

Auditor Requirements

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OBJECTIVE AND VALIDITY OF THIS DOCUMENT

The objective of this document is to set out the requirements for certification bodies wishing to be accredited to issue certifications by the SAN.

This version of the SAN Auditor Requirements was approved by the SAN Board of Directors in March 2010.

It is valid as of May 1, 2010.

REQUIREMENTS FOR AUDITOR REGISTRATION

In the SAN system, there are three categories of auditors:

- a. Support Auditor
- b. Lead Auditor
- c. Lead Group Auditor

In order to acquire the status of registered auditor, a candidate must comply with the selection requirements, pass the *SAN Auditor Candidate Course*, and complete the training hours as a trainee. With sufficient hours of practice a support auditor can acquire the status of lead auditor or lead group auditor.

The SAN secretariat is in charge of the auditor registration process and decides on the suspension or withdrawal of auditors from the register.

1 Auditor Qualification Criteria

1.1 Requirements for Farm Support Auditors

In order to qualify to be a registered SAN support auditor, the professional must have passed the *SAN Auditor Candidate Course*; and have gone through an observation phase with an approved certification body:

- a. The following are the selection requirements for participants of the *SAN Auditor Candidate Course*:
 - i. Have obtained a university degree in a course related to agriculture: agronomic engineering, agricultural engineering or economics, natural resource management, forest engineering, environmental engineering, biology, ecology, occupational health and safety, geography, environmental management, zootechnician, rural administration or sociology/anthropology; Candidates with other degrees can qualify provided that they have a minimum of three years experience in agriculture or in other topics related to the Sustainable Agriculture Standard;
 - ii. All candidates shall demonstrate a minimum of two years professional experience in the agricultural field - including evaluating the impact of agricultural and/or forest industries, implementing environmental, social, or occupational health and safety management systems, forestry or plantation audits; a post-grad degree (Masters or Doctorate) in the fields mentioned above can equate to one year of professional experience;
 - iii. Oral and written mastery of the local language, in addition to English (Africa and Asia) or Spanish (Latin America).
- b. Those qualifying for the trainee phase are:
 - i. Participants that pass the *SAN Auditor Candidate Course*.

- ii. SAN technicians that have worked previously in farm diagnostics or technical assistance and comply with requirement 1.1.a.i.

Trainees can accompany audit activities of certification bodies. Nevertheless, they must not participate actively in audit evaluation activities. They always have to be accompanied by a support auditor or lead auditor and follow their instructions. They must not undertake their own evaluations. Trainees can be withdrawn from the team by the lead auditor, if they do not respect the conduct described here.

- c. Those qualifying to be accredited SAN Support Auditors are:
 - i. Trainees that complete 40 hours or 5 certification or annual auditing days, divided among a minimum of four certification or annual auditing processes.
 - ii. Professionals with two years of proven experience in other certification systems, members of ISEAL Alliance with experience in agriculture - like, for example, *IFOAM organic standards*, *FLO*, *FSC*, *SAI*, or *Utz certified* - must complete a minimum of 20 hours auditing including one complete certification or annual audit process. Support auditors can also accompany a lead group auditor in group audits.

1.2 Requirements for Lead Auditors

Those SAN accredited support auditors will qualify as registered SAN Lead Auditors with a minimum of 80 hours or ten days of certification or annual auditing, divided among a minimum of three auditing processes - in certification or annual audits - with accredited SAN certification bodies.

1.3 Requirements for Lead Group Auditors

An accredited SAN lead auditor qualifies as registered SAN Lead Group Auditor if having accompanied an accredited SAN lead auditor with experience in group auditing for at least two group auditing processes; and passed the SAN Secretariat's exam for group certifications – as long as he/she passes the internal performance evaluation of the certification body.

2 Auditor Registration Processes

2.1 Registration Process for Support Auditors

- a. The SAN Secretariat announces the SAN Auditor Candidate Course and accepts applications and resumes from those professionals that want to participate;
- b. The approved SAN certification body will send the names of the candidates along with the resumes to the SAN Secretariat and confirm that the university degrees are legitimate;
- c. The SAN Secretariat coordinates looking over the content of the resumes and checking of the legitimacy of university degrees as well as phone calls to verify the experience of the candidates with personal references;
- d. The SAN Secretariat will review all the information and will approve participation in the course of those people that fulfilled requirement 1.1.a. The maximum number of participants in the course may not exceed 15;
- e. The SAN Secretariat coordinates the organization of the course, which will be taught by a registered SAN trainer;
- f. The registered SAN trainer will get in touch with the SAN Secretariat with respect to those participants that passed the course;

- g. The SAN Secretariat will give the names of the people who passed the course to an accredited SAN certification body in order to start the observation phase process with the certification body.
- h. The certification body will ensure the fulfillment of requirement 1.1.c) and send the corresponding documentation to the SAN Secretariat.
- i. The SAN Secretariat will analyze the information and, if appropriate, in each case shall register the respective observer within the SAN support auditor registry.
- j. The maintenance of this record is subject to requirements found in section 3.

