certification Bodies**

## Section 5

### Requirements for Certification Bodies

#### 1. Scope

- 1.1. This document describes the requirements the Certification Bodies (CBs) are expected to meet in order to be approved under the IndG.A.P. Certification Scheme (hereafter referred to as the Scheme) for undertaking certification.
- 1.2. This document elaborates on the requirements specified in ISO/IEC 17065:2012, as applicable to the Certification Bodies operating the IndG.A.P. Scheme for agricultural produce and also specifies some IndG.A.P. Scheme specific additional requirements that the certification bodies operating this scheme shall need to fulfil.
- 1.3. In order to be able to offer certification as stated above the certification bodies need to be accredited by the National Accreditation Board for Certification Bodies (NABCB) as per ISO 17065 and the additional requirements specified herein.
- 1.4. Certification Bodies that are accredited to ISO Guide 65 shall be eligible for approval under the Scheme till the transition period as decided by NABCB post which they need to be compliant to ISO 17065. They shall meet the additional requirements specified herein. Any certification body accredited for GLOBALG.A.P. certification would be provisionally approved subject to meeting all requirements specified herein within transition time to ISO 17065.

#### 2. Objectives

- 2.1. The additional criteria described in this document shall form the necessary adjunct to the requirements prescribed in ISO 17065 and will also need to be complied with by the Certification Bodies, in addition to the generic requirements prescribed in ISO 17065:2012 and the Certification process requirements prescribed in the document "IndG.A.P. - Certification Process" (Section 4).
- 2.2. The clause numbers in this document are aligned to the main clause numbers of ISO/IEC 17065:2011 for the purpose of ease of usage. These are also prefixed with the word "A" for the purpose of indicating that these are additional.

3. This section consists of majorly two components. One specific to scheme components and the other one specific to the systems requirements. The systems requirements are given in the following parts which is prefixed as A.

#### **A.4 General Requirements**

##### **A.4.1 Legal and contractual matters**

###### **A.4.1.1 Legal responsibility**

- A.4.1.1.1** In addition to the requirements specified in clause 4.1.1 of ISO/IEC 17065:2012 the following requirements shall also apply to QCI in the prescribed format and

pay applicable fee. The applicant CB shall apply to the SO (QCI), send a completed application form in English and pay an evaluation fee (according to the latest version of the. Fee Table maintained in the website) to the IndG.A.P. Secretariat for initiating the approval process.

- A.4.1.1.2** The accreditation shall be granted to a legal entity, who can be legally held responsible for its work irrespective of whether the entire organization or a part of it performs the certification functions.
- A.4.1.1.3** The certification body shall be responsible for and shall retain authority for its decisions relating to certification. This includes the granting, maintaining, renewing, extending, reducing, suspending and withdrawing of certification.
- A 4.1.1.4** The accreditation body to which the CB applies shall be a signatory of the IAF Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (MLA) for product certification (IAF Product MLA) with GLOBALG.A.P. sub-scope of the MLA (level 4 and 5). In addition, the AB shall have signed the 'Memorandum of Understanding' (MoU) with GLOBALG.A.P.
- A 4.1.1.5** The accreditation document issued by the AB to the CB shall clearly state the extent of the accreditation sub-scope(s) and/or approved modified checklist it has been approved for, The GLOBALG.A.P. normative documents and its version, limitation to Option 1 (if applicable), territorial limitation (if applicable)
- A 4.1.1.6** An initial AB assessment of a IndG.A.P. scope (Crops) shall require at least one witness assessment (of one sub-scope) within each applied scope.
- A 4.1.1.7** The AB shall only grant the accreditation for Option 2 (including Option 1 multisite operation with QMS) if the AB has completed at least one QMS audit witness assessment regardless of the scope or sub-scope.
- A 4.1.1.7** The extension of the accreditation to new sub-scope(s) within an already accredited scope shall include at least the assessment of the personnel competency and a new witness assessment is not necessary. Benchmarked schemes and AMCs are considered as equivalent sub-scopes (for the respective sub-scope).
- A 4.1.1.8** The AB shall, during its surveillance program, witness all sub-scopes in at least a 4-year period, but not every scope/sub-scope combination every year by default. Selection shall take into consideration and preference shall be given to the Option 2 and the Option 1 multisite with QMS certificates of the CB. The AB shall justify the increase of witness assessment frequency.
- A 4.1.1.9** The AB shall issue a confirmation of application including the applied standard scope and sub-scope to the applicant CB. The CB shall issue certificate in compliance with the scope of external inspections.
- A 4.1.1.10** In case a CB requests the termination of the 'IndG.A.P. License and Certification Agreement', the CB shall send a formal termination request to the IndG.A.P. Secretariat. The CB shall inform all clients that the re-certification has to be carried out by another CB.

**A 4.1.11** There is no need for the CB to modify or update anything in the IndG.A.P. Database. If the products are not re-accepted for the next cycle, once the current certificate expires, the new CB will be able to accept the UNI of the producers and re-certify.

**A 4.1.1.12** From a specific date onwards, the CB shall be blocked in the IndG.A.P. Database and cannot register new clients or re-issue and extend their valid certificates. The CB shall contact the IndG.A.P. Sectt for any changes such as modification of existing certificates, shortening of the certificate validity, changing of the access rights of existing producers, amendments in the master data, complaints, etc. The CB shall inform the accreditation body. The CB shall be listed on the IndG.A.P. website until their last certificate expires. A comment shall be added that the CB cannot contract/certify producers and will terminate its IndG.A.P. approval on a specific date. The Sectt. shall decide if the certification body license fee applies for the current and/or following year and whether any further training shall be attended.

#### **A.4.1.2 Certification agreement**

**A.4.1.2.1** The certification body shall ensure that its certification agreement requires that the client comply with the following requirements in addition to those specified in ISO 17065:2012. This also includes that QCI (SO) can also be part of the assessment process.

**A.4.1.2.2** The certification body shall ensure their certification agreement require that the client comply with the following:

- a) always fulfil the certification requirements including product requirement as specified in the document “Certification Criteria – IndG.A.P. Scheme”, the certification process described in the document “Certification Process – IndG.A.P. Scheme” and the requirements specified in this document, as applicable and the changes in them as communicated by the certification body, time to time always fulfil the certification requirements including produce requirement and changes communicated by the certification body;
- b) the certified produce and its processes always fulfil the requirements;
- c) the liability on account of non-conforming processes shall rest with the certified producer
- d) the client makes all necessary arrangements for the conduct of the initial and recertification onsite evaluation, onsite surveillance valuations (announced and unannounced), onsite special/short notice evaluations for the purpose of complaints investigation, etc. It shall also include provisions for examining documentation and records, and access to the relevant location(s), area(s), and personnel, client's subcontractors; and for investigation of complaints;



- e) makes claims regarding certification only in respect of the scope for which certification has been granted;
- f) does not use its certification in such a manner as to bring the certification body into disrepute and does not make any statement regarding its certification which the certification body may consider misleading or unauthorized;
- g) upon suspension or cancellation/withdrawal of certification, discontinues its use of all advertising matter that contains any reference thereto and returns as required by the certification scheme any certification documents and takes any other measure;
- h) endeavors to ensure that no certificate or report nor any part thereof is used in a misleading manner;
- i) if the client provides copies of the certification documents to others, the documents shall be reproduced in their entirety
- j) in making reference to its GAP produce certification in communication media such as documents, brochures or advertising, complies with the requirements of the certification body if applicable;
- k) uses the certification mark only on produce it has found to comply with the requirements if applicable;
- l) applies a mark to each certified produce, or to produce packaging, or on information accompanying each produce if applicable;
- m) keeps a record of all complaints made known to the client relating to the compliance with certification requirement and to make these records available to the certification body when requested, and
  - i) takes appropriate action with respect to such complaints and any deficiencies found in produces, processes or services that affect compliance with the requirements for certification;
  - ii) Document the actions taken.
  - iii) Verification by the certification body of (l) is performed only when certification scheme mandates it.
- n) The client shall inform the certification body, without delay, of matters that may affect ability to conform to the certification requirements. These shall include changes in:
  - i. the legal, commercial, organizational status or ownership,
  - ii. organization and management (e.g. key managerial, decision-making or technical staff),
  - iii. contact address and production sites/premises,
  - iv. modifications to the major inputs or other materials with potential to affect the produce quality and safety; framing practices or the production methods and in the internal control measures which are significant in nature.
  - v. any other information indicating that the produce may no longer comply with the requirements of the IndG.A.P. certification criteria and the IndG.A.P. certification scheme.
- j) The producer/producer group representative shall sign or confirm the inspection and audit outcome during the closing meeting. A documented

or electronic confirmation by the producer is equal to the 'signature' of the producer.

