ÍNDEX

1. INTRODUCTION

1. The official language for all documents associated with the *Small Producers´ Symbol* is Spanish. In the case of any doubt arising from a translated version, the Spanish document shall be used as the only valid version
2. This document cancels and replaces:

   Registration Procedures for Buyers

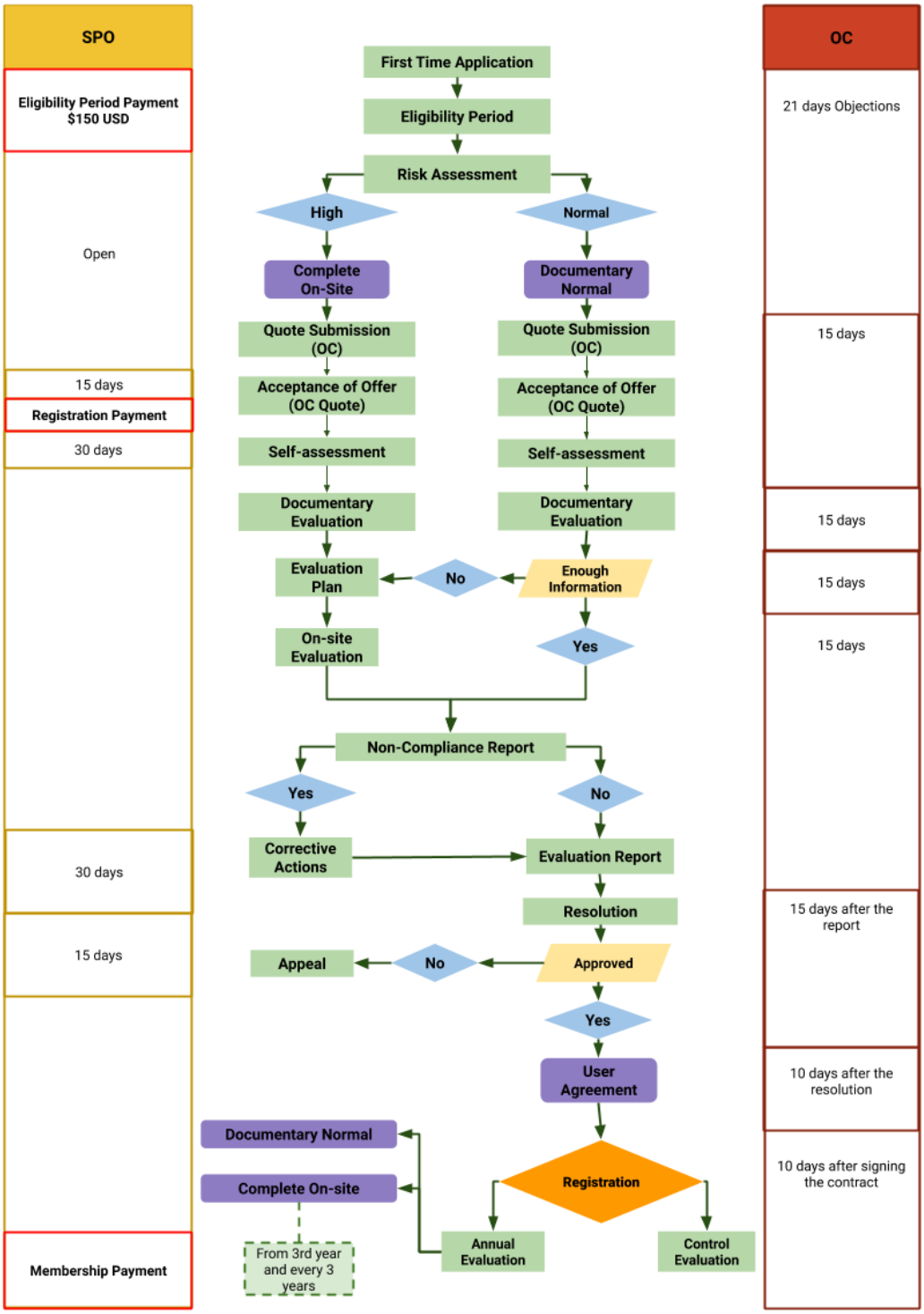
   Small Producers´ Symbol

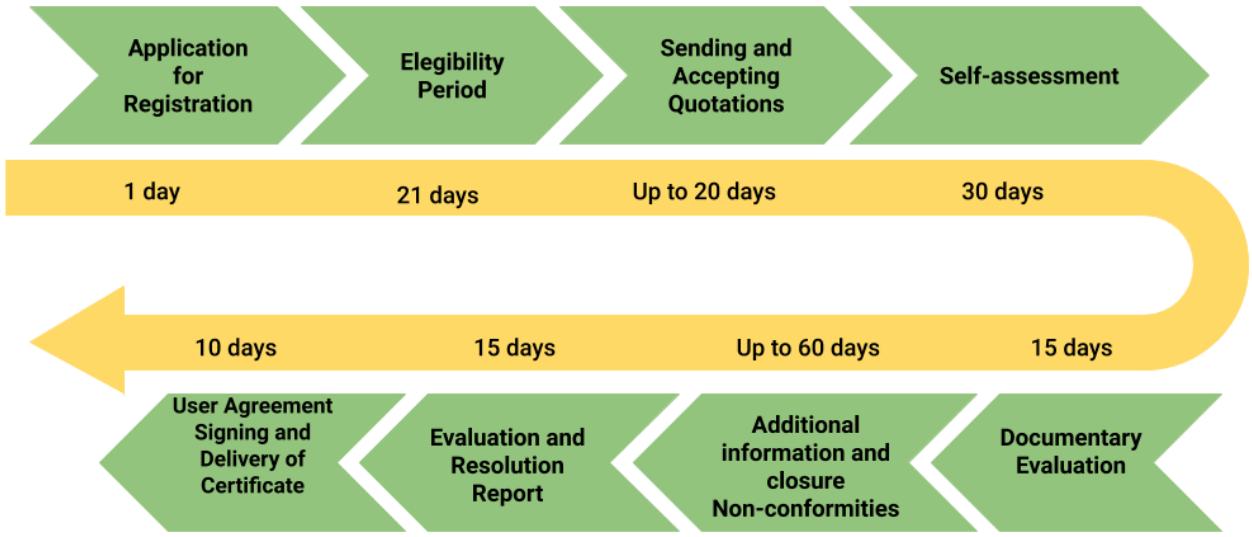
   Version 7. 31-Jul-2019

   Edition 1. 31-Jul -2019

   Translation 12-Dec-2019
3. ISO 19011: 2002 Guidelines for quality and/or environmental management systems auditing have been used as the basis for developing these procedures.
4. These procedures fulfill the ISO/17065 Standard “Conformity assessment - Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services”.
5. If you would like to see the changes between this new edition and the previous one, please consult the chart listing the changes, presented at the end of this document.

