

SECTION II

VOLUNTARY CERTIFICATION SCHEME FOR MEDICINAL PLANT PRODUCE

GOVERNING STRUCTURE

1. SCOPE

This document explains the governing structure of the Voluntary Certification Scheme for Medicinal Plant Produce (hereinafter referred to as 'the Scheme') and the roles and responsibilities of various organizations and committees involved in operating the Scheme.

2. OBJECTIVE

The objective of this document is to clearly define the roles of various organizations/committees involved in the operation of the Scheme.

3. GOVERNING STRUCTURE

The governing structure of Voluntary Certification Scheme for Medicinal Plant Produce shall have a multi-stakeholder Steering Committee (SC) with secretariat in the National Medicinal Plants Board (hereinafter referred to as NMPB) at the apex level supported by a Technical and a Certification Committee each with its secretariat in the Quality Council of India (hereinafter referred to as QCI).

4. APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES – GENERAL RULES

In the appointment of various Committees, the following general principles shall be kept in mind:

- a) representation of a balance of interests such that no single interest predominates.
- b) key interests to include: representatives of medicinal plant growers'/collectors' associations, ayurvedic and other user industry bodies, representatives of regulatory bodies or other governmental agencies, Academic/Research Bodies, Certification Bodies, Testing Laboratories, Accreditation bodies, and representatives of non-governmental organizations.
- c) Offer of membership to individual experts shall be made with great caution and only when a suitable person is not forthcoming as a representative of an organization

- d) Except when a member is appointed in his personal capacity, a person vacates his membership on leaving his organization and a fresh nomination is sought from the nominating authority.
- e) the member organizations shall nominate a principal and an alternate representative on the committee(s) to maintain continuity. Both members can attend any meeting.
- f) the tenure of a committee shall be 3 years after which it may be reconstituted especially to provide representation by rotation to interests where there may be several representative bodies like state governments, certification bodies etc.

5. STEERING COMMITTEE (SC)

5.1 Membership - The SC shall comprise of the following;

- a) Secretary, Ministry of AYUSH - Chairperson
- b) Representative of Department of Agriculture & Co-operation - Member
- c) Representative of Ministry of Environment & Forest- Member
- d) Representative of Department of Commerce- Member
- e) Representative of Ministry of AYUSH - Member
- f) Drugs Controller General of India or his representative
- g) Representatives of state governments (state medicinal plants boards) – 3 at a time by rotation
- h) Representatives of growers'/collectors' – one each
- i) Representatives of user industry bodies – ADMA, AMAM, Cosmetics manufacturers association, any others concerned
- j) Representative of CSIR-Member
- k) Representative of ICAR-Member
- l) Representatives from NABCB/NABL-Members
- m) Representative of approved Certification Bodies – 2 at a time by rotation
- n) Representative of labs – PLIM, IIIM
- o) Representative of Quality Council of India- Member
- p) Chief Executive Officer, NMPB- Member Secretary

5.1.1 SC may coopt any other members.

5.2 Quorum - The presence in person, at a meeting of the Steering Committee (SC) of the representatives of at least 5 members shall constitute a quorum for a meeting.

5.3 Terms of reference - The MSC is responsible for;

- a) Overall development, modification and supervision of the Scheme
- b) Receiving recommendations of the Technical/Certification Committees and deciding on them
- c) Constituting any committees, as needed

5.4 Meetings - The SC shall meet at least once every year.

6 TECHNICAL COMMITTEE (TC)

6.1 Membership – The Technical Committee shall comprise of following:

Chairman (by name – to be appointed)

Representative of Ministry of AYUSH

Representative of CIMAP, Lucknow

Representatives of ADMA/AMAM

Representative of One approved CB by rotation.

Representatives of Medicinal Plants Growers Association – 2

Experts in Individual capacity

NMPB

Member Secretary - Representative from Quality Council of India

6.1.1 TC may coopt more members.

6.2 Quorum -- The presence in person, at a meeting of the Technical Committee of at least 2 members other than the Chairman and Member Secretary shall constitute a quorum for a meeting.

6.3 Terms of reference - The Technical Committee is responsible for

- a) Defining the certification criteria for the Scheme
- b) Developing any standards or technical documents needed for certification.
- c) Resolving any technical/related issues

6.4 Meetings - The TC shall meet at least once every year.

7 CERTIFICATION COMMITTEE (CC)

7.1 Membership - The Certification Committee shall comprise of the following:

- a) Chairman (to be appointed by name)
- b) Representative of Ministry of AYUSH
- c) Representative of NMPB
- d) Representative of Growers/Collectors' associations – one each from the SC
- e) Representative of Certification Bodies - One from the SC
- f) Representatives of Accreditation Bodies – One Representative each from NABCB and NABL
- g) Representative of DCGI
- h) Representative of User Industry (ADMA/AMAM)
- i) PLIM
- j) Member Secretary – Quality Council of India

7.1.1 CC may coopt more members.

7.2 Quorum - The presence in person, at a meeting of the Certification Committee of at least 2 members other than the Chairman and Member Secretary shall constitute a quorum for a meeting.