- A.4.1.2.3** Records kept by the client in respect of the complaints received and their resolution shall be verified by the CB during the surveillance visits to the client's premises.
- A.4.1.2.4** The client shall agree for re-audit/evaluation by the certification body as per the requirement of the certification scheme, in the event of changes significantly affecting its capability to comply with the requirements of the certification scheme.
- A.4.1.2.5** The client shall also agree for re-evaluation by the CB, in the event of changes in the IndG.A.P. Certification criteria.
- A.4.1.2.6** In addition to the requirements as specified above the requirements specified vide clauses A.4.1.3 and A.4.5 shall also be part of the agreement with the client.

#### **A.4.1.3 Use of certificates and marks of conformity**

- A.4.1.3.1** The following requirements are additional to those stated in clause 4.1.3 of ISO/IEC 17065:2012.
- A.4.1.3.2** The certification body shall ensure that the Certification mark is affixed only on transaction documents and produce that are covered under the scope of the certificate. The certification body should not allow the accreditation mark to be used on certified produce.
- A.4.1.3.3** The Certification body shall document clear instructions regarding appropriate use of certification mark and for providing information about certification status by its clients. It shall also identify the aspects that would be considered as misleading and unauthorized as relevant to the IndG.A.P. certification scheme. The certification agreement shall make appropriate cross references to the above document, so as to make it legally binding.
- A.4.1.3.4** The certification body shall ensure that the applicants are not applying the Certification mark on documents prior to grant of certification.
- A.4.1.3.5** A certification body shall have procedures to ensure that its IndG.A.P. certification marks are not used in a way that may be likely to confuse or mislead the market. In case, as per the requirements of the IndG.A.P. certification scheme, the certified producer is allowed to include the Mark in off-site products, then the certification body shall have clear procedures to ensure that the advertisement and other claims made by the producer does not create an incorrect impression regarding the certification status of the other produce not covered under the scope of certification.
- A.4.1.3.6** The certification body should have documented procedures to ensure a traceable link from its mark to the relevant certification requirements.
- A.4.1.3.7** The certification body shall have documented procedures for the use of its mark (see also ISO/IEC 17030), and the measures to be adopted in case of non-compliances to specified requirements with respect to use of certification mark, misuse, including false claims as to certification and false use of certification body and accreditation body marks and these shall be part of its agreement with the certified clients (IndG.A.P. producers). The procedure shall include the process steps and the actions (including penal actions as relevant), the certification body intends to take in the event of observing



misuse/misleading use of IndG.A.P. certificates and marks. The above aspects shall be part of its agreement with the certified clients.

**A.4.1.3.8** In case the Certification Body runs more than one product certification schemes, then it is may have a procedure specifying generic requirements common to all schemes and in line with the requirements of ISO/IEC 17065:2012 and the specific requirements as specified for IndG.A.P. certification scheme.

**A.4.1.3.9** If a certification body incorrectly claims accredited status for certificates issued before appropriate accreditation has been granted, the accreditation body shall require it subsequently to withdraw them and also impose any other sanctions as deemed appropriate.

**A.4.1.3.10** The certification body intending to certify a benchmarked standard, that is, IndG.A.P. to GLOBALG.A.P. shall show proof of approval by the scheme or scheme owner, that is, QCI.

**A.4.1.3.11** The certification body shall complete the steps below before issuing any accredited IndG.A.P. certificates or operating any accredited IndG.A.P. Add-On and before final approval can be granted.

No.	Activity	Timelines
A.4.1.3.11.1	Time period after provisional approval for accreditation	6 (six) months after provisional approval (extension of 6 months can be granted after due justification to scheme owner)

*Note: If accreditation has not been achieved within a maximum period of one year, the provisional approval may be withdrawn, and the CB shall not appear as provisionally approved on the QCI website and cannot issue any IndG.A.P. certificates, unless the CB submits justification for the delay. The CB may re-apply for provisional approval again. Alternatively, any CB which is not accredited shall not take up any project that seeks benchmarked certificate.*

**A.4.1.3.12** Once accreditation has been obtained, the certification body shall submit a copy of the accreditation certificate to the scheme owner and in case of benchmarking to the GLOBALG.A.P. to the GLOBALG.A.P. secretariat.

**A.4.1.3.13** Only after the CB has been accredited to ISO/IEC 17065 with the applicable IndG.A.P. (or benchmarked) sub-scope can the CB place the IndG.A.P. trademark/logo on the certificate according to the applicable IndG.A.P. certificate template, which shall be followed at all times.

**A 4.1.4 Responsibility for certification decisions -**

**A 4.1.4.1** The certification body shall be responsible for and shall retain authority for its decisions relating to certification. This includes the granting, maintaining, recertifying, extending, reducing, suspending and withdrawing of certification.

**A 4.1.4.2** The certification body shall only grant authority to make a certification decision, or any decision in the handling of complaints and appeals, to an individual or group that is impartial with respect to the produce.

**A 4.1.4.3** The person who makes the certification decision or at least one member of the certification committee of the CB shall comply with auditor qualifications as set out in evaluator competence clause.

**A 4.2 Management of impartiality** - In addition to the requirements as specified in clauses 4.2 ISO17065:2012, the following requirements shall also apply.

**A.4.2.1** The top management's commitment to impartiality shall be demonstrated through:

- a) Documenting the certification body's policy on safeguarding impartiality and ensuring that it is understood at all levels of the organization. Implementing good practices like establishing "Code of Conduct" and requiring internal and external personnel to abide by it.
- b) Having a defined institutional structure and impartiality policy and procedures, appropriate implementation of these policy and procedures and operation and conduct of its activities and personnel.
- c) Having a system that ensures appropriate management of conflict of interest for ensuring objectivity of its certification functions.
- d) Taking action to respond to any threats to its impartiality arising from the actions of other parts of the organization, persons outside of the organization, subcontractors, related bodies or other bodies or organizations.
- e) Maintaining a professional environment and culture in the organization that supports a behaviour of all personnel that is consistent with impartiality.
- f) Making available to public through its website, its policy on impartiality.

**A.4.2.2** The certification body shall establish and implement a documented procedure for analysing threats against impartiality of the certification body. The analysis shall cover all existing potential sources of conflict of interests, arising certification body's activities (its own activities, activities of the related bodies and activities of personnel it employs) and from its relationships (organizational as well as individual's).

The certification body shall ensure that a conflict of interest analysis is carried out at least once annually and whenever a significant change occurs in the certification body's activities, such as changes in the organizational structure and business activities or of the legal status and mergers with, or acquisitions of other organizations.