2. DIAGRAM OF PROCESS





Note:[1]

3. OBJECTIVE

To establish the procedures that must be carried out by the Certification Entity when registering Buyers, Collective Trading Companies owned by SPO´s, Intermediaries and Maquila Companies that comply with the General Standard of the *Small Producers´ Symbol.*

4. SCOPE

4.1 These procedures apply to all Final Buyers, Collective Trading Companies owned by SPO´s, Intermediaries and Maquila Companies that wish to apply for Registration based on the General Standard.

4.2 These procedures may be applied in combination with other registration procedures of other registration programs.

4.3 It is important to become familiar with all the procedures in order to understand the different parts of this registration process and the types of evaluations mentioned in this document, to then be able to apply each of the separate components correctly.

[1] If there is an expeditious collaboration between all the actors, the minimum estimated time is 60 days. In case of complications in the Eligibility Period, the Certification Process can be extended up to 4 or 5 months.

5. REFERENCES

To carry out these procedures, it is necessary to consult the valid versions of the following documents:

a. General Standard of the *Small Producers´ Symbol*

b. Code of Conduct of the *Small Producers´ Symbol*

c. Guidelines for defining the Work Plan for an Evaluation of Compliance

d. Dissents Procedures

e. Risk Determination Procedures

f. Examination Procedures

g. Regulation on Costs

h. Procedures for Issuance, Modification and Extension of Certificates and Registrations of Conformity

i. General SPP Application Guidelines

j. Collective Certification Guidelines

k. List of Requirements for Final Buyers

6. DEFINITIONS

a. **Corrective Action:** An action presented in the case of Non-Compliance with Criteria in the General Standard of the *Small Producers´ Symbol.*

b. **Cancellation:** Total annulment of the validity of an SPP certificate or registration of an organization or company, as a result of a certain failure to comply with the SPP Regulatory Framework. The status obtained in this case is “Cancelled.”

c. **Examination Committee of the Certification Entity:** The Examination Committee or staff of *SPP Global* or any other Certification Entity recognized by *SPP Global.*

d. **Final Buyer:** A company that buys products certified with the *Small Producers´ Symbol* to place them on the final consumer market under its own name or trademark, and that complies with the respective criteria in the applicable Standards of the Small Producer’s Symbol.

e. **Collective Trading Companies owned by Small Producers´ Organizations (C-SPO):** Companies that are majority-owned by two or more Small Producers’ Organizations certified with the *Small Producers´ Symbol,* and that trade products certified with the *Small Producers´ Symbol* to place them on the market.

f. **Criteria:** The criteria defined in the General Standard of the *Small Producers´ Symbol.*

g. **Critical Criteria**: The criteria for these standards that are qualified as critical are mandatory and will be evaluated in all cases, including as part of desktop assessments. Non-Compliance with these criteria will directly impact Certification and Registration results.

h. **Minimum Criteria:** The minimum criteria are mandatory, but will only be evaluated through evaluations that include an On-Site visit. Failure to comply with these criteria will directly impact Certification and Registration results.

i. **Continuous Improvement Criteria:** Criteria that are evaluated according to the range of possibilities for compliance within a specific context. They are only evaluated by means of an On-Site evaluation. Unjustified Non-compliance with these criteria will impact Certification and Registration results.

j. **Deactivation:** Temporally annulment of the validity of a certificate or registration requested voluntarily by the organization or company. The status obtained in this case is “Inactive.”

k. **Day:** Calendar Day

l. **Evaluation:** A systematic, independent and documented process used to obtain and analyze facts in an objective manner, in order to determine the level of compliance with criteria.

m. **Control Evaluation:** An On-Site evaluation that is randomly carried out on a yearly basis among 10% of the certified Small Producers’ Organizations and registered Buyers through the Quick Procedure and among 5% of the certified Small Producers’ Organizations and registered Buyers through the Complete Procedure.

n. **Monitoring Evaluation:** A programmed evaluation that is conducted exclusively to evaluate the Corrective Actions requested in the resolution.

o. **On-Site Evaluation:** An on-site evaluation at the location(s) where activities of the organization or company to be evaluated take place, to verify compliance with the Standard**.**

p. **Document-based Evaluation:** An evaluation focused exclusively on documents that verify compliance with the Standard, to be presented or sent by the applicant to the evaluator.

q. **Annual Evaluation:** An annual evaluation that is conducted to verify if the conditions under which registration was granted, have been maintained.

r. **Evaluate:** Applicant subject to an evaluation in order to obtain Certification or Registration.

s. **Evaluator:** A person assigned by *SPP Global* or the Certification Entity who is responsible for the process of evaluating the applicant.

t. **Objective Evidence:** Records, declarations of facts, or any other information that can be verified and reproduced.

u. ***SPP Global*:** Symbol of Organized Small Producers, a Civil Association (*Símbolo de Pequeños Productores Organizados, Asociación Civil*).

v. **Evaluation Findings:** Results of the evaluation of objective evidence, showing compliance or Non-Compliance with criteria.

w. **Intermediaries (INT)**: Trading companies that buy and sell *Small Producers´ Symbol* products, and do not place these products on the final consumer market under their own name or trademark.

x. **Maquila Companies (MAQ):** Service providers that intervene in the trading or processing of products, but do not buy or sell these products.

y. **SPP Regulatory Framework:** The set of standards, procedures, regulations, guidelines, policies, codes and forms that regulate the program of certification, registration, use and authorization of the *Small Producers´ Symbol.* The Declaration of Principles and Values of the *Small Producers´ Symbol* expresses the basic philosophy of the Regulatory Framework, but is not part of it.

z. **Offer:** Proposal for costs and characteristics of a service.

aa. **Certification Entity (CE)**: CE authorized by *SPP Global* to operate the certification or registration program for the *Small Producers´ Symbol.* In exceptional cases in which authorized CEs are unable to provide the service requested in a timely manner, *SPP Global* may serve as a CE.

bb. **Small Producers' Organization (SPO)**: A Small Producers' Organization that meets the criteria for Small Producers' Organizations in the General Standard of the *Small Producers´ Symbol.* When a trading company is part of the structure of a single Small Producers' Organization that is certified with the *Small Producers´ Symbol,* it is considered to be part of the Small Producers' Organization.

cc. **First-Level Small Producers' Organization:** SPO whose members are producers and individuals.

dd. **Second-Level Small Producers' Organization:** SPO whose members are first-level SPOs (and occasionally members of a first-level SPO and/or individuals).

ee. **Third-Level Small Producers' Organization:** SPO whose members are second-level SPOs (and occasionally members of a first-level SPO and/or individuals).

ff. **Fourth-Level Small Producers' Organization:** SPO whose members are third-level SPOs (and occasionally members of a second-level or first-level SPO and/or individual members).

gg. **Observation related to the Continuous Improvement Criteria:** An observation carried out by the Certification Entity, related to compliance with the Continuous Improvement Criteria specified in the General Standard of the *Small Producers´ Symbol*.

hh. **Documental based Procedure:** Consists exclusively of a Document-based Evaluation of compliance with the applicable Critical Criteria specified in the General Standard, as part of a Certification or Registration process.

ii. **Complete Procedure:** Includes a Document-based Evaluation and an On-Site Evaluation of compliance with all applicable criteria specified in the General Standard, as part of a Certification or Registration process.

jj. **Applicant:** Those applying for Certification or Registration with the *Small Producers´ Symbol*.

kk. **Suspension:** Temporary annulment of the validity of a certificate or registration of an organization or company, as a result of certain failure to comply with the SPP Regulatory Framework. The status obtained in this case is "Suspended".

