CERTIFICATION GUIDELINES

COMPOUND FEED MANUFACTURING (CFM)
Scope: Livestock and Aquaculture Feed
Version 2.2 August 2016. General Rules Version 5.2 Feb 2019

Edited by	Revised by	Approved by	issue
Technical Department Date: 08/02/2021	AQUA Operations Manager Date: 08/02/2021	Quality Manager Date: 08/02/2021	03
CAUSE OF THE NEW REVISION: - Adding of GLOBALG.A.P. Procedure for REMOTE audits.			

Certification Guideline Index

1. GLOBALG.A.P. CERTIFICATION SYSTEM BY ACERTA

1.1. Introduction

This document describes the certification processes for producers to be certified with ACERTA for the Program GLOBALG.A.P. Compound Feed Manufacturing (CFM) Scope: Livestock and Aquaculture feeds.

The scope of GLOBALG.A.P. Certification covers the following:

- The controlled production process of primary products. It does not cover wild fish/catch, extractive fisheries or wild harvest.
- Only products included in the GLOBALG.A.P. product list, published on the GLOBALG.A.P. website, can be registered for certification. The GLOBALG.A.P. product list is not limited and can be extended based on demand.
- Only products that are produced by producers themselves. Producers cannot receive certification for the production of products that are not produced by themselves.

1.2. Registration in the CFM-GLOBALG.A.P. Program: Application Procedure

1.2.1. Applicants

An applicant

- Cannot register the same product more than once with different CBs.
- Cannot register the same product more than once under different certification options.
- Can register different products with different CBs and/or different certification options.

a) New Applicant

When a new applicant contacts ACERTA in order to get information of the certification in accordance with the Compound Feed Manufacturing (CFM)-GLOBALG.A.P. Program, ACERTA's Commercial Department will contact the applicant requesting necessary information to propose a cost estimate.

Next, using the ACERTA management computer system (SIG), the quotation is made and reviewed by the Administration Manager.

The quotation includes the costs derived from the certification process and a specification of the items detailed in it: application procedure, management of the information in the GLOBALG.A.P. Database, certification audit, issuing of the "report", decision taking, and at the customer's request, any previous audit to the facilities. The method of payment is also specified in the quotation.

The applicant who wants to begin the certification shall send this quotation appropriately accepted. The Technical Department includes the accepted quotation in the SIG and files the computerized copy in the corresponding folder in local server.

Next, the Technical Department will send the applicant the related documentation.

- ***"Certification Request Form"***, document to be sent back to ACERTA completed to formalize the certification procedure. In this document the information concerning all aquaculture products (species) to be certified will be detailed.
- ***"Certification Agreement"***, between ACERTA and the applicant company, document where the conditions which will regulate the commercial relationship are specified. The duration of the contract will be 1 year.
- ***"Certification Guideline"***, document where the activities included in the certification process are detailed.
- ***"Declaration for Options 1"*** (in case of Cooperative Societies - Options 1 individual producer).
- ***"GLOBALG.A.P. Sublicense and Certification Agreement"***, Contract between the Certification Body (CB) and the producer. Sets the legal framework in order to grant the GLOBALG.A.P. Certification.

b) Certification maintenance: Renewal

Registered producers (i.e.: persons, companies, individual producers that are legally responsible for the production process and products covered within the scope) and/or producers with certified products must re-register annually **before the certificate expiry date.**

For this purpose, between 2 and 4 months before the expiry date, the Technical Department informs the holder of the certificate (or the relevant office) of the new activities of the certification maintenance to be carried out, by sending the documents to be completed and/or signed:

- ***Predefined quotation***
- ***"Certification Request Form"***
- ***"Certification Agreement"***
- ***"Certification Guidelines"***
- ***"Declaration for Options 1"***
- ***"GLOBALG.A.P. Sublicense and Certification Agreement"***

However, ACERTA shall apply the rules for initial (first) audit if the certificate expired for more than 12 months.

When a producer changes from one CB to another CB or requests the services of a new CB, it is not considered a first audit, but subsequent audit.