*Note 1: A relationship that threatens the impartiality of the certification body can be based on ownership, governance, management, personnel, shared resources, finances, contracts, marketing and payment of a sales commission or other inducement for the referral of new clients, etc.*

*Note 2: While carrying out the conflict of interest analysis the following risks, but not limited to them, shall be considered:*

- a) Self-interest threats: threats that arise from a person or body acting in their own interest. A concern related to certification, as a threat to impartiality, is financial self-interest.
- b) Self-review threats: threats that arise from a person or body reviewing the work done by themselves. Certification of a client, whose product was designed or who was provided service regarding internal evaluation by the CB or the personnel it employs would be a self-review threat.
- c) Familiarity (or trust) threats: threats that arise from a person or body being too familiar with or trusting of another person instead of seeking audit evidence. Repeat evaluation of a client by the same evaluator/auditor, over and over again may also present a familiarity threat.



- d) Intimidation threats: threats that arise from a person or body having a perception of being coerced openly or secretly, such as a threat to be replaced or reported to a supervisor.

**A.4.2.3** When a relationship poses an unacceptable threat to impartiality then certification shall not be provided. Some of these situations requiring prohibitions as mitigation measures have been described vide clause 4.2.6 of ISO 17065:2012. These shall be implemented together with the additional ones provided in this document.

**A.4.2.4** Further, where risks to impartiality have been identified as a result of risk analysis (clause 4.2.3), the CB shall establish and implement a documented procedure for mitigation of threats against impartiality. These shall be through any of the following mitigation means:

1. Not provide certification, since the situation poses unacceptable threat to impartiality – prohibition.
2. Carry out the certification in a restricted manner based on disclosures
3. Minimize the risks on the basis of clearly defined control points to ensure mitigation.

The impartiality risk analysis together with mitigation strategies should be made available to the Impartiality Committee (see A.5.2.1)

**A.4.2.5** In addition to those prescribed in clause 4.2.6 of ISO 17065 the other type of product related consultancy services that shall be considered are barriers to certification would be participation in an active creative manner in the ongoing development and monitoring/improvement of the product, process, or service, for example;

- a) providing specific support/advise on elements of the design.
- b) preparing or producing manual, handbooks or procedures.
- c) involvement in the supplier's monitoring, review and decision-making process applicable to the product.

**A.4.2.6** In addition to the requirement specified in ISO 17065 clause 4.2.6, the following shall also apply:

- a) The certification body shall not have any relationship with the client except third party conformity assessment. There shall be a minimum separation of 2 years before application can be entertained, in case the certification body has had relationship which is generic (not IndG.A.P. certification scheme) in nature, for example, internal audit training, etc. then the certification body shall carry out impartiality risk analysis before entertaining the application. Purpose of risk analysis shall be to ascertain if, longer separation than two years is required from the last date of end of relationship as stated above or that the risk is of such unacceptable level so as to prohibit certification by the certification body. Based on the risk analysis appropriate decision shall be taken and the justification for the same shall be recorded.
- b) In case the related body is engaged in any of the activities as specified in clause 4.2.6 of ISO 17065:2012 or activities like management system consultancy, internal auditing or training, then certification shall not be provided to the relevant client to whom these services may have been provided by the related body. There shall be a minimum separation of 2 years, in case the related body has had relationship which is generic (not IndG.A.P. certification scheme) in nature, for example, internal audit training, etc. then the certification body shall carry out impartiality risk analysis before entertaining the application. Purpose of risk analysis shall be to ascertain if, longer separation than two years is required from the last date of end of relationship as stated above or that the risk is of such unacceptable level so as to prohibit certification by the certification body.

Based on the risk analysis appropriate decision shall be taken and the justification for the same shall be recorded.

- c) If the certification body and its client are both part of government, the two bodies shall not directly report to a person or group having operational responsibility for both. The certification body shall, in view of the impartiality requirement, be able to demonstrate how it deals with a case where both itself and its client are part of government. The certification body shall demonstrate that the applicant receives no advantage and that impartiality is assured.
- d) The certification body shall not certify a product on which a client has received consultancy or internal evaluations, where the relationship between the consultancy organization and the certification body poses an unacceptable threat to the impartiality of the certification body. Allowing a minimum period of two years to elapse following the end of the product consultancy is one way of reducing the threat to impartiality to an acceptable level.
- e) The certification body shall not outsource/subcontract any part of the certification work, evaluation, etc, to a legal entity that is engaged in designing, manufacture, installation, distribution or maintenance of the certified/to be certified, product, process and service. It shall also not be outsourced to organizations who are likely to provide consultancy / internal auditing services to clients / prospective clients of the certification body.
- f) The CB shall not use external evaluators/auditors for the purpose of evaluation of any client, if they, or the organization that employs them, have been engaged in any other activities as stated in “d” above.
- g) The CB shall not use personnel who have been involved in, or have had relationships with the Product certification client in any way within the last two years as a minimum, to take part in evaluation/auditing. The period of separation shall be determined by the nature of association. In case the individual concerned has worked for the organization concerned, or provided any farm related process/product related consultancy then the certification body shall not use such person at all.

**A.4.2.7** The certification body's activities shall not be marketed or offered as linked with the activities of an organization that provides farm related consultancy. The certification body shall take action to correct inappropriate claims by any consultancy organization stating or implying that certification would be simpler, easier, faster or less expensive if the certification body were used. A certification body shall not state or imply that certification would be simpler, easier, faster or less expensive if a specified consultancy organization were used.

**A.4.2.8** The certification body's personnel involved in certification activities shall be bound by the certification body's impartiality policy and act impartially in their work through contractual or employment conditions and assignment conditions for each evaluation/audit activity.

**A.4.2.9** The certification body shall also have a system for self-disclosure and documentation of the types of activities carried out by its internal and external personnel and subcontractors and the organizations that employ them, in general and in particular regarding the designing of relevant product/process/service, consultation, internal evaluation/auditing, training, etc.

**A.4.2.10** The certification body shall also take an undertaking with respect to freedom from conflict of interest for every audit/evaluation assignment allotted to the individuals. Based on the revelations made if any, the CB shall use this information as input to identifying threats to impartiality raised by the activities of such personnel or by the organizations that employ them, and shall not use such personnel, internal or external, unless any potential conflict of interests has been addressed and the measures taken to address these potential conflicts have been documented and implemented.

**A.4.2.11** The CB shall require its personnel, internal and external, to report any situation of influence or pressure from the client that may threaten their independence in the course of certification activities. Based on such report, the CB shall take appropriate actions to ensure its independence in its certification work.

**A.4.2.12** The CB's personnel involved in certification activities shall not provide, while carrying out evaluation/audit, any advice, consultancy or recommendation to the client on how to address any deficiencies that may be identified during the evaluation/audit.

**A.4.2.13** The certification body should be responsible for ensuring that neither related bodies, nor sub-contractors, nor external assessors/auditors operate in breach of the undertakings that they have given. It should also be responsible for implementing appropriate corrective action in the event that such a breach is identified.

**A.4.2.13** The certification body shall immediately raise sanction without delay to the producer. Any delay or non-application of sanction shall be raised as an NC.

**A.4.3 Liability and financing** - In addition to the requirements as specified in clause 4.3 of ISO17065:2012, following requirements shall apply.

**A.4.3.1** The certification body shall also be able to demonstrate that it has evaluated the risks arising from its certification activities and that it has adequate arrangements (e.g. insurance or reserves) to cover liabilities arising from its operations in each of its fields of activities and the geographic areas in which it operates.