Other important definitions and abbreviations are reflected in the various documents mentioned.

7. GENERAL PROCEDURES

a. REGISTRATION OPTIONS AND TYPES OF EVALUATION

i. Following are the current Registration Procedures

Document-based Procedure:

1. **Normal:** Consists exclusively of a Document-based Evaluation of compliance by BUY, C-SPO- INT, MAQ, applying for certification with the applicable Critical Criteria specified in the General Standard.
2. **Complete Procedure On Site:** Consists of an evaluation on site for all applicable criteria (critical, minimum and continuous improvement) of the General Standard by Final Buyers, Collective Trading Companies, Intermediaries and Maquila Companies to be registered.

ii. The Registration Procedure for Final Purchasers, Collective Trading Companies owned by SPO's, Intermediaries and Maquiladoras will be carried out according to the following certification scheme:

Year 0	Normal Documentary Procedure
Year 1:	Normal Documentary Procedure
Year 2:	**Complete On-site** Procedure
Year 3:	Normal Documentary Procedure
Year 4:	Normal Documentary Procedure
Year 5:	**Complete On-site** Procedure
Year 6:	Normal Documentary Procedure

Year 7: Normal Documentary Procedure

iii. If the applicant prefers, the Complete On-site Procedure may be applied in any case, instead of the Document-based Procedure.

iv. If there were no SPP transactions in the previous year, Document-based Procedure may be applied instead of Complete On-Site Procedure

v. If in the previous year there have been SPP transactions, Complete On-Site Procedure must be applied, even though the SPP number of transactions is low.

vi. Companies handling SPP transactions with a value less than or equal to $125,000 USD per year in the immediate previous cycle and involving less than 5 import transactions, may opt for the complete remote evaluation instead of performing the on-site evaluation every third year[2].

vii. In cases when SPP transactions are more than US $ 3,000,000.00, in all cases Complete On Site Procedure must be applied

viii. In any case, if the Document-based Procedure does not provide sufficient information to establish compliance with the Critical Criteria specified in the General Standard, it must be complemented with an on-site Evaluation.

ix. In this case the Certification Entity will make a proposal for costs based only on expenses incurred in the complementary evaluation on site conducted for verifying the missing information.

x. Non-conformity notes, changes in legal status and other drastic changes in a company´s may cause the CE to request control evaluations (with an On-site evaluation) in the years corresponding to a Document-based Evaluation, with prior authorization from *SPP Global*.[3]

b. APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION

i. Final Buyers, Small Producers' Organizations Marketers, Intermediaries and Maquiladoras interested in the Registration can contact *SPP Global*, or request, through the website or by email, a package including the following information:

a) *Small Producers´ Symbol* Handbook

b) General Standard of the *Small Producers´ Symbol*

c) Declaration of Principles and Values of the *Small Producers´ Symbol*

d) Code of Conduct of the *Small Producers´ Symbol*

[2] The third-year distance evaluation shall be complete (Complete Distance Evaluation), evaluating Critical, Minimum and Continuous Improvement Criteria of the SPP general standard

[3] After the application of the Complete Procedure On Site, the Document-based Procedure is applied two continuous years, as established in 7.1.2

e) Application Form for Registration and Use of the *Small Producers´ Symbol*

ii. *SPP Global* clarifies any doubts expressed by the applicant;

iii. *SPP Global* informs the companies that they must send their application through the D-SPP digital system and take the necessary actions;

iv. The applicant's authorized representative must send the Application for Registration duly completed, using the SPP digital system[4];

v. Interested parties must attach Organic Certificates or similar to the applications for Registration of those products to be included in the SPP certification.

vi. *SPP Global* will review the Registration Application for correct completion; and approve or reject it;

vii. If the application is not properly completed, *SPP Global* informs the Applicant to submit a corrected or supplemented version;

viii. At the time *SPP Global* receives the application, an SPP Identification Code (#SPP) is assigned.

Note:

a. *Companies should, as far as possible, indicate the SPP Identification Code (#SPP) on all documentation generated for commercial transactions of products certified under the Small Producers' Symbol.*

c. ELIGIBILITY PERIOD

Once the Registration Application is submitted and the Initial Application Fee has been verified, corresponding to $150 U.S.D, the eligibility period begins for which 21 days are established.

i. The Evaluation Report (for the Eligibility Period) must be completed in all cases, as part of the Eligibility Period. This Evaluation Report evaluates critical criteria from the SPP General Standard, SPP Code of Conduct and SPP Principles and Values. This report will be shared only with the Certification Entity involved. Only the Resolution is shared with the Applicant, not this Evaluation Report.

ii. In cases where Phase II of the Eligibility Period is carried out, the Resolution must bear signatures of the Head of the Certification Area and the Executive Director. In the cases where only Phase I applies, it must bear the signature of the Head of the Certification and Quality Area

The Eligibility Process is divided into three phases:

i. Desk research and general objection consultation;

ii. Request for additional documentation and information from the evaluated party;

iii. Make an on-site visit.