1.2.2. Request Form

Once the Technical Department has received all the documents related to the applicant's certification request:

- The Technical Department reviews the ***"Certification Request Form"*** sent by the applicant (including the data provided detailing production sites).
- A folder is also created in the local server for each applicant, appropriately identified with its corresponding code in order to file and maintain records.
- Once the ***"Certification Request Form"*** is reviewed, ACERTA will register the producer/Producer Group (including all group members) in the GLOBALG.A.P. Database (if the producer / producer group is registered with ACERTA for the first time) and will accept the information provided in the request form in the GLOBALG.A.P. Database, always within 28 calendar days after the registration, the Database will automatically send to the applicant an email confirming the file acceptation by ACERTA and his/her GGN. If the producer has its own GLN, he must declare it and it must be used.
- The Technical Department assigns a registration number (only for producers registered with ACERTA for the first time).

  The registration number (inscription number) for producers under option 1 and producer groups consists of the word ACERTA, followed by a four digit number.

  Example: ACERTA XXXX.

  The Technical Department registers the applicant's request in the ACERTA's SIG and create the file number: The file number consists of the acronym "GGCFM", the code assigned to the customer and the digits corresponding to the year in which the work is carried out, and the number of works carried out to this customer in this year (assigned by the system).

  Ej: GGCFM.00344-17/001

Any objective evidence found that indicates that the applicant has been misusing the GLOBALG.A.P. claim shall lead to the exclusion of the applicant from certification for 12 months after evidence of misuse. In addition, the applicants will be listed and the list must be checked before registration in the database. Any case of misuse shall be communicated to the GLOBALG.A.P. members.

GLOBALG.A.P. registration fees are generated once ACERTA registers and accepts the aquaculture products in GLOBALG.A.P. database. This admission starts the invoicing of registration costs. Only ACERTA is allowed to register and accept products in the GLOBALG.A.P. database.

1.2.3. Evaluation of Request Form and Issuing of Working Order

The Operation Manager or GLOBALG.A.P. Scheme Manager will draw up a working Program by using the SIG from the review made to the **"Certification Request Form"**. He/she will assign an auditor team, determine the appropriate working days, define the interval of dates to undertake the audits, and inform the auditor or auditor team, in writing, of the assignation and sample to be carried out, by way of the **"Working Order"**.

1.3. Previous Visit

At the applicant's request, ACERTA will perform a previous visit.

Initially, the designated auditor team for carrying out the work agrees the date of the visit with the applicant usually by telephone or email. Then, the applicant is sent the ***Audit Plan***, where the date of the audit is confirmed, and all the information and activities to be carried out and the persons involved, are detailed. Simultaneously, the auditor sends the Technical Department a copy of this document, to be registered in the SIG.

The visit will be carried out by the auditor team, either ACERTA own staff or subcontracted, and it will begin with an initial meeting with the producer or his/her representative. In this previous audit, the compliance of the producers and production sites detailed by the applicant will be assessed in accordance with the GLOBALG.A.P. Program. It will end with a closing meeting and the findings will be mentioned to the producer.

The auditor team who carries out this visit will prepare a ***Previous Visit Report***, where all non-compliances detected will be detailed and the applicant will be informed of the continuation of the process moving forward. The Technical Department will send a copy of this report to the applicant within 15 days from the end of the previous visit.

In this stage of the process, the applicant shall not be requested a corrective action proposal.

1.4. Audit

If a previous visit has been carried out, from the reception of the report, the applicant may contact ACERTA in order to request the continuation of the process. In the same way, ACERTA will be able to contact the applicant if the time elapsed since the report was sent is considered long enough to know the applicant's intentions as to the continuation of the certification process.

It can be possible that from the initial ***"Certification Request Form"*** to the audit, one or more modifications related to the scope to be certified can arise. If any change is made regarding the initial recorded information, the producer shall inform ACERTA to carry out the corresponding changes.

Only in the case of remote audits, the producer must send to ACERTA the document **GLOBALGAP & GRASP Agreement for remote audits** duly filled out and signed as a signal of acceptance of all the conditions applicable to this kind of audits.

REMOTE inspections/audits for all certification options will be carried out following the current official GLOBALG.A.P. Remote Procedure.

In case the producer opts to use the **Off-site Module** exclusively under the **Remote** Audit Procedure the process will follow the current official GLOBALG.A.P. procedures.

Once the auditor designated has received the ***"Working Order"***, the audit date will be agreed with the applicant (by telephone, email…).

In preparation for the audit, the auditor will confirm that the information received is correct.

When all the issues related to the scope of the audit have been set, the auditor will prepare the ***"Audit Plan"***, and send it to the applicant and ACERTA's Technical Department. If the applicant does not agree with any aspect, he/she will be able to notify it within the 3 subsequent days after the communication. In this case, the auditor or the Technical Department and the applicant shall have to reach an agreement and a new ***"Audit Plan"*** will be sent.