**A.4.3.2** The certification body shall be able to demonstrate that it has a reasonable expectation of being able to provide and to continue to provide the service in accordance with its contractual obligations. Certification bodies shall also be able to provide sufficient evidence to demonstrate its viability, e.g. management reports or minutes, annual reports, financial audit reports, financial plans, etc.

**A.4.3.2** The means by which the certification body obtains financial support should be such as to allow the certification body to retain its impartiality.

**A.4.3.3** In addition to the above the CB shall also demonstrate to the Impartiality committee, that initially, and on an ongoing basis, commercial, financial or other pressures do not compromise its impartiality.

#### **A.4.4 Non-discriminatory conditions**

**A.4.4.1** The certification body shall have means of demonstrating compliance to this requirement of ISO 17065:2012 (clause 4.4), through its policies and procedures as well as actual practice.

**A.4.4.2** The CB's policies and procedures should ensure that it does not practice any form of hidden discrimination by speeding up or delaying the processing of applications.

#### **A.4.4.3 Certification Fees**

**A.4.4.3.1** The certification body, shall charge fees to the applicant producer for the various activities of IndG.A.P. certification scheme, without any discrimination between units, geographical location, size of the unit. Any additional requirements as may be imposed by the IndG.A.P. certification scheme owner, time to time shall also be adhered to.

**A.4.4.3.2** The certification body's fee structure shall be publicly available on its website.

The fee structure available on website may be generic in nature. On request from a specific applicant/client, based on the specific conditions concerning the applicant, the certification body shall inform the applicable fees, which shall essentially be derived from the fee structure made publicly available. It shall not substantially defer from the one available publicly, unless some plausible justifications are recorded.

**A.4.4.3.3** CB shall notify and obtain consent to its fee structure from the producer prior to grant of certification. As and when the fee undergoes a change, the same shall be communicated to all including applicants and the manufacturing units certified under IndG.A.P. certification scheme for their acceptance.

**A.4.4.3.4** Ensure availability of immediately accessible information on all audit and inspection details (including those of the unannounced inspections and audits) to the regulators when sought for as well as details for each certificate.

**A.4.5 Confidentiality** - In addition to the requirements specified in ISO 17065:2012 (clause 4.5) following shall apply:

**A.4.5.1** The Certification Body shall have a documented policy and mechanism to safeguard the confidentiality of information obtained or created during the course of certification activities. It shall also be part of the certification agreement.

**A.4.5.2** Personnel, including any committee members, contractors, personnel of external bodies or individuals acting on the certification body's behalf, shall keep confidential all information obtained or created during the performance of the certification body's activities. There shall be a mechanism such as obtaining signed confidentiality agreements, etc. for ensuring the same.

**A.4.5.3** The certification body shall have available and use equipment and facilities that ensure the secure handling of confidential information (e.g. documents, records).

**A.4.5.4** When confidential information is made available to other bodies (e.g. accreditation body, agreement group of a peer assessment scheme), the certification body shall inform its client of this action, in advance, through agreements, etc.

**A.4.5.5** Information about the client obtained from sources both from the client and other than the (e.g. from the complainant or from regulators) through the evaluation process, if used for certification decision by the certification body shall be made known to the client.

**A.4.5.6** In case of transfer of certificate or application, when the client decides to move from one certification body to another certification body, the certification body to which the client is now moving may ask the previous certification body for information on the reasons for such movement or the performance of the client with respect to the certification requirements. The previous certification body shall be obliged to share this information within a reasonable time, not exceeding 10 days from the date of receipt of the request. Such information shall not be considered as confidential and the certification body shall inform its client of this requirement, in advance, through agreements, etc.

#### **A.4.6 Publicly available information**

**A.4.6.1** Making the information publicly available through the CB's website shall be the only means of meeting this requirement.

**A.4.6.2** The following information with respect to IndG.A.P. certification scheme shall be made publicly available on the CB's website. The information provided shall be accurate, non-misleading and where relevant detailed enough for the reader to clearly understand.

- a) The certification process, from application stage to the grant of certification, including the evaluation process; the system for maintenance of certification, including processes for surveillance, market sampling, recertification, scope extension and reduction, suspension and withdrawal. The information shall also cover the terms and conditions of certification and the use of certificates IndG.A.P. mark, as contained in the Certification Agreement.
- b) The IndG.A.P. scheme specific rules and conditions for granting, for maintaining, for extending or reducing the scope of, for suspending, for withdrawing or for refusing certification.
- c) Requirements of IndG.A.P. certification scheme, including the IndG.A.P. certification criteria and application form shall be available to the applicant. The CB may also provide any other guidance documents on the certification criteria for the benefit of the applicant, as long as they are not advisory/consultative in nature.
- d) The certification body shall make publicly available on its website, the information about applications registered and certifications granted, suspended or withdrawn.
- e) On request from any party, the certification body shall provide the means to confirm the validity of a given certification and the provision for the same shall be made available on the website.
- f) The certification body shall maintain and make publicly available on its website, a directory of valid certifications. Please also see additional requirements given in the document "IndG.A.P. Certification Process".
- g) a description of the rights and duties of applicants and clients, including requirements, restrictions or limitations on the use of the certification body's name and certification mark and on the ways of referring to the certification granted.

**A.4.6.3** The CB shall have procedure for frequent updating of the information on its website. The responsibilities for ensuring accuracy of the information made available on the website, ensuring frequent updates, etc shall be documented.

**A.4.6.4** The CB shall list out the sources of its finances.

**A.4.6.5** The information on complaints handling process and the CB's procedure shall be directly available to the public, without the public having to go through layers of cross linkages.

#### **A.4.6.6 Information exchange between a certification body and its clients**

**A.4.6.6.1 Information on the certification activity and requirements-** The certification body shall provide and update clients on the following:

- a) a detailed description of the initial and continuing certification activity, including the application, initial evaluation, surveillance evaluation, and the process for granting, maintaining, reducing, extending, suspending, withdrawing certification and recertification;
- b) the certification criteria for IndG.A.P. certification scheme;

- c) information about the fees for application, initial certification and continuing certification;
- d) the certification body's requirements for prospective clients;
- e) documents describing the rights and duties of certified clients as well as obligations on part of the certification body including the changes within certified IndG.A.P. producer that need to be informed to the certification body [see clause 4.1.2.1.1h) of this document];
- f) information on procedures for handling complaints (both by the certification body as well by the IndG.A.P. producer, in respect of complaints against certified products) and appeals.
- h) Certification bodies shall actively cooperate with IndG.A.P. during management of complaints related to the CB or to the producers contracted by the CBDont.

**A.4.6.7.2** Based on the changes affecting certification, including those initiated by the client the certification body shall decide upon the appropriate actions in accordance with its documented procedure, which shall be based on the requirements described in "IndG.A.P. Certification Process" as well as clause 7.10.3 of ISO 17065. Responsibility for deciding about the course of actions to be taken shall also be documented.

## **A.5 Structural requirements**

### **A.5.1 Organizational structure and top management**

**A.5.1.1** The organization structure shall include structure of the parent body (legal entity) if separate from the department/division that offers certification. It shall also include structure of the related departments in relation to the department offering certification services.

**A.5.1.2** The certification body shall identify and document all related bodies (separate legal entities) as well as other departments of the same legal entity and their activities and functions and their relationships with the certification body, when describing its organizational structure. This shall cover all relationships, such as those described in Clause **A.4.2.2** of this document. The activities of all related bodies shall also be documented for the purpose of identifying any potential conflict of interest. The above information shall also be used for identification of actual/potential risks to impartiality (see clause **A.4.2.2**).

**A.5.1.3** An organization chart(s) shall be used for showing the structure, supported by the documented responsibilities and authorities for the functions described in the organization chart.