During the first 14 days of the 21-day period, the *SPP Global* Certification and Quality area conducts a background review of the applicant Buyer, using the following methodology:

[4] As of September 1, 2016, all Final Buyers applying for D-SPP registration for the first time or renewing their registration must submit their application through the digital D-SPP system. In addition, they must carry out the actions indicated in the D-SPP instructions for Final Buyers...

i) Phase 1: Desk research and general objection consultation

1. The applicant's intention to become certified is made public on the website and notification of this intention is given to all users who are certified, registered, authorized, and to related producers' networks. There is a period of 15 days for any objections to the Applicant's Certification. Objections presented to *SPP Global* must be supported by concrete and verifiable information, regarding non-compliance with the Standard and/or Code of Conduct of the *Small Producers' Symbol.*
2. SPP actors and coordination structures in the country concerned are contacted directly.
3. The origin and background of the applicant in question is reviewed, making use of public information and eventually through direct interviews.
4. Objections submitted by third parties are reviewed for compliance.
5. If elements of non-compliance with the Standard and/or the Code of Conduct of the Small Producers' Symbol are detected, *SPP Global's* Certification and Quality area prepares an "Objection Note" and sends it to the *SPP Global's* Dissents Committee.
6. If there are no elements of non-compliance with the Standard and/or Code of Conduct for the *Small Producers' Symbol,* the Certification and Quality area of *SPP Global* notifies the CB, no later than the end of the 14-day period, to start the registration process.
7. In the event of an objection, the *SPP Global* Dissents Committee must analyze the objection and respond within a period of no more than 5 days. The Dissents Committee's Resolution can be positive or negative, or it can request the *SPP Global* Certification and Quality area to proceed with a more in-depth investigation within a given time frame.
8. If in the first 5 days, the Dissents Committee gives a positive or negative resolution, SPP Global's Certification and Quality area notifies the OC if it can continue with the registration process or not, within a maximum of two days after the CI's resolution. A negative resolution implies that the registration process will not proceed, which is informed to the OC in question.
9. If the CI (Dissents Committee) considers that a more in-depth investigation by the *SPP Global* operational team is necessary, the OC is informed to wait for the investigation within a certain time frame.
10. If the requesting organization and company do not agree with the Dissents Committee's resolution, they can request a case review, providing the necessary support.

ii) Phase 2: Request for additional documentation and information from the evaluated party.

11. If controversial or insufficient information is generated in Phase 1, the Eligibility Process would enter a **Phase 2,** and *SPP Global* will request the following documents:
    - Constitutive Act and, if there have been modifications to the statutes, to present current Statutes;
    - Current certificates (Organic, fair trade, etc.);
    - List of suppliers of companies contracted for processing and/or marketing;

- Recommendation Letters of the following types (optional);
  A. National SPP Committee if any
  B. Companies-SPP in the country if any
- SPP Final Buyers and eventually public or private instances (Obligatory to present two if options A and B do not exist. If you meet A and B, type C cards are optional).

12. In Phase 2, based on the information obtained, if it is clear enough, the person responsible for the *SPP Global* Certification and Quality Area prepares the Eligibility Report.

iii) Phase 3: Make an on-site visit

13. If Phase 2 does not generate enough clarity regarding the organization's compliance, *SPP Global* will execute an Eligibility Visit, on site, if required human and economic resources are available.
14. The Eligibility Visit consists of reviewing compliance with the applicable critical criteria, verifying the practical functioning of written documents, through an on-site visit to the main facilities and through personal interviews with both managers, executive and operational staff and members (producers in the case of Small Producers' Organizations) of the organization or company, using the Eligibility Report Format (SPO, FB) and the documentary information available prior to the visit as a reference.
15. If there is no operational possibility of conducting an Eligibility Visit, despite the existence of controversial or insufficient information, the case is referred to the Dissents Committee for a Resolution.
16. In Phase 3, based on the obtained information, if it is clear enough, the responsible for the *SPP Global* Certification and Quality Area prepares the Eligibility Report.

d. APPLICATION OF RISK ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE

i. The procedure is applied in the following cases:
   a) The first time when the applicant has a properly complemented Application for Certification
   b) When the previous Certification procedure was complete

ii. It is not necessary to apply the Risk Assessment Procedure when it is the first time and the applicant states its decision to have the Full Procedure applied In Situ from the first time.

iii. The OC applies the Risk Assessment Procedure for the Small Producers' Symbol and based on the results notifies the Applicant what type of Certification Procedure will be applied.

e. PREPARATION OF OFFER

i. Once *SPP Global* has issued a Positive Resolution regarding the Eligibility Period, the Certification Entity will prepare the Offer for the Registration Process; considering Risk Determination described in previous paragraph.

ii. The Certification Entity applies the "Guidelines for defining the work days for evaluating compliance" and the "Regulations on Costs" in order to thus determine the Offer for the Registration Process.

iii. The Offer for the Registration Process is sent to the Company for acceptance.

f. SPECIFIC PROCEDURES

i. NORMAL DOCUMENT-BASED PROCEDURE

A. The Certification Entity will ask the applicant to send in its Evaluation Form. The Evaluation Form is based on the General Standard of the *Small Producers´ Symbol,* and its purpose is for the applicant to complete a self-assessment. The Applicant will be informed that it should use the spaces labeled with the heading: "To be completed by the applicant," and that it must also attach:

1. A list of the Small Producers' Organizations with which it has a commercial relationship, including minimally the following information:

    a) Names of the Small Producers' Organizations
    b) Addresses
    c) Estimated volumes purchased from each Small Producers' Organization
    d) Data Contact

2. Certificates (Organic, Fair Trade, Sustainable, etc.) that the applicant has been awarded and that are currently in effect.

3. Documents that support and confirm the data and responses indicated in the Evaluation Form, with regard to compliance with the Critical Criteria in the General Standard including:

    a) Constitution
    b) Description of company's structure and the group to which it belongs, including a description of its infrastructure.
    c) Description of Control System for Product Flow
    d) List of the subcontracted entities that intervene in the processing and trading of products, when applicable
    e) Documents that support its administrative and accounting system
    4. Company's history (Year of Foundation, Institutional objectives, primary achievements, products and suppliers)

5. Receipt for payment of the Document-based Evaluation Fee.

B. The applicant sends the Evaluation Form, correctly filled out and signed, with the requested attachments, as indicated in the instructions provided on the form.

C. The Certification Entity receives and reviews the Evaluation Form to verify that it has been correctly filled out and signed, in accordance with the instructions provided on the

form, and that the required annexes have been included. It also verifies that confirmation of the corresponding payment is included.

If a document is missing or the form is not filled out correctly, the Certification Entity will notify the applicant that the process will not move forward until all the documents requested have been received.

D. After it is confirmed that all documents have been received, the Certification Entity will assign an evaluator, taking care to assure that there is no conflict of interest with the Applicant
E. The assigned evaluator will begin with the Document-based Evaluation of the information sent by the applicant and any objections that may have been submitted.
F. If the evaluator considers the information insufficient for establishing compliance with the Critical Criteria of the Standard, he/she may request complementary documentation (to be sent preferably by email) to support the application and the Evaluation Form. Some examples of complementary documents that may be requested are listed below:
    1. Legal authorizations
    2. Corrective Measures of certifications. For example:
        i. Fair Trade
        ii. Organic Production
        iii. Sustainable Production
    3. Other documents that support compliance with the General Standard:
        i. Most recent Annual Commercial Report
        ii. Valid Commercial Working Plan

G. At the moment in which complementary documentation is requested, the Applicant will be informed that it will have 30 days to send it in, and if it fails to do so, the Application for Registration will be canceled, and it will be necessary to start the process again.
H. On the basis of the Evaluation Form and the complementary documentation provided by the Small Producers' Organization, the assigned evaluator will compile evidence of compliance through a desk review of these documents, recording it on the Evaluation Form, in the spaces labeled with the heading: "To be completed by the Certification Entity's evaluator."
I. Development of Findings:
    a) The evaluator must review all findings to determine which should be reported as Non-compliance, and at the same time avoid overlooking those findings that do establish Compliance. The evaluator must assure that all findings are documented in a clear, concise manner, and supported by objective evidence.

    b) All Compliance and Non-compliance must be referenced to the criteria, and the sources of information must be specified in the Evaluation Form.