The auditor shall communicate to the Technical Department any information found during the audit that it is not correctly reflected in the ***"Certification Request Form"*** or in the ***"Working order"***.

1.4.1. Audit Development

The certification audit will begin with an initial meeting in which the auditor team and the representatives of the company will be introduced. The methodology to be followed during the audit will be explained and the power point document "Presentation of the GLOBALG.A.P. Program" may be used.

During the audit, the methodology described and defined in the GLOBALG.A.P. Program will be followed.

The audit will finish with a closing meeting in which the auditor team will inform the representative of the company of the findings, identifying all the control points in which non compliances have been detected (differentiating Major Musts, Minor Musts and Recommendations).

1.4.2. Documents

The following documents will be used during the on-site audit:

***1. Audit report*:** (Instructions/Front Page/Feedmill Check List)
The auditor must use the currently approved Audit Report on file.

***2. Traceability test*:**
The auditor must carry out a traceability test.

***3. Audit Final Conclusions*:** (Feedmill Check Results)
The auditor will print the appropriate page of ***"Audit Final conclusions"***, selected from the electronic file "GLOBALG.A.P. Checklist" and the company's representative and the auditor will both sign the **"Audit Final conclusions"** as evidence of this being carried out, and **a copy will be given to the auditee** detailing the non-compliant control points detected. An electronic copy will be sent to ACERTA's Head Office. A documented or electronic confirmation by the producer is equal to the 'signature' of the producer.

4. Corrective Action Plan (CA PLAN):
Each non-compliance will be detailed together with the auditor's motivation in a **Corrective Action Plan** – a table that is part of the electronic file **"GLOBALG.A.P. Checklist"** – and **a copy of this table** will be given to the producer/producer group in order to facilitate the implementation of the corrective actions (if needed). In this document the auditor will indicate if the detected non-compliance is a non-conformance.

1.4.3. Timing

The deadline for closing the CA PLAN will be:

I. If the non-compliance implies a non-conformance:

(See Control Program Chapter 3: Assessment criteria)
The audited company will prepare and submit the corrective action proposal, which shall include the description of the measures taken to solve the non-conformance, the term for its implementation and the responsible person, as well as the evidence of the implementation and, where appropriate, the effectiveness of these measures. The applicant has the following timeframes to close the CA PLAN:

(i) For Initial Certification Audits:
- This section is applicable to producers seeking GLOBALG.A.P. Certification for the first time.
- A maximum term of **3 months since audit date**.
- If an individual producer or producer group does not comply with **100% of Major Must and 95% Minor Must control points** within 28 days after an initial audit, the status "open non-conformance" is set in the GLOBALG.A.P. Database.
- The status "open non-conformance" cannot be given to producer group members' products.
- If the status "open non-conformance" is set and no corrective actions are sent to close the CA PLAN in a maximum term of **3 months since audit date** an initial audit will need to be performed again at producer's expense to continue with the certification process (harvesting process will not need to be observed again).

(ii) For Renewal Audits:
- A maximum term of **28 calendar days since audit date.**
- Each non-conformance shall be assessed in accordance with *Chapter 3: Assessment Criteria.*
- If **28 calendar days have passed after the initial audit** before closing the CA PLAN, ACERTA will set the status "suspension of product" in database.

If the non-conformance is against a **Major Must, the General Requirements or contractual**, the period given for compliance before suspension is applied will be decided between the audit team and the Operations Manager or Scheme Manager. This period shall never exceed 28 days and may be shortened according to the criticality of the non-conformance in terms of safety of workers, environment and consumers. An immediate suspension shall be issued where a serious threat to food safety, the safety of workers, the environment, consumers and/or product integrity. The decision will be communicated through a direct communication by warning letter.

If no corrective actions are sent in the established time, ACERTA will apply the required sanction.

In the case that non-compliances are a non-conformance, the auditor must send all the related documents to the Technical Department as soon as the non-conformance is considered closed, within 28 days (or 3 months if the Open Non-Conformance Status has been issued) after audit.

When assessing the corrective actions, the adequacy of the measures taken to solve the non-conformances, their implementation stage and their effectiveness will be considered. For this purpose, other audits, analyses, etc., can be also be required, being this determined, in that case, by the Operation Manager or Scheme Manager.

In this case, the applicant will be informed of the necessity of undertaking a new audit, its scope and his/her acceptance, in writing, of the additional costs derived from it, which will be specified also in writing. Once the applicant has accepted it, the Administration Manager will issue and send the corresponding invoice to the applicant.