**A.5.1.4** The identification of responsibilities, however done, shall clearly and unambiguously reflect the responsibilities for activities/functions as described vide clause 5.1.3 a) to n) of ISO/IEC 17065:2012.

**A.5.1.5** The requirement specified vide clause 5.1.4 of ISO/IEC 17065:2012 shall cover the Impartiality committee and any other committees, if established by the certification body for establishment of systems for IndG.A.P. certification scheme, planning for certification evaluation (sampling and determination), certification review and decision making, appeals process, etc.

**A.5.1.6** The Impartiality committee and any other committees involved in operation of the CB and the certification process, shall also be shown as part of the organizational structure.

### **A.5.2 Mechanism for safeguarding impartiality**

**A.5.2.1** An Impartiality committee with specific responsibility for safeguarding the certification body's impartiality in its certification functions and for ensuring that the policy on safeguarding impartiality and related procedures and other systems are effectively implemented shall be the means of fulfilling this requirement. **A.5.2.2** The Impartiality Committee shall:

- a) assist the certification body in developing the policies relating to impartiality of its certification activities,
- b) counteract any tendency on the part of a certification body to allow commercial or other considerations to prevent the consistent objective provision of certification activities,
- c) advise on matters affecting confidence in certification, including openness and public perception, and
- d) conduct a review, as least once annually, of the impartiality of the evaluation, certification and decision-making processes of the certification body.
- e) Approve the conflict of interest analysis and the mitigation measures described in clauses 4.2.3 and 4.2.4 of ISO/IEC 17065:2012 as read with clauses A.4.2.2 to A.4.2.4 of this document.

Other tasks or duties may be assigned to the committee provided these additional tasks or duties do not compromise its essential role of ensuring impartiality. The impartiality committee shall not be involved in development of operational processes of the certification body.

The composition, terms of reference, duties, authorities, competence of members and responsibilities of this committee shall be formally documented and authorized by the top management of the certification body.

This committee shall meet regularly, at least once a year, and a complete record of the proceedings of this committee shall be maintained.

**A.5.2.3** The certification body shall ensure that

- a) The committee for safeguarding impartiality shall be separated from the management of the CB operations and established at the highest level within the organization, independent of its day-to-day operations.
- b) In the composition of the committee, participation of key interested parties shall be ensured, with a representation of a balance of interests such that no single interest predominates. Internal or external personnel of the certification body are considered to be a single interest, and shall not predominate.
- c) Its chairman shall be a person independent from and external to the certification body.

**A.5.2.5** Impartiality Committee meetings may be observed by the Accreditation Body's Assessment Teams as part of the Certification body's accreditation process.

**A.5.2.6** Although every interest cannot be represented in the mechanism, a certification body shall identify and invite significantly interested parties. Such interests may include: clients of the certification body, customers of organizations whose management systems are certified, representatives of industry trade associations, representatives of

governmental regulatory bodies or other governmental services, or representatives of non-governmental organizations, including consumer organizations.

## **A.6 Resource requirements**

### **A.6.1 Certification body personnel**

In addition to the generic requirement as specified in clause 6 of ISO 17065:2012, the IndG.A.P. Certification Scheme requirements as specified in this document shall apply.

#### **A.6.1.1 General**

**A.6.1.1.1** The certification body shall have, as part of its own organization, personnel having sufficient competence for managing the IndG.A.P. Certification Scheme that it operates.

**A.6.1.1.2** While determining sufficiency of resources the CB shall also take in to consideration the requirements with respect to technical personnel competent for the development and establishment of certification body's internal systems in accordance with the IndG.A.P. scheme requirements and for other operational functions like application review, Evaluation (all stages like initial, final, surveillance, etc), review and decision making.

**A.6.1.1.3** The certification body shall employ, or have access to, a sufficient number of evaluators, including evaluation team leaders, and technical experts to cover all of its activities with respect to IndG.A.P. certification scheme and to handle the volume of evaluation work performed.

**A.6.1.1.4** The CB shall determine competency requirements (knowledge and skills required for different functions defined in the CB's structure) and describe the mechanism/predefined routes in terms of education, qualification, experience, knowledge and skills, training, etc.

A.6.1.4.2 these shall cover management as well as certification process related functions. These shall include the following:

- a) Development and establishment of certification body's internal systems in accordance with the IndG.A.P. certification scheme requirements.
- b) Management of the certification activities.
- c) Application review,
- d) Undertaking Evaluation (all stages like initial, surveillance, etc). These shall cover evaluators, team leaders and technical experts as well as evaluation teams as whole.
- e) Review and decision making.

**A.6.1.1.5** The activities as listed at A.6.1.1.3 – a), b), c), and e) shall essentially be carried out by the CB's internal resources. Internal resources include the following:

- a) Regular employees.
- b) Employed on long term (one year or more) contract on full time basis.
- c) Employed on long term contract (2 years or more) on part time basis.

Individuals assigned to perform certification functions as stated above need not necessarily each have all the required competencies, providing the CB can demonstrate that it has the collective competence to perform those functions and that in individual cases an individual or a group of individuals having the required competence has performed the individual function. For example, the certification decision maker may not have the required competence, but if



the report has been reviewed by an independent technical expert the collective competence may be evident.

**A.6.1.1.6** The CB shall also have processes for evaluating to determine if the designed/to be designated persons have the necessary competence as described. The evaluation mechanism that a certification body shall use (as described in clause A.6.1.4.2 of this document) shall depend upon the type of competence aspects to be evaluated and the basis on which it is stated to be acquired. Records shall show which personnel are designated as competent, the date of evaluation and the details of evidences based on which competence is adjudged.

**A.6.1.1.7** The certification body shall nominate scheme manager who will be responsible for handling certification and related technical activities pertaining to IndG.A.P. scheme. He shall be available in-house, an authorised signatory and decision making a part of his functional role including attending all meetings and discussed called by IndG.A.P. Sectt. Certification bodies shall immediately inform IndG.A.P. of changes in personnel relevant for the management of the G.A.P. scheme (e.g., change of the Scheme Manager, in-house trainer, etc.) and of all changes that may affect their function as an independent CB, in particular withdrawal of approval/accreditation or corporate changes. He shall be fluent in English, Hindi or any local language. Manager should have management skills and understanding of agricultural activities, IndG.A.P. requirements and conformity assessment.

**A.6.1.1.8** The certification body shall nominate an in-house trainer and complete or at least register for the in-house trainer training of the relevant scope (s). Shall be fluent in English, hindi or any local language.

**A.6.1.1.9** The in-house trainer and the Scheme Manager may be the same.

#### **A.6.1.2 Competence of Management and Personnel**

**A.6.1.2.1** The certification body shall have processes to ensure that personnel have appropriate knowledge of product certification, IndG.A.P. certification scheme requirements and any other related requirements like regulatory requirements, etc.

**A.6.1.2.2** The functions described shall cover at least those listed in clause **A.6.1.1.3** of this document.

**A.6.1.2.3** The certification body shall have access to the necessary technical expertise for advice on matters directly relating to IndG.A.P. certification. Such advice may be provided externally or by certification body personnel.

**A.6.1.2.4** Certification bodies planning to certify Option 2 or Option 1 multisite with QMS shall have at least 2 auditors complying with the auditor qualification requirements.

#### **A.6.1.3 Competence requirements for Personnel Involved in Certification activities**

**A.6.1.3.1 Application Review function** - The personnel performing the application review shall be qualified for their understanding of the IndG.A.P. certification criteria and the certification scheme and process requirements, sufficient for carrying out the application review function effectively in accordance with the certification process requirements. The application reviewer shall be qualified on the basis of demonstrated competence to carry

out the review function say based on experience of having performed at least three technical reviews under the IndG.A.P. certification scheme.