J. The Evaluator will prepare the Evaluation Report, completing the Evaluation Form, and proceeding with the following steps:

a) If there is insufficient document-based support, the applicant should be notified of the need for an On-Site Evaluation for establishing compliance with the General Standard. In such case, the evaluator must present the reasons for this need and present an On-Site Evaluation Plan, with the corresponding estimated costs.

   In this case, the Certification Entity will make a proposal on costs based exclusively on the costs involved in the complementary On-Site visit conducted in order to corroborate the missing information, and following the guidelines for defining the days in the On-Site evaluation.

b) Review and corroborate the findings and any other relevant information that will be reflected in the Evaluation Report.

c) Document cases of Compliance and Non-compliance and reference them in the Evaluation Form.

d) Skip to point “Final Evaluation Report” of these procedures.

K. At the beginning of this document, there is a diagram of the process, with timelines for the various steps in the process that may be summarized as follows:

1. Self-evaluation completed: 30 calendar days
2. Complementary information sent: 30 calendar days
3. Non-conformities addressed: 30 calendar days

   a) If a Small Producers’ Organization that is applying for certification **for the first time** does not comply with the total of the maximum timelines for each step in the certification process, the process will be considered to be discontinued and the applicant will have to send a new application to the CE (Certification Entity). Each stop has a timeline of 30 days (total = 90 days).

   b) The time granted to the CE for conducting the evaluation for each step is a total of 15 calendar days, independent of the time that the evaluate has for each step in the process. The time periods granted to the CE will never be considered within the timelines for SPPs.

ii. *COMPLETE PROCEDURE ON-SITE*

A. The Certification Entity will ask the applicant to send in its Evaluation Form. The Evaluation Form is based on the General Standard of the *Small Producers´ Symbol,* and its purpose is for the applicant to complete a self-assessment. The applicant will be informed that it must also use the spaces labeled with the heading “To be completed by the Applicant,” and must also attach:

1. A list of the Small Producers’ Organizations with which applicant has a commercial relationship, including minimally the following information:

   a) Names of the Small Producers’ Organizations

b) Addresses
c) Estimated volumes purchased from each Small Producers' Organization
d) Data Contact

2. Certificates (Organic, Fair Trade, Sustainable, etc.) that the applicant has been awarded and that are currently in effect.

3. Documents that support and confirm the data and responses indicated in the Evaluation Form, with regard to compliance with the Critical Criteria in the General Standard, including:

   a) Constitution
   b) Description of company's structure and the group to which it belongs, including a description of its infrastructure
   c) Description of Control System for Product Flow
   d) List of the subcontracted entities that intervene in the processing and trading of products when applicable
   e) Documents that support its administrative and accounting system
   f) Most recent Annual Commercial Report
   g) Valid Commercial Working Plan

4. Company´s history (Year of Foundation, Institutional objectives, primary achievements, products and suppliers)

5. Receipt for Payment of the Document-based Evaluation Fee.

B. The applicant sends the Evaluation Form, correctly filled out and signed, with the requested attachments, as indicated in the instructions provided on the form.

C. The Certification Entity receives and reviews the Evaluation Form to verify that it has been correctly filled out and signed, in accordance with the instructions provided on the form, and that the required annexes and confirmation of the corresponding payment have been included.
   If a document is missing or the form is not filled out correctly, the Certification Entity will notify the applicant that the process will not move forward until all the documents requested have been received.

D. After it is confirmed that all documents have been received, the Certification Entity will assign an evaluator, taking care to assure that there is no conflict of interest with the Applicant.

E. Development of Evaluation Plan:
   a) The evaluator reviews the information obtained from the applicant and any objections from third parties received within the indicated time period, and will use the document entitled "Guidelines for defining the work days for evaluating compliance" together with Annexes 1 and 2 to develop an Evaluation Plan.

   b) The Evaluation Plan will define: the work plan, timelines and levels of evaluation in which the On-Site evaluation will be conducted. It will also specify the list of

documents that the Applicant must have available during the on-site evaluation, and the responsibilities to be fulfilled by the Applicant in attending to and accompanying the evaluator.

c) The Evaluator or the Certification Entity will send the applicant the Evaluation Plan.

d) The proposed estimated costs for this service, and its scope is attached. The applicant must then send its approval and a receipt for payment for this service.

e) The Evaluator or the Certification Entity will establish the date and time, and other information regarding the visit, in agreement with the applicant.

F. Meeting for initiating On-Site Evaluation:

At the beginning of the On-Site Evaluation, the Evaluator will minimally carry out the following steps:

a) Introduce him/herself to the applicant's staff and representatives and define the contact person who will accompany him/her during the evaluation.
b) Present the Evaluation Plan, clarify any doubts, make adjustments if necessary, and validate the Plan.
c) Present an overview of the methodology that will be used during the evaluation.
d) Confirm the day and time of the closing meeting.
e) Prepare a list of those in attendance.

G. Compilation and evaluation of information:

a) Evidence should be gathered through interviews, reviews of documents, and observations of activities and conditions in the areas involved. The entire process should be carried out in reference to the criteria to be evaluated, specifically the Critical Criteria, Minimum Criteria, and Continuous Improvement Criteria, as specified in the General Standard.

b) Information gathered through interviews must be confirmed by other independent sources of information, such as: physical observations, measurements, records, etc.

c) In the case of Monitoring Evaluations, it is necessary to review the implementation and effectiveness of improvement actions carried out by the applicant in response to detected failures to comply.

H. Development of Evaluation Findings:

a) The evaluator must review all findings to determine if any of them should be reported as failures to comply. He/she must assure that all findings are documented in a clear, concise manner, and supported by objective evidence.

b) All Compliance and Non-compliance will be documented on the Evaluation Form, will be made known and will be commented to the contact person.

c) Cases of both Compliance and Non-compliance should be referenced to criteria, using the same Evaluation Form, in the spaces labeled with the heading: “To be completed by the Certification Entity’s evaluator.”