II. If the non-compliance does not imply a non-conformance:

The producer will be able to choose if he wants to make and submit the corrective action proposal, which shall include the description of the measures taken to solve the non-compliance, the term for its implementation and the responsible person, as well as the evidence of the implementation and, where appropriate, the effectiveness of these measures.

In this case, the evidence of corrective actions will be sent to the auditor **within 7 calendar days after audit date**.

The auditor should send all the above documents to the Technical Department no later than 1 week if the producer chooses not to submit corrective actions and 2 weeks if the client chooses to submit the corrective action proposal.

In both cases, from the conclusions obtained from the assessment of the corrective action proposals provided by the applicant, the auditor makes the **"Corrective Action Assessment Report"** – format included within the digital file **"GLOBALG.A.P. Checklist"** (CA PLAN) – which includes the table of the Corrective Action Plan submitted by the company, where each corrective action has been reviewed by the auditor, the final result of compliance level and the advice about the certification (or not certification) is stated.

The auditor in charge of the file is responsible for giving the Technical Department all the appropriate documentation in electronic format: **Audit Reports, Traceability test** *(included in a separate tab within the Audit Report)***, Final conclusions of the audit, Corrective Action Assessment Report** and **evidence of implementation** (where applicable) provided by the company.

1.5. Certification decision

All the reports will be filed in electronic format by the Technical Department in the corresponding folder in the local server, which is the responsible of this action.

In order the certification decision to be taken, the responsible person, in accordance with the decision-making structure detailed in the quality procedure "Assessment of the results and certificate awarding", will take into account what is described in the chapter 3: Assessment Criteria of GLOBALG.A.P. Control Program.

To begin the decision-making process, the Technical Department will be in charge of providing the documents to be assessed, including at least: **Certification Request Form, Audit Reports, Final Conclusions of the audit, Traceability Test, Corrective Action Plan Assessment Report** and **evidence of implementation** provided by the company.

The Technical Department will be responsible for this process to be completed, providing to the person responsible for making the **decision** with all the necessary documents for that purpose.

The certification decision will not be delayed more than **28 calendar days** after the producer has shown sufficient evidence of corrective actions and closed the Corrective Action Plan, or 28 calendar days since audit date, in the case that non-compliances detected do not imply a non-conformance.

1.6. Notification of certification decision and Certificate.

1.6.1. Favorable decision

As soon as the decision has been satisfactory, according with Control Program Chapter 3: Assessment Criteria, the Technical Department shall update the information in the GLOBALG.A.P. Database and GLOBALG.A.P. will send an automatic notification to the registered e-mail confirming the certification of the producer.

The Technical Department will issue and send the **Certificate of Conformity** and Technical Annex (if applicable) for the corresponding GGN, including all the information required by the General Regulations and according to the information available in the GLOBALG.A.P. Database at that moment. Additionally, the GLOBALG.A.P. and ACERTA's User guidelines of trademark will be provided for the product (certified fish) once the payment has been confirmed. If the payment is not confirmed, the Technical Department will inform the producer about the satisfactory decision and will send the certificate once the payment has been confirmed.

Validity dates of the certificate will be the following:

Valid from:

Initial certification: The initial date of validity is the date on which the ACERTA makes the certification decision.
Subsequent certifications: The "valid from" date for subsequent certificates issued shall always revert to the "valid from" date in the original certificate except when the certification decision is made after the expiration of the previous certificate. In this case the "valid from" date shall coincide with the date of the certification decision.

Valid to:

Initial certification: Date "valid from" plus 1 year minus 1 day. ACERTA may shorten the certification cycle and the validity but cannot prolong it unless an extension is given following Point 1.11 of this document.
Subsequent certifications: The validity date for subsequent certificates issued shall always revert to the "valid to" date on the original certificate.

If a certificate that was not extended nor "re-accepted" expires and the subsequent audit (to be performed by the same CB) is going to take place in less than 12 months after the expiration date, a new certification cycle should start. The old cycle can be reinstated by setting the same "valid to" date as before (ACERTA shall apply the rules for initial (first) audit if the certificate expired for more than 12 months).

The cycle remains the same if the certificate was extended.

Other considerations

ACERTA or their subcontracted parties may issue communications other than the certificate related to the producer status (registered, audited, etc.) as long as it is clear that it is not a certificate and it contains the sentence: The actual GLOBALG.A.P. status of this producer is always displayed at: www.globalgap.org/search.