**A.6.1.3.2 Technical Review function** – The technical review shall consists of an independent and structured assessment to verify if all the IndG.A.P. certification scheme related requirements have been fulfilled. It shall fulfil the following requirements:

- a) The technical review function shall be independent of audit and evaluation functions.
- b) The personnel (or group of personnel) performing the certification decision shall be qualified for their understanding of the certification criteria, certification scheme and certification process requirements and their ability to correctly grant or expand the scope of certification on the basis that the evaluation activities, information and results are a demonstration of fulfilment of requirements of the certification criteria in accordance with the certification scheme.
- c) For the purpose of initial evaluation, the technical reviewer (s) or committee will have at least one person who has experience of farming practices, agro-processing industry or related as gained through one year of work experience.
- d) Technical reviewer shall be qualified on the basis of demonstrated competence to carry out the review function say based on experience of having performed at least three technical reviews under the IndG.A.P. certification scheme.

**A.6.1.3.3 Decision making** – This function involves decision on granting, maintaining, renewing, extending, reducing, suspending or withdrawing certification and essential is an authoritative function. The decision-making functionary shall fulfil the following requirements:

- a) The person(s) or committee, who take(s) the decision on granting certification under the IndG.A.P. certification scheme shall be duly authorised by the CB for the task and shall have a level of knowledge and experience sufficient to evaluate the information obtained from the evaluation process and the review.
- b) The technical review and the decision may be completed concurrently by the same person(s) or committee, provided they fulfil the necessary requirements as specified in clause A.6.1.3.3 above. In case of a committee, it meets have the combined competence of technical reviewer and decision maker.
- c) Impartiality and absence of conflict of interest shall be ensured before entrusting the task of certification decision making.

**A.6.1.3.4 Competence of evaluators – (Inspectors and auditors)** The evaluators used by the certification body to carry out the evaluation of the IndG.A.P. Certification Scheme against the IndG.A.P. certification criteria and the certification process shall have the following qualifications and CB shall verify the factual evidence before the evaluators are send for inspections/Audits. The qualification of the Scheme Manager, in-house trainer and auditor will be similar.

- a) Education – (both Inspectors and Auditors Degree and/or Post-secondary education in any stream of science relevant to agriculture, horticulture, soil sciences or agroforestry areas, sufficient to provide knowledge of basic microbiology, agronomy, plant entomology and pathology, and hygienic conditions in the production and processing of horticulture crops as relevant to the crops certified.

- b) Work Experience – The Evaluator shall have at least 4 years of post qualification experience in horticulture or agriculture production, including at least two years of work experience in quality assurance within farm management, inspection or enforcement, or the equivalent. The number of years of total work experience may be reduced by one year if the auditor has completed appropriate post graduate education in the education relevant to horticulture and/or agriculture sector.
- c) Training – Following training requirements need to be complied with by evaluators:
  - i. Auditor Training: Successful completion of training in audit techniques based on ISO 17021/19011 for minimum duration of one day for inspectors and for auditors a LA training of minimum duration of 37 hours based on ISO 19011 recognised by industry and certificate shall specify the course as well as duration and shall cover the auditing techniques, skills, psychological aspects, communication methods, reporting, and a practical case study.
  - ii. Food Safety and Hygiene: Training on HACCP principles as part of the formal qualification or by successful completion of a formal course based on the principles of codex Alimentarius. It can be in the form of internal training by CB. The duration shall be minimum 8 hours. Training on Food hygiene as part of the formal qualification or by successful completion of a formal course. It can be internal training by CB. The duration shall be minimum 8 hours. This course shall cover site management, water, fertilizer, equipment, facilities and personal hygiene and shall also include practical case studies. Both the trainings can be combined but shall be of a minimum duration of 16 hours.
  - iii. Farm management principles: Training in Plant protection products, Fertilizers, Integrated pest management, integrated nutrient management as part of the formal qualification or by successful completion of a formal training course by qualified agronomist. CB shall train the evaluators on the standard customized to the trainees before signing off.
  - iv. Quality management Systems: The auditors have to attend 2 days QMS training offered by SO and pass the exam for each new version.
  - v. The in-house trainer shall be responsible for training all the respective GLOBALG.A.P. auditors and inspectors (based on IndG.A.P.). In case of change in personnel, the same shall be trained by the trainer within 3 months of induction.
- d) Audit experience – Experience of conducting audits/inspections in farm sector. Experience of conducting audits of crop-based system shall also be considered. For initial qualification as an auditor for IndG.A.P. scheme at least 12 man-days of audits in Quality management system (ISO 9001, ISO 22000, ISO 14000, OSHAS 18000, BRC food, IFS food, GLOBALG.A.P., Organic ICS in at least 4 different organizations, in the last 3-year period shall be required. The time spent by the observer/trainee shall not count towards time spent on evaluation. Audit experience as stated in this clause is essential for all auditors for the purpose of qualification.
- e) The Evaluators shall complete IndG.A.P. on line training and exam once made available. Along with the updates within 3 months of release of the test in the respective language of evaluators.
  - f) Working language skill and product knowledge -The auditors and inspectors shall have practical knowledge on the product they are inspecting and shall be

familiar with the local language or national language or a language which both (auditee and auditor) can communicate. Any exemption to this shall be consulted with SO and permission to be sought before inspection/audit.

g) Evaluators signing off-

- i. The inspector/ Auditor shall take part as an observer for at least one option-1 inspection or 1 producer group member inspection. This is not applicable for already approved IndG.A.P. inspector. CB shall witness minimum of one option-1 inspection or 1 producer group member inspection by and already qualified inspector/ Auditor. For Auditors in addition to this a QMS witness has to be done by an already qualified auditor.
- ii. For CB first inspector/Auditor CB shall develop its own procedure and as minimum these shall be applicable.
- iii. Technical knowledge on the fruits and vegetables (sub-scope), identification ability of food safety risks/ hazards, Ability to assess HACCP system and identify/challenge critical control point. Up to date knowledge on Plant protection products, Fertilizers, Integrated pest management and integrated nutrient management, ability to carry out traceability check and mass balance analysis.
- iv. Knowledge on the local legislation where specific control point refers to local legislation. Communication and behavioral skill to conduct inspections and the working language knowledge.

h) Maintenance of Competence

- i. The inspectors/auditors shall at least do 5 inspections at different organizations or 10-man days of inspection in at least 2 different organizations for IndG.A.P./ GLOBALG.A.P. inspections. If the CB has less clients and due to which if this condition cannot be full filled then it has to informed to SO and exception permission to be obtained. Witnessed inspections can also be counted to it.
  - ii. Witness inspection for all IndG.A.P. inspectors/auditors shall me carried out at least once in 4 years or the standard version changes whichever is earlier.
  - iii. If competency is not maintained clause g) shall apply
  - iv. These requirements are not applicable to scheme managers who are not doing any inspections.
  - v. The CB shall have in place a system for the on-going calibration and training of its inspectors and auditors. The CB shall carry out annual internal refreshing/update training to inspectors/auditors. Records of those trainings shall be maintained.
- i) Inspector/Auditor rotation requirement- The same inspector/Auditor shall not be used consecutively for more than 4 years regardless whether it is announced or unannounced inspection in case of option-1. In case of option-2 the auditor needs to be rotated (no more than 4 years). Inspectors can be the same. In case CB has only one inspector / Auditor then the exception has to be received from SO.