I. Preparation of Evaluation Conclusions:

Before the closing meeting, the Evaluator must:

a) Review the findings and any other relevant information that will be presented at the closing meeting.
b) Prepare the cases of Compliance and Non-compliance, to be presented at the closing meeting.
c) Prepare the Evaluation Report, to be presented at the closing meeting.

J. Closing Meeting:

a) The objective of the closing meeting is to present the evaluation findings and conclusions, in a manner in which they will be understood and acknowledged by the applicant.

b) The cases of Non-compliance identified should be presented.

c) During the meeting, the Applicant should be given the opportunity to make clarifications, and a debate, should be avoided.

d) At the end of the meeting, the conclusions obtained should be presented, and participants will be asked to sign the cases of Compliance presented to indicate their agreement.

e) A list of those in attendance should be prepared.

K. At the beginning of this document, there is a diagram of the process, with timelines for the various steps in the process that may be summarized as follows:

- Self-evaluation completed: 30 calendar days
- Complementary information sent: 30 calendar days
- Non-conformities addressed: 30 calendar days

a) If a Small Producers’ Organization that is applying for certification **for the first time** does not comply with the total of the maximum timelines for each step in the certification process, the process will be considered to be discontinued and the applicant will have to send a new application to the CE (Certification Entity). Each step has a timeline of 30 days (total = 90 days).

b) The time granted to the CE for conducting the evaluation for each step is a total of 15 calendar days, independent of the time that the evaluate has for each step in the process. The time periods granted to the CE will never be considered within the timelines for SPPs.

L. Go to point “Final Evaluation Report”

g. FOLLOW-UP ON NON-COMPLIANCE

a) If cases of Non-compliance are identified, the Applicant will have a maximum of 30 days from the date on which it was notified of these cases to present evidence that it has taken corrective actions to address them

b) The evaluator is responsible for reviewing the evidence sent by the Applicant to address cases of Non-compliance

c) The evaluator, using the information from the Evaluation Form and the eventual corrective actions presented by the Applicant, will write the Evaluation Report, and will present it to the certification entity.

h. REGISTRATION DECISION

a) After the evaluator has presented the Evaluation Report with its corresponding attachments to the Certification Entity, the report will be evaluated by the Examination Committee.

b) The Examination Committee will analyze, evaluate and make a decision on the basis of the Evaluation Report and its corresponding attachments, adhering closely to Examination procedures.

c) The Examination Committee will prepare and present the Resolution signed by the participants to the Director's Office of the Certification Entity.

j. SPP Global ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP PAYMENT

a) When the OC submits the registration quotation, the OC must report in the same quotation the annual membership amount to be paid to *SPP Global* at the end of the evaluation process.

b) The official deadline for making *SPP Global* membership payments directly to *SPP Global* is set out in the Regulations on Cost. The annual membership payment will be made:

- At the time the Registry is issued, for first-time application
- Before requesting the SPP Registration Renewal, from the second year of having obtained the registration.

c) Membership payment, when applying for registration renewal, will not be refunded if the registration process is not positively concluded.

d) In exceptional cases, *SPP Global* may authorize the registration renewal if there is a payment agreement between the evaluated entity and *SPP Global*

k. GRANTING REGISTRATION

a) By sending the signed User Agreement and Acknowledgement of Receipt from the FB, the Certification Entity can deliver the Registration.

1. Evaluation Report
2. Resolution
3. Registration, on form authorized by *SPP Global*.
4. User´s Contract signed by *SPP Global*

b) The Certification Entity must prepare a file on this service with a copy of all the documents mentioned above.

c) After of have been received the Registration of Conformity, Buyers will pay to *SPP Global* for the use of the SYMBOL when the first Report of use is delivered. This information is explained in the SPS Handbook and the Regulations on Costs

l. VALIDITY OF REGISTRATION

a) The validity of registration is for a year with a maximum of one month. (See chapter 0 on the periodicity of the evaluations).

b) The renewed registration will be valid for one year from the date of previous renewal, regardless of the date of evaluation or the determination.

m. PUBLICATION OF REGISTRATION

a) After the evaluate obtains the corresponding registration, the Certification Entity must maintain a directory with all organizations granted Registration. This directory must be available to anyone who requests it, through the means deemed necessary.

b) The Certification Entity must immediately inform *SPP Global* when it has issued a Registration, sending the signed User's Contract and copies of the Resolution and Registration. In a maximum period of 10 natural days.

c) When *SPP Global* receives notification of new registration, it will publish an updated list of registered companies.

d) Whenever a company has acquired 'Registered' status or has regularized its Registration, SPP GLOBAL will notify the entire SPP actors database.

n. NOTIFICATION OF NEGATIVE DECISION

1. If the Decision is negative, the Certification Entity must send a Letter of Notification to the evaluate, and must return all original documentation within a period of 14 calendar days or less after the Resolution is presented.
2. If the evaluate does not agree with the Decision, it may initiate an Appeal Process with the Certification Entity, following Dissent Procedures.

o. COMPLAINTS REGARDING THE CERTIFICATION ENTITY

In the case of a complaint regarding the Certification Entity, the Dissents Procedures of the Small Producers Symbol will apply.

p. MONITORING EVALUATION

If a need for corrective actions is addressed in the Resolution, the process will move to the Monitoring Evaluation.

a) The monitoring evaluation must be carried out in a maximum period of 90 days

b) If the applicant does not agree with the monitoring evaluation, it can follow the Dissent Procedures.

c) If the monitoring evaluation is not carried out in the stipulated time frame and in a correct manner, this matter will be turned over to the Examination Committee.

q. ANNUAL EVALUATIONS

a) To assure that the applicant maintains the conditions under which the Registration was granted, the Certification Entity conducts Annual Evaluations.

b) These annual evaluations are conducted every 12 months, with a **grace period of one month before or after.**

c) The **month before and after are for the assessment**. It is possible that the registration is then delivered, according to the table of maximum times of the procedure.

d) It is necessary to send a new application to the CE, using the current version of the format. The Certification Entity sends the request filled to *SPP Global* when they are going to initiate the evaluation.

e) For the Organization to begin its registration renewal process, any debts corresponding to *SPP Global* registration, membership and/or volume fees must be paid.

f) As part of the Annual Evaluations, the following should be reviewed:

   i. That there is a User's Contract signed by *SPP Global*.

   ii. The use of the *Small Producers´ Symbol,* specifically: in order to use the Symbol, a Company must have a Registration through which it can demonstrate compliance with the Symbol's General Standard.

   iii. Compliance with the commercial criteria established in the General Standard, the list of specific Parameters, or the Specific Product Standards.

r. MAXIMUM TIMELINES FOR ANNUAL EVALUATIONS

a) The company should have initiated—through the formal approval of a registration offer—the annual registration evaluation during the period between **the month prior** to and the **month following** the date that its registration expires (see Section 0).