Initial audits and products registered for the first time

This section is applicable to producers seeking GLOBALG.A.P. Certification for the first time, and to producers who want to add a new product to an already existing GLOBALG.A.P. Certificate. No audit can take place until ACERTA has accepted the applicant's registration.

Each feed mill registered and accepted for certification for the first time **must be completely assessed** (all applicable control points must be verified) **prior to issuing the certificate**. In initial audits, once the decision is favourable, a sole Certificate of Conformity will be issued for the legal entity (applicant) including all the products whose production process has been completely assessed. The certification cycle (certificate validity) will be set for each legal entity (GGN) and will be sole and the same for all audited feed mills, being independent of the date when the audits of the different feed mills have been carried out.

No product will be certified before registration with GLOBALG.A.P.

Records that relate to harvest or product handling before the producer has registered with GLOBALG.A.P. are not valid.

Renewal audits

In subsequent years, the certificate issued after the favorable decision of the renewal audit, will include all feed mills belonging to the legal entity (applicant) (those that were registered and audited for this cycle and were in previous certificate). The certification cycle (certificate validity) will be set for each legal entity (GGN) and will be sole and the same for all audited feed mills, being independent of the date when the audits of the different feed mills have been carried out.

1.6.2. Unfavorable Decision.

When the decision is unfavourable, the applicant may communicate his/her disagreement within the following **30 calendar days** after receiving the certification decision notification, or it may request an extraordinary audit which will have to be carried out within six months, having previously accepted the additional costs derived from it.

If the applicant does not agree with the decision, the Technical Department will provide him/her the Appeals registration form. Once ACERTA has received it duly completed, the appeal procedure described in the quality procedure "Complaints, appeals and lawsuits" will be followed

1.7. Unannounced Audits

ACERTA shall carry out unannounced audits to 10% of the certified producers in Option 1 during the valid period of the certificate. The methodology to carry out these audits is explained in Chapter 2 of ACERTA's Control Program.

In the case of a favourable decision of an Unannounced Audit, ACERTA will send to the auditee a letter informing of the favourable report issued.

1.8. Unannounced Reward Program

Producers of animal feed (CFM) cannot participate of the Unannounced Reward Program as this Program is only applicable to GLOBALG.A.P. Integrated Farm Assurance (IFA) standards.

1.9. Registration of additional producers / production sites

- **Option 1:**

Additions in case of Option 1 may be carried out during the cycle of validity of a certificate, always subject to a favourable certification decision taken by ACERTA and based on in situ audit or in a documentary study. This decision will be taken by the Operations Manager.

The decision shall depend on the type of addition and the existing risk. That risk shall depend on several aspects: **new areas of expansion of the facility, if there are new processing lines for new species** (see section 2.1.2. - Certification / Renewal Audit), **the geographical location** of the new production site, etc.

1.10. Extension of the certificate validity

ACERTA may extend the certificate beyond the 12 months for a maximum period of 4 months (12 months + 4 months, 16 months in total), only if there is a valid reason, which has to be recorded. The following conditions must be met:

- On producer's demand, ACERTA (the CB who issued the certificate extended) re-accepts the product in the GLOBALG.A.P. Database for the full next cycle within the original validity period of the certificate.
- The full certification license fee and registration fee shall be paid for the next cycle.
- The producer shall be re-audited during the extension period.

The only reasons that are considered to be valid for an extension are the following:

- ACERTA wants to schedule the on-site audit after the certificate has expired in order to observe a certain part of the production process because it was not seen in the previous audit/audit, because it is considered to be a high-risk process in terms of product safety, or to be able to see a newly added product, process or a new or particular member of a producer group.
- ACERTA needs to be able to extend some certificates because of resource restraints.
- ACERTA was not able to conduct the on-site audit and/or the producer was not able to receive the CB audit due to circumstances beyond its control (force majeure) e.g.: natural disaster, political instability in the region, epidemic or unavailability of the producer due to medical reasons.

The producer cannot change the CB in the cycle subsequent to the one for which the extension was granted.

In this case, the cycle remains the same.

1.11. Transfer between Certification Bodies

Transfer between Certification Bodies takes place when a producer that is found in the GLOBALG.A.P. Database changes from the original GLOBALG.A.P. approved CB (outgoing CB) to ACERTA (accepting CB).