j) Key tasks-

- i. The inspector/auditor has to do inspection of farms/producer members of the group/ sites in case of multi sites with QMS to access compliance with the IndG.A.P. certification requirements and may include shadow inspections of the internal inspectors of producer group or option-1 multisite with QMS.
- ii. They shall produce timely and accurate reports for the inspection done by them which needs to be signed to be auditee during the closing meet. All fields will be filled by the evaluators and any thing which is mandatory (No N/A) will be need to

- be mandatorily filled during the evaluation. They shall also record the timings and other details of the inspection report.
- iii. The auditor/s need to do assessment of QMS of the producer group/option-1 multi sites with QMS to access compliance with the IndG.A.P. certification requirements using the check list provided by scheme owner and can do all task assigned to inspector.
- iv. Other task may include works assigned by CB outside the scope of IndG.A.P. provided it will not conflict the requirement set out in ISO 17065 and IndG.A.P. requirement. Maintain up to date files on quality polices, work instructions procedures and other documents issued by CB relevant to inspectors'/auditors' job.
- v. To stay updated of the legislation and its changes relevant to the scope of inspections/ audits

k) Independence and confidentiality -

- i. The inspector shall sign confidentiality agreement and any conflict shall be declared to the CB. And shall maintain strict confidentiality regarding the information and records
- ii.
- iii. The inspectors/auditors shall not do the inspection/audits if they have worked, given consultation etc., to the client/ Producers during the past 2 years, Training given on generic topic inspection/ audit standards are not considered as consultations it shall not be tailor made to suit organizations requirement or shall not include specific solutions to a issue.
- iv.
- v. Auditors shall not take certification decisions for the audits/ inspection done by them
- vi.
- vii. All qualifications, trainings and experience records shall be maintained by the CB for verification by the AB during audit

**A.6.1.3.5 Selection of audit team** - The evaluation team may consist of one or more members. The certification body shall ensure the competence of the evaluation team as stated below:

- a) As part of evaluation team, the certification body may use auditors who do not have the requisite qualifications as prescribed above provided they are supported by technical experts (TEs) who meet the qualifications at A.6.1.3.4 a) and b) above. The time spent by the TE on an audit shall be in addition to the audit time as prescribed under the 'Certification Process' which the CB is expected to spend.
- b) In case of an evaluation team, one of the evaluators shall be designated as team leader based.

**A.6.1.4 Management of personnel involved in the certification process**

**A.6.1.4.1** The certification body shall have defined and documented processes for recruitment selecting, training, formally authorizing personnel for functions like application review, evaluation and technical review/decision making functions. Where applicable the initial competence evaluation shall include a demonstration of applicable personal attributes and the ability to apply required knowledge and skills during actual performance of the activity, as determined by a competent evaluator.

**A.6.1.3.5 Selection of audit team** - The evaluation team may consist of one or more members. The certification body shall ensure the competence of the evaluation team as stated below:

- a) As part of evaluation team, the certification body may use auditors who do not have the requisite qualifications as prescribed above provided they are supported by technical experts (TEs) who meet the qualifications at A.6.1.3.4 a) and b) above. The time spent by the TE on an audit shall be in addition to the audit time as prescribed under the 'Certification Process' which the CB is expected to spend.
- b) In case of an evaluation team, one of the evaluators shall be designated as team leader based.

**A.6.1.4 Management of personnel involved in the certification process**

**A.6.1.4.1** The certification body shall have defined and documented processes for recruitment selecting, training, formally authorizing personnel for functions like application review, evaluation and technical review/decision making functions. Where applicable the initial competence evaluation shall include a demonstration of applicable personal attributes and the ability to apply required knowledge and skills during actual performance of the activity, as determined by a competent evaluator observing the conduct of the activity or through review of records, as relevant and applicable.

**A.6.1.4.2** The CB shall have documented procedure for carrying out initial competence evaluation leading to the formal authorization of personnel for specific functions in the certification process. The evaluation process may include a combination of methods like review of records, feedback, interviews, observations (of persons performing the task) and examinations. Depending upon the role and functions in the certification process the appropriate combination of methods shall be chosen.

**A.6.1.4.3** In respect of evaluation personnel, the certification body shall have a process to achieve and demonstrate effective evaluations, including the use of evaluators and evaluation team leaders possessing generic auditing skills and knowledge, as well as skills and knowledge appropriate for evaluating in specific technical areas.

**A.6.1.4.4** The certification body shall ensure that evaluators (and, where needed, technical experts) are knowledgeable of its audit processes, certification requirements (including IndG.A.P. Certification Scheme requirements) and other relevant requirements. The certification body shall ensure that the evaluators and technical experts have an access to an up-to-date set of documented procedures giving instructions for conducting evaluations and all relevant information on the certification activities.

**A.6.1.4.5** The certification body shall use evaluators and technical experts, only for those certification activities where they have demonstrated competence.

**A.6.1.4.6** The certification body shall identify training needs and shall offer or provide access to specific training to ensure its evaluators, technical experts and other personnel involved in certification activities are competent for the functions they perform. The certification body shall also have a process to achieve and demonstrate effective evaluation of the training process.

**A.6.1.4.7** The certification body shall ensure the satisfactory performance of all personnel involved in the evaluation and certification activities. There shall be documented procedures and

criteria for monitoring and measurement of the performance of all persons involved, based on the frequency of their usage and the level of risk linked to their activities. In particular, the certification body shall review the competence of its personnel in the light of their performance in order to identify training needs.

**A.6.1.4.8** The documented monitoring procedures for evaluators shall include a combination of on-site observation, review of evaluation reports and feedback from clients or from the market.

**A.6.1.4.9** The certification body shall periodically observe the performance of each evaluator on-site. The frequency of on-site observations shall be based on need determined from all monitoring information available, but should not be greater than once a year.

**A.6.1.4.10** The certification body shall make clear to each person concerned their duties,

**A.6.1.4.11** The personnel records shall also include up-to-date information about their affiliations and any relevant consultancy that may have been provided, which may be considered as potential source of conflict of interest, while assigning evaluation and other jobs to them. This is most relevant in respect of the external resources.

#### **A.6.1.5 Use of individual external evaluators and external technical experts**

**A.6.1.5.1** The external evaluators and external technical experts, used by the certification body shall have the same competence and qualification process as for internal personnel.

**A.6.1.5.2** The certification body shall require external auditors and external technical experts to have a written agreement by which they commit themselves to comply with applicable policies and procedures as defined by the certification body. The agreement shall address aspects relating to confidentiality and to independence from commercial and other interests, and shall require the external auditors and external technical experts to notify the certification body of any existing or prior association with any organization they may be assigned to audit.

*NOTE: Use of individual auditors and technical experts under such agreements does not constitute outsourcing as described under A.6.2.*

**A.6.1.5.3** The contract shall also require the personnel to proactively declare about affiliations (personal and professional) and other jobs/associations like consultancy, etc which may have potential for presenting conflict of interest. It shall also include information about any other association that the individual feels have the potential for threat to impartiality.

#### **A.6.2 Outsourcing/subcontracting**

This clause Corresponds to the requirements specified in clause 6.2.2 of ISO 17065:2012.

**A.6.2.1** The certification body operating the IndG.A.P. Certification Scheme shall not outsource any activity other than testing. Sending of samples to the CB's own laboratory shall also be considered as sub-contracting.

##### **A.6.2.2 Test Laboratory**

**A.6.2.2.1** If required, the certification body shall test all samples of farm produce or semi- finished produce drawn for independent evaluation, in a laboratory accredited to ISO 17025 by NABL with relevant scope of accreditation, for ascertaining conformance to the certification criteria.

**A.6.2.2.2** The certification body shall maintain a directory of laboratories to which it intends to sub-contract. It shall have a formal contract with the sub-contracted laboratories for provision of competent services and also for ensuring aspects like impartiality and confidentiality as relevant.