b) If the company has not initiated the evaluation by one month following the expiration of its certificate, the CE should issue the registration's suspension immediately after the month have ended (see Section a).

c) As soon as the evaluation has begun, the company must adhere to the maximum timelines indicated in the Diagram for the Registration Process (see Section II) which are as follows:

1. Self-evaluation completed: 30 calendar days
2. Complementary information sent: 30 calendar days
3. Non-conformities addressed (when such exist): 30 calendar days

d) If the evaluate does not send the information corresponding to the first and second steps in a timely manner, it may send this information by the timeline established for the last step (compliance with any required Corrective Actions). In this case the evaluate will have only 30 days to complete the three steps.

e) If the evaluate fails to send the necessary documentation, the CE should send reminders every 30 calendar days, requesting the information.

f) The maximum amount of time for the CE to complete its evaluation for each step is 15 days, independent of the time granted to the evaluate for each step of the process. The CE's timelines will not, in any case, be included within the time periods allowed for SPOs.

g) If the evaluate sends the information only one or two weeks before the end of the final 30-day period, the CE will not accept the information, since it will not be able to complete all the steps in the process in the remaining time. Thus, the registration renewal process will be terminated, and the registration will be cancelled. If the company insists that it wishes to regularize its situation, it will have to send a substantiated request to *SPP Global* for an extension of the time period allowed for registration.

h) Based on the total number of days granted to the company to send information for all the steps in the process, plus the total number of days granted to the CE, the resolution on certification should be obtained within a maximum time period of 135 calendar days after the date on which the certificate expires. If notification of the resolution has not been made by the end of this time period, *SPP Global* will issue the immediate cancellation of the certificate. Any justification for any delay beyond the time period allowed must have been received by *SPP Global* within the established time period

i) If the CE issues the suspension of the company´s registration, the time periods established in this section will once again begin. However, in the case of non-compliance with the maximum time period established, the registration's cancellation will be issued in accordance with that established in section b of these Procedures.

s. CONTROL EVALUATIONS

a) To assure the reliability of the *Small Producers´ Symbol* system, Control Evaluations are conducted. The Certification Entity conducts random Control Evaluations based on the Risk Determination Procedures, with a proportional number of all certified Small Producers' Organizations. These evaluations are carried out through On-Site visits to the companies, which are not charged for the visits, since a portion of payments for the certification process is used to contribute to a fund for conducting these Control Evaluations.

b) Control Evaluations should be conducted with about 10% of those registered through a Document based Procedure and about 5% of those registered through a Complete Procedure.

c) The Control Evaluations should be carried out less than one month after the selected Buyers, C-SPO, Intermediaries, and Maquila Companies are notified regarding the upcoming visit. The Certification Entity must inform them of the date selected.

d) The Control Evaluation should be aimed at corroborating the information from the last report prior to Registration, especially focusing on any corresponding corrective actions.

8. LIMITATIONS OF REGISTRATION

a. DOUBLE REGISTRATION FOR DIFFERENT CERTIFICATION ENTITY IN PARALLEL

It is not allowed that a Company is registered under the SPS across any more than one authorized Certification Entity

9. PROCEDURES FOR NON COMPLIANCE WITH REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

In this section in particular we understand the Regulatory Framework to be the set of regulatory documents in the SPS system, with the exception of the Code of Conduct.

When cases of a failure to comply with the Regulatory Framework (as specified here) are detected, the main entity responsible for the process in all cases is the authorized Certification Entity. The first step is Suspension, as established in Section a, and if a Suspension is not lifted, the next step will be Cancellation, as established in Section b

a. SUSPENSION

i. Cause:

- Failure to renew the certificate opportunely
- Failure to compliance with the Regulatory Framework[2]

ii. Consequences

- Not allowed to enter into new SPS commercial contracts with registered operators.
- Required to comply with current SPS contracts already in force.
- Will remain in *SPP Global*'s official lists of companies with the status of 'Suspended.'
- The status specified in the D-SPP (digital info system) (Define) will be recorded so that any SPP actor can consult that status, which may include the status 'Suspended.'
- Timelines for registration cycles in effect will not be interrupted. In other words, the timelines established in the most recent registration for renewing such will remain in effect.

iii. Lifting:

- The Suspension is lifted when reasons for the determination of such status are resolved.
- In addition, any pending registration debts, membership or any other concept must be paid.
- *SPP Global* must verify the last OC suspension and/or cancellation report to confirm that there is no breach of the Regulatory Framework by the SPO before it can begin its SPP Certificate renewal process.

iv. Responsible Entity: The OC is the entity in charge of carrying out the registration suspension.

Suspension Procedures

1. Prior to suspension, the CE will send notifications in a timely manner and on various occasions, to emphasize the reasons for proceeding with the suspension, which may be:

   i. Need to renew the registration based on its term of validity
   ii. Non-compliance with any aspect of the Regulatory Framework

2. The CE will notify at the company that has been suspended, by way of an official communication and with a copy sent to *SPP Global*, specifying the reasons for which this decision was made. The company will be asked to confirm that it received such communication.

3. Following the notification sent by the CE, the Company should resolve the reason(s) for the suspension and give basic information on the corresponding actions implemented to the CE.

4. The CE should apply the corresponding procedures for processing cases of non-compliance.
5. The CE should notify *SPP Global* when the suspension has been lifted.
6. *SPP Global* will send a notification to the entire database of SPO stakeholders (SPOs and Final Buyers) to advise them that a company registered has been Suspended
7. The notification will include information regarding the consequences of the suspension, in the interest of transparency and discouraging negative practices.

b. CANCELLATION

i. Cause: Not resolving the reasons for which a Company was suspended

ii. Consequences

- Not allowed to conduct new transactions in SPS conditions.
- Required to comply with SPS contracts, as long as the following is respected: Products subject to contracts signed when the entity was still registered may be sold in the market as SPP products for up to a year in the case of products on an annual cycle, up to six months in the case of biannual production, and up to three months in the case of products in ongoing production.

iii. Lifting of Cancellation

- The process should be reinitiated as an application for signing up as a new member. The Shortened Procedure will not apply.
- The Company must demonstrate that it resolved the causes for which its registration was cancelled.
- The minimum amount of time before applying for a new registration is two years following the date of the notification of cancellation.
- Any debt from unpaid fees corresponding to a previous or registration must be paid.

iv. Responsible Entities

- The CE is the entity responsible for carrying out the cancellation of the registration.
- *SPP Global* is responsible for cancelling the corresponding User's Contract.

Cancellation Procedures

1. The CE issues a Cancellation decision when the indicated cases of non-compliance are not resolved within the time periods established, in accordance with the corresponding procedures.
2. The CE will notify the company that its registration has been cancelled by way of an official communication with a copy sent to *SPP Global*, explaining the reasons for which

this decision was reached. When the notification is sent, it should ask at the company to confirm that it was received.