7.3 Terms of reference - The Certification Committee shall be responsible for

- a) Developing, maintaining and revising as appropriate the certification scheme
- b) Designing the Certification Marks
- c) Developing any guidance document to assist growers/collectors to apply for certification
- d) Developing, maintaining and revising as appropriate the requirements for certification bodies for the operation of the Voluntary Certification
- e) Developing, maintaining and revising as appropriate the process for permitting certified entities for use of Certification mark.
- f) Any other issue relating to certification

7.4 Meetings - The Certification Committee shall meet at least once every year.

8. ROLES OF ORGANIZATIONS

National Medicinal Plant Board under the Ministry of Ayush shall be the Scheme Owner jointly with QCI.

Quality Council of India (QCI) shall be the joint Scheme owner and provide the secretariat for the Scheme and own the Certification Mark(s)/logo(s)

National Accreditation Board for Certification Bodies (NABCB) shall be responsible for accrediting certification bodies desirous of participating in the Scheme to appropriate international standards

National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories (NABL) shall be responsible for accrediting laboratories to appropriate international standards to support the Scheme.

9. COMPLAINTS

9.1 The entire system has provisions for entertaining complaints from any stakeholder against any component of the Scheme – the manufacturing units certified under the Scheme, the Certification Bodies approved under the Scheme, the laboratories utilized under the Scheme, and the accreditation bodies, NABCB/NABL, are all required to have a complaints system in place as per standards applicable to them. Anyone having a complaint is encouraged to utilise the available mechanisms.

9.2 Any complaint received directly by the National Medicinal Plant Board shall be referred to QCI who in turn will make a reference to the appropriate body against which the complaint is made and monitor it till it is decided upon.

9.3 Any complaint received by QCI shall be similarly handled.

9.4 A statement on complaints as received above with their status shall be reported to the SC in each meeting.

10. APPEALS

10.1 There are provisions for entertaining appeals from the manufacturing units certified/desirous of certification under the Scheme, the Certification Bodies approved under the Scheme, and the laboratories utilized under the Scheme, which shall invariably be utilized.

10.2 In case any one aggrieved by the decision of the TC/CC appeals, it shall be handled by the SC.

10.3 In case any one aggrieved by the decision of SC appeals, the Chairperson, SC shall appoint an independent appeals panel to look into the appeal and recommend action to him/her

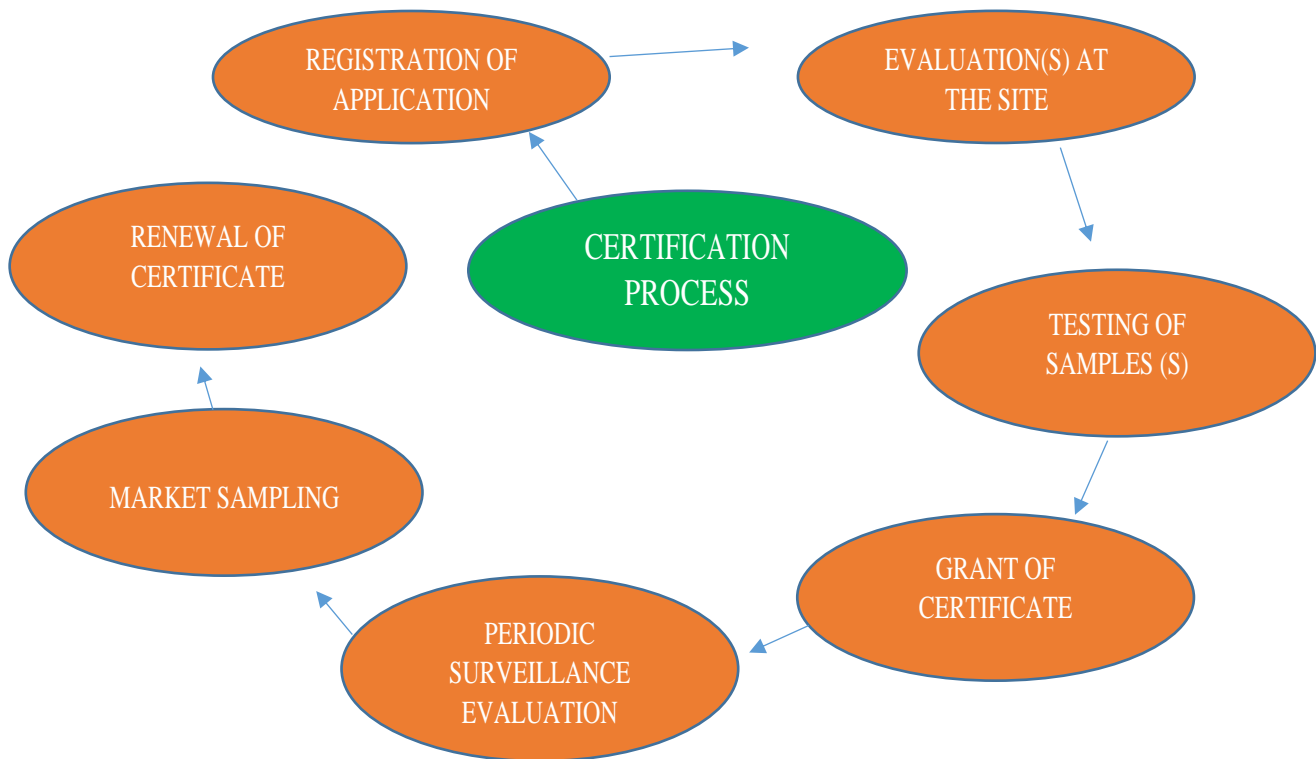
10.4 In handling appeals, the broad principle that the appeal is handled independently of the personnel involved in the decision appealed against shall be maintained.