**A.6.2.2.3** If the certification body uses an in-house laboratory (part of the same legal entity), it shall be ensured that there exists an adequate separation, in terms of organization structure and reporting and defined responsibilities. It shall also ensure through above means and policies and procedures, that there is no possibility of compromising the independence of the lab personnel by bringing undue pressure over them.

**A.6.2.2.4** The certification criteria against which the product is to be tested or if in case of complaint shall be clearly mentioned and communicated to the testing laboratory. The sample(s) shall be so dispatched that they do not get damaged and or contaminated, undergo deterioration, and the product integrity is maintained. The certification body shall have a documented procedure for drawal of samples and their subsequent handling and dispatch to the laboratories. The procedure shall also include aspects like receipt of test reports and their evaluation.

## **A.7 Process Requirements**

**A.7.1** The certification body shall establish appropriate operational systems (internal processes and procedures) for carrying out certification activities as per the requirements specified in the document “IndG.A.P. Certification Process” of the Scheme and meeting the generic certification process requirements as stated in respective standards – clause 7 of ISO 17065:2012.

**A.7.2** The certification body may also develop and document any additional guidance documents considered essential for uniform application of the certification criteria and certification/scheme requirements by its personnel and for the purpose of knowledge sharing.

## **A.8 Management system requirements**

### **A.8.1 Options**

#### **A.8.1.1 General**

The purpose and objective of which ever option the CB chooses is same – establish and maintain management system that is capable of achieving the consistent fulfilment of:

- a) the requirements of ISO/IEC 17065:2012,
- b) additional requirements specified in this document, and
- c) the requirements pertaining to the “IndG.A.P. Scheme”, specified in the relevant Certification Process documents.

#### **A.8.1.2 Options A**

In respect of option A the additional management system elements as given vide clauses A.8.2 to A.8.8 of this document shall be addressed by the CB to support the implementation.

#### **A.8.1.3 Management System Requirements**

The IndG.A.P. Secretariat will allow provisionally approved CBs with a previous ISO/IEC 17065:2012 accreditation to issue a limited number of non-accredited certificates before final approval. The maximum number of producers that may receive non-accredited



certificates (Option 1, Option 2, and benchmarked Options 3 and 4) per scope (Crops) is 20.

### **A.8.2 General management system documentation (Option A)**

**A.8.2.1** The established, documented and maintained policies and objectives shall ensure the fulfilment of requirements specified in ISO 17065, the additional criteria/requirements as specified in this document and the IndG.A.P. certification scheme documents, like certification process, etc.

**A.8.2.2** The CB shall establish, document, implement and maintain its processes and procedures for ensuring fulfilment of requirements specified in ISO/IEC 17065:2012, the additional criteria/requirements as specified in this document and the IndG.A.P. Scheme related documents like IndG.A.P. Certification Process and IndG.A.P. Criteria. The documentation shall cover both management system aspects and technical competence aspects with appropriate linkages and with clear description of the structure of the documentation established by the CB.

**A.8.2.3** The CB's system for access to documents, and information by its internal personnel, shall also be extended to the external persons involved in its certification activities, as relevant to their responsibilities.

**A.8.2.4** CBs shall continually register all auditors and inspectors in their database.

### **A.8.3 Control of documents (Option A)**

**A.8.3.1** All the requirements as specified in clause 8.3 of ISO 17065 shall also apply to the IndG.A.P. Scheme relevant documents established by the CB as well as relevant external origin documents.

### **A.8.4 Control of records (Option A)**

**A.8.4.1** The CB's system for control of records shall also include records related to fulfilment of the additional criteria/requirements as specified in this document and other IndG.A.P. scheme related documents.

### **A.8.5 Management review (Option A) A.8.5.1 General**

**A.8.5.1** The review by the CB's top management shall also include review of its management system in order to ensure its continuing suitability, adequacy and effectiveness, including the stated policies and objectives related to the fulfilment of the additional criteria/requirements as specified in this document and other IndG.A.P. scheme related documents.

**A.8.5.2** The frequency of management reviews should be determined by the certification body, taking account of the results from internal audits and previous reviews and reports from an accreditation body and feedbacks from regulators, if any. However, it shall not be less than once a year and should generally be timed following the internal audit.

**A.8.5.3** An agenda for management review meeting listing all the items stated vide clause 8.5.2 a) to h) of ISO/IEC 17065:2012, alone are not considered as review inputs. It needs to provide adequate information to enable an appropriate review and generation of output in line with the requirements.

**A.8.5.4** The outcome of a management review should include the setting up of measurable quality objectives for the coming period and proposed improvements to the CB's

management system and its processes for ensuring fulfilment of all the relevant requirements (see A.8.5.1

#### **A.8.6 Internal audits (Option A)**

**A.8.6.1** The objectives of the internal audit shall also include verification of fulfilment of requirements of the additional criteria/requirements as specified in this document and the IndG.A.P. Certification Scheme specific requirements.

**A.8.6.2** The audit program shall cover all the elements of ISO/IEC 17065:2012, the additional criteria/requirements as specified in this document and the IndG.A.P. Certification scheme specific requirements.

**A.8.6.4** The internal audit shall be conducted by personnel knowledgeable in certification, auditing and the requirements of ISO 17065, the additional criteria/requirements as specified in this document and the IndG.A.P. Certification scheme specific requirements.

**A.8.6.5** The internal audit report shall clearly report both the compliance (to the requirements specified vide G8.6.1) aspects as well as the observed gaps (non-conformities) areas for improvement, along with the objective evidences to support the conclusions drawn.

#### **A.8.7 e actions (Option A)**

**A.8.7.1** The CB's documented procedure shall clearly identify the responsibilities for various steps in the non-conformity identification and corrective actions determining process.

**A.8.7.2** The CB's documented procedure shall clearly indicate the information sources which will enable it to identify the non-conformities and the procedure for their management. The information sources may not be limited to internal audit and complaints.

**A.8.7.3** The CBs shall use an appropriate technique for and analysing and determining the root cause.

#### **A.9 Extension of Scopes, Sub-scopes, Approved Modified Checklists, and Benchmarked Schemes**

**A.9.1** IndG.A.P. approved CBs that want to extend their scope of IndG.A.P. certification shall follow all steps and requirements for approval and/or accreditation as applicable and shall apply for the accreditation of the new scope before signing the agreement of extension of scope with IndG.A.P. Standards such as PSS, HPSS, CFM, AMCs, benchmarked schemes, etc., or local G.A.P. programs and IndG.A.P. Add-ons will be considered as new scopes.

**A.9.2** IndG.A.P. approved or accredited CBs that are willing to extend their sub-scope of certification within a scope, shall have a minimum of 1 inspector or auditor who complies with specific IndG.A.P. inspector or auditor sub-scope requirements. A formal application shall be sent to the QCI Secretariat.

**A.9.3** The CB shall apply for the accreditation of the new sub-scope after provisional approval as mentioned within stipulated timeline.

**A.9.4** Prerequisites for the extension of scope or sub-scope as the case is availability of adequate resources including an in-house trainer for the new sub-scope(s). In the absence of training opportunity, the CB shall need to register for the next upcoming

training. The provisional approval shall be withdrawn where the CB does not attend or fail the applicable in-house training.

**A.9.5** IndG.A.P. approved CBs willing to extend their approval to an AMC or benchmarked scheme -within the same scope and sub-scope- shall send an application request to the QCI. Secretariat. In case of benchmarking to GLOBALG.A.P., a copy needs to be sent to GLOBALG.A.P. secretariat as well.