3. *SPP Global* will eliminate the Company from the official lists of SPS stakeholders.
4. *SPP Global* will send a notification to the entire database of SPP Stakeholders (SPOs and Final Buyers) to inform them that the company's Registration was Cancelled.
5. The notification will include information regarding the consequences of the cancellation, in the interest of transparency and discouraging negative practices. Example:

   "SPOs and companies that have had their certification cancelled may not enter into new SPP contracts nor may they become certified during a two-year period."

6. Those companies that have abandoned registration due to lack of market or resources for it and want to return, will not have to comply with the two-year period without registration to reapply.

10. PROCEDURES FOR NON COMPLIANCE WITH CODE OF CONDUCT

SPP Global's Procedures for Non-conformities will enter into operation if a failure to comply with the Code of Conduct is detected, or in the case of any non-compliance with the contract between the stakeholder and *SPP Global*, especially in the following cases:

A. Use of the SPP logo in final products without having paid the corresponding user's fee to *SPP Global*.

B. Use of the SPP logo by an SPO or company without having a current certification or registration in effect.

C. Use of the SPP logo on products from small producers' organizations without a current certificate in effect.

a. Cause: Failure to comply with the Code of Conduct or failure to comply with the SPP User's Contract.

b. Procedures

1. *SPP Global* is notified of a case of failure to comply with the Code of Conduct by a Certification Entity or from any other source.
2. *SPP Global* activates the Procedures for Non-Conformities.
3. In line with the Procedures for Non-Conformities, the Non-Conformities Committee will make a decision regarding each case, according to the information available and with support from *SPP Global*'s operations team.

4. The resolutions reached by the Non-Conformities Committee may be, while not exclusively, the following:
    a. Request complementary information from the company in question and/or *SPP Global*'s internal bodies or third parties.
    b. Determine a Suspension, in the terms of Section a of this procedure[5] indicating the conditions necessary for lifting the Suspension.
    c. Determine a Cancellation, in the terms of Section b of this procedure[5]. A cancellation may be determined as a consequence of the failure to comply with the non-conformities indicated in the Suspension determination, or directly, in the case of infringements considered to be serious by the Non-Conformities Committee.
    d. Retroactive payment for use of the SPS and/or administrative expenses.
    e. File a lawsuit for damages and injuries, seeking compensation for damages.
    f. Removal of products and materials from public spaces and distribution channels.
    g. Notify intention to pursue legal action.
5. *SPP Global* L will notify at the Company through a formal communication, with a copy sent to the corresponding CE, explaining the reasons for which the decision was reached, and requesting that the CE confirms it received the communication.
6. In line with that established in Section 7.1 of this procedure, when a Suspension has been determined, *SPP Global* will publish the new status acquired by the Company, and in the case of a Cancellation, *SPP Global* will remove the Company from its official lists.
7. In line with the Procedures for Non-Conformities, a decision by the Non-Conformities Committee may be appealed.

11. PROCEDURES FOR DEACTIVATION

When a voluntary deactivation has been requested, the main entity responsible for the processes to follow is *SPP Global*.

a. *Cause:* Lack of market and/or resources

b. Conditions

i. The Company must contact *SPP Global* to request that its registration be deactivated at least 10 work days prior to the date when it expires.

ii. It must be consistently current on payments for its annual enrollment with *SPP Global*, even when it does not conduct the registration process.

c. Consequences

i. Not allowed to enter into new SPS contracts.

ii. Will remain on the SPS lists of Companies with an 'inactive' status for a maximum time period of 5 years.

iii. The way in which the inactive status affects or not the participation like Member will be defined by the *SPP Global*'s Internal Regulation.

iv. Timelines in the registration cycles will be interrupted, or in other words, when the process is reinitiated, it will follow the procedures corresponding to the moment in the cycle when deactivation took place.

d. Lifting of the Deactivation: When the renewal of a registration is requested.

e. Cancellation: If the conditions specified above are not met, *SPP Global* will proceed with the cancellation of the registration in the terms specified in Section b of this procedure[5].

Deactivation Procedures

1. At least 10 work days prior to the expiration of the registration, *SPP Global* will receive a request for deactivation from company, with an explanation of the causes.
2. If all the required conditions are met, *SPP Global* will approve the request from the company, advising the latter of the amount to be paid to *SPP Global* corresponding to any unpaid fee for registration, with a copy sent to the CE that carried out the last registration process.
3. The Company must make a payment to *SPP Global* to cover the full amount of enrollment fee. *SPP Global* will inform the CE when such payment has been made, confirming the status of 'inactive.'
4. *SPP Global* will publish the new status of the company in its official lists. If such status is cancelled due to failure to comply with the required conditions, *SPP Global* will remove the company its lists.
5. The CE will notify *SPP Global,* in line with the normal procedures, when the inactive company has reinitiated its registration process.

[5] With the difference that in this case SPP GLOBAL will be responsible for the process, instead of the OC.

12. CHANGES FROM PREVIOUS VERSION OR EDITION

If you desire to know changes from previous editions or versions, you can find them on our website or request them at **cert@spp.coop**

Previous document:
Registration Procedure for Buyer's and other stakeholders
Small Producers' Symbol
Version 6 2016-07-31
Translation 1. 2017-03-10

#	Changes	Reason	Changes type	Entry into force
1	Elimination of Shortened Documentary Process	Giving more reliability to the Registration Procedure	Content	01-07-2019
2	The 3 phases for the Eligibility Period are integrated	Ensure compliance with the Code of Conduct and the Declaration of Principles and Values for new applicants.	Content	01-07-2019
3	The Eligibility Period Fee is integrated.	Ensure interest and follow-up of the Registration Process for new applicants.	Content	01-07-2019
4	The time for payment of SPP Membership is changed	To ensure greater efficiency in monitoring collection by the Administration and Finance Area	Content	01-07-2019
5	Criterion 7.a.vi, is modified by establishing the value and number of transactions, for Microenterprises can opt for a Complete Distance Evaluation.	To set limits, take care of the transparency of the operations and the credibility of the SPP.	Content	22-04-2020
6	The Organic or Similar Certificates Annex is Integrated to the Registration Request	Ensure fulfillment with the Critical Criterion 4.7.10 of the General Standard SPP	Content	22-04-2020
7	The evaluation report is integrated and described (for the Eligibility Period)	Generate a full investigation report that supports the Eligibility Period Resolution	Content	22-04-2020
8	The signatures that the Evaluation Report must have (for the Eligibility Period) are specified in Phase I and Phase II	Give greater reliability to the Resolution of the Eligibility Period	Content	22-04-2020
9	Modification of the application fee amount to a fixed fee	To standardize costs	Content	06-03-2020