Only producers found in the GLOBALG.A.P. database and that are **not sanctioned** will be accepted by ACERTA. Producers must first solve any outstanding sanction before being able to transfer to ACERTA. Moreover, for accepting the transfer, the producer shall sign the Sublicense and Certification Agreement with ACERTA.

ACERTA will keep the existing GGN of the transferred producer/producer group.

A certificate is not transferable from one owner to another when a production site changes the legal entity or owner. In this case a complete audit, following the rules for renewal audit, is required. The new legal entity shall receive a new GGN.

1.11.1. Producer transfer

This type of transfer of a producer from other CB to ACERTA takes place after the producer's certificates has expired as long as there is no binding service contract between producer and the original CB. The producer will apply for certification for the next cycle to ACERTA. It is not necessary to wait until the current certificate has expired to initiate certification request to ACERTA.

Prior to any transfers the Operations Manager or Scheme Manager or the Technical Department will carry out a review of the certification status of the potential customer checking the GLOBALG.A.P. database and documents provided.

Minimum requirements to be reviewed:

- Firstly, **a search in the GLOBALG.A.P. Database** will be carried out, in order to verify the current status of the producer and the certificate – in terms of authenticity, duration, and scope of activities covered in respect of the site or sites wished to be transferred.
- In particular, when a producer **has a sanction** applied by the outgoing CB, which **has not yet been closed out**. In cases where sanctions are outstanding, the sanction must be resolved and closed out with the outgoing CB **before** any transfer of the producer to ACERTA.
- Whether any **contractual commitments** with the outgoing CB are still outstanding, which would impede a correct transfer.
- A consideration of the last evaluation/re-evaluation reports, subsequent surveillance reports and any outstanding non-conformities arising there from. This consideration should also include any other available, relevant documentation regarding the certification process (i.e.: handwritten notes, verification list, complaints received, and corrective actions taken, etc.).

Two situations are possible:

Expired certificate

If the date of acceptance (signing of Sublicense and Certification Agreement) and the date of audit are AFTER the certificate from the outgoing CB expired, there will be a period when the producer does not have a valid certificate.

If the certificate with the other CB has expired when ACERTA receives the request form, ACERTA will carry out an **initial audit** (see point 1.6.1. b about Initial audits and species registered for the first time).

Valid certificate

If the date of acceptance (signing of Sublicense and Certification Agreement) and perhaps also the date of audit is BEFORE the certificate from the outgoing CB expired, the certification decision can only take effect as soon as the certificate expires. In this case, the certification cycle of the producer will remain the same as before. If, during the validity of the certificate issued by the outgoing CB, the accepting CB detects non-conformities that are

not closed after 28 days, then ACERTA shall inform GLOBALG.A.P. about the non-conformities detected so that appropriate actions can be taken.

If the producer has a valid certificate with the other CB when ACERTA receives the request form, ACERTA will carry out a **renewal audit** (see point 1.6.1. c about Renewals).

1.12. Complaints, appeals and lawsuits

For the purposes of this document, the following definitions are established:

Complaint: Act by which a natural or legal person states his/her disagreement with ACERTA's procedures in any issue related to its activity (administrative, economic, technical, etc).

Appeal: Act by which a natural or legal person states his/her disagreement with a decision made by ACERTA.

Lawsuit: Act by which a natural or legal person or even ACERTA decides to settle the resolution of any discrepancy to the arbitration of a third party.

Complaints: Any natural or legal person will have the right to issue a complaint against ACERTA. The complaints may be communicated orally or in writing. In both cases, ACERTA shall record it in the corresponding Complaints Form. The complaint will be internally assessed by ACERTA. Where required by the complaint, the applicant will be informed of the decisions adopted as soon as possible.

Appeals: Any customer or applicant for certification will have the right to give notice of appeal against the decisions adopted by ACERTA. In this case, he/she shall have to communicate it in writing (fax or letter) addressed to ACERTA's Management, using for this purpose the Appeals Form, and explaining the reasons by which he/she does not agree with the adopted decision. ACERTA's Management will assess the case and will inform the applicant of the decisions adopted within a maximum period of 10 days.

The decisions made are not susceptible to be appealed again.

Lawsuits: Lawsuits arising in connection with the certification or any other activity between ACERTA and other party, will be handled by the Court of Arbitration of the Madrid Chamber of Commerce and Industry that will appoint the arbitrator who will resolve in accordance and following the rules of its own Court.

Note: Notifications about changes on certification requirements is done through ACERTA's web site: www.acerta-cert.com