10.5 A statement of appeals received by the NMPB/QCI shall be placed before the SC in each meeting.

OPERATION OF THE SCHEME

Under the Scheme, any producer/collector/group of producers/collectors can obtain a certification from an approved certification body (CB) and will be under regular surveillance of the certification body. An option of getting a lot inspected and certified has also been made in the Scheme. It also allows certification of intermediaries like traders who may source certified medicinal plant material and supply further.

QCI will initially provisionally approve some CBs for the Scheme but ultimately the technical competence of such CBs would be established through the internationally recognized concept of accreditation. The National Accreditation Board for Certification Bodies (NABCB) under QCI, as the national accreditation body, is already operating a scheme for accreditation of Product Certification Bodies as per applicable international standard, ISO Guide 65, and will provide certification bodies accredited as per the applicable international standard and competent to operate the medicinal plant certification scheme. Similarly, NABL accredited labs will be used under the Scheme. These measures are designed to facilitate acceptance of the Scheme in international market in the future.



BENEFICIARY

The scheme will benefit the medicinal plants producers/collectors/group of producers/collectors, societies, traders, manufacturers of herbal medicines, Ayush industry and Ayush consumers due to the assured quality of the medicinal plants/herbs.

ADDITIONAL BENEFITS

- Reduced risk of recall/rejection.
- Increase buyer confidence in Indian herbs.
- Assured legal compliance.
- Assured sustainable collection.

About NMPB

In order to promote medicinal plants sector, the Government of India has set up National Medicinal Plants Board (NMPB) on 24th November 2000. Currently the board is located in Ministry of Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha & Homoeopathy (AYUSH), Government of India. The primary mandate of NMPB is develop an appropriate mechanism for coordination between various ministries/departments/ organizations in India and implements support policies/ programs for overall (conservation, cultivation, trade and export) growth of medicinal plants sector both at the Central / State and International level.

In recent years cultivation of medicinal plants has started gaining momentum. However, still a significant part of our requirements continues to be met from wild sources.

To meet increasing demand for medicinal plants, the NMPB focusses on in-situ & ex-situ conservation and augmenting local medicinal plants and aromatic species of medical significance. The NMPB also promote research & development, capacity building through trainings, raising awareness through promotional activities like creation of Home/ School herbal gardens.

NMPB also support programs for quality assurance and standardization through development of Good Agricultural and Collection Practices (GACPs), development of monographs laying down standards of quality, safety and efficacy; development of agro-techniques and credible institution a mechanism for certification of quality of raw drugs, seeds and planting material.

About QCI

Quality Council of India (QCI) was set up in 1997 jointly by the Government of India and the Indian Industry represented by the three premier industry associations i/e. Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM), Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), to establish and operate national accreditation structure and promote quality through National Quality Campaign. The Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion, Ministry of Commerce & Industry, is the nodal ministry for QCI.

Accreditation facilitates international trade by way of establishing equivalence and global acceptance of certification, inspection and testing being undertaken by various conformity assessment bodies, in areas of quality, environment, food safety etc.

National Quality Campaign aims at promoting quality by enabling manufacturers and suppliers of goods/ services to apply quality standards and tools and simultaneously empowering consumers to demand quality goods/ services. The promotion of quality encompasses all segments including manufacturing, health, education and public services.

For further details kindly contact :

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