2.2 Registration Process for Lead Auditors

- a. The certification body will inform the SAN Secretariat when the support auditor fulfills requirement 1.2 and will provide respective documentation.
- b. Upon confirming that the support auditor fulfilled the 1.2 requirement, the SAN Secretariat will register it with the SAN lead auditor registry.

2.3 Registration Process for Lead Group Auditors

- a. The certification body will inform the SAN Secretariat when the lead auditor fulfills requirement 1.3 and will provide respective documentation.
- b. Upon confirming that the SAN lead auditor fulfilled the 1.3 requirement, the SAN Secretariat will register it in the SAN lead group auditor registry.

3 Cancellation, Suspension and Withdrawal of Auditor Registration

3.1 Suspension of an Auditor

The suspension of an auditor means that an auditor cannot be authorized to audit for a SAN approved certification body. The suspension of an auditor can be changed again by the SAN Secretariat to the status of registered auditor if the certification body proves the respective corrective actions to the below mentioned conditions *a*, *b*, *c* or *d*. The SAN Secretariat may suspend a support auditor, lead auditor, or lead group auditor, if any of the following conditions are not met:

- a. Involvement in SAN Secretariat updates about new or modified SAN Standard documents;
- b. Carrying out a minimum of 40 hours or 5 days of audits (certification, annual, verification or research) per year;
- c. Insufficient knowledge regarding the applicable legislation as confirmed by the certification body;
- d. Not having complied with the performance evaluations of the certification body to verify aptitude to continue as an auditor;

An auditor who wants to be voluntarily suspended can be registered again at the SAN Secretariat, if compliance with the contents of sections 1 and 2 is confirmed by the SAN Secretariat.

3.2 Withdrawal of Auditor Registration

The SAN Secretariat can withdraw from its registers a support, lead or group auditor's registration and consequently remove him/her from the registry for an infinite period of time if any of the following situations are proven:

- a. Having received any gift from a client that contravenes the certification body's Code of Ethics;

- b. Mitigation procedures stipulated by the certification body, in communication with the SAN Secretariat, for any condition outlined in 3.1 have not been fulfilled within the time allotted.

TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Accredited SAN Lead Auditor with experience in group audits	Group auditor that has overseen at least three annual or certification group auditing processes.
Accredited SAN trainer	Professional authorized by the SAN secretariat to conduct the <i>SAN Auditor Candidate Course</i> .
Approved Certification Body	A Certification Body that has been granted approval to operate as a Certification Body with limitations by the Accreditation Body once it has met the following conditions: a) Applied for accreditation from the Accreditation Body; and b) Has undergone a document review by the Accreditation Body and has no outstanding nonconformities with required documented systems and processes; and c) Has signed the SAN Certification Body License Agreement.
Certification Body	An organization that decides to issue or cancels a certification by the SAN. A Certification Body may subcontract Inspection Bodies to undertake audits, and if so it controls the quality of their functions. Certification Bodies must become approved or accredited prior to being able to offer certifications to all clients.
Client	Farms or group administrators that apply for certification by the SAN are in process of being certified to SAN standards or who are certified to SAN standards.
Farm	A primary production unit subject to certification or audits.
Group Auditor	Authorized to head group auditing processes based on the requirements for <i>Group Certification Standards – Sustainable Agriculture Network</i> . He/she can lead an auditing team made up of support auditors.
Lead Auditor	A person with the skills to lead an audit (<i>Source: ISO 19011:2002(E)</i>). Authorized to oversee farm auditing processes. He/she can lead an auditing team made up of support auditors.
SAN Secretariat	A SAN member that acts as SAN’s International Secretariat in regards to standards and policy development, as well as the coordinator of the related processes.
SAN Standards	All current valid SAN standards, requirements and policies.
Support Auditor	Member of an auditing team headed by a registered lead auditor. After having completed 80 hours as a support auditor, then, he/she will become a lead auditor. Annual or certification auditing processes cannot be overseen alone.
Trainee	Person authorized by the certification body and the client to accompany an audit. The trainee must not interfere in the audit process and must agree with the instructions of the responsible lead auditor.