GLOBAL ORGANIC TEXTILE STANDARD
ECOLOGY & SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

APPROVAL PROCEDURE AND REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTIFICATION BODIES

Version 4.0

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How to Read This Document
The following verbs are used to indicate requirements, recommendations, permissions, or capabilities in this document:

- "**shall**" indicates a mandatory requirement
- "**should**" indicates a recommendation
- "**may**" indicates a permission
- "**can**" indicates a possibility or capability

Availability of Documents:

All primary documents of the Global Organic Textile Standard including this one; and any further relevant public information as released by Global Standard gGmbH are available for public download on the Global Standard website.

About GLOBAL STANDARD
Global Standard gemeinnützige GmbH, a not-for-profit organization incorporated in Germany in 2002 that develops voluntary sustainability standards, including the Global Organic Textile Standard and the Global Responsible Textile Standard.

Vision
Our Vision is a world where all textiles are produced in accordance with the principles of health, ecology, fairness and care to enhance people's lives and the environment. Organic textiles are an integral part of this holistic approach.

Mission
Our mission is to ensure the highest level of social and environmental impact in textile value chains through voluntary sustainability standards and related activities.

Document Revision History

Approval Procedure and Requirements for Certification Bodies Version 1.0 May 2009
Approval Procedure and Requirements for Certification Bodies Version 2.0 May 2017
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Further information is available at: www.global-standard.org

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INTRODUCTION

As a standard-setter, Global Standard gGmbH (Global Standard) defines globally recognised requirements that ensure the organic status of textiles, encompassing environmental, health, human rights, and social governance criteria.

Global Standard collaborates with a variety of stakeholders – including Accreditation Bodies, Certification Bodies, civil society organisations, and industry representatives – to incorporate a range of perspectives and expertise in developing robust and effective procedures.

The procedures in this document (referred to as “these procedures”) were developed based on the ISEAL Code of Good Practice for Sustainability Systems, December 2023.

Certification Bodies conduct independent, third-party inspections, audits, and certifications of companies in accordance with the requirements of Voluntary Sustainability Standards (VSS) developed and operated by Global Standard. The Certification Bodies issue certificates of conformity and continuously monitor compliance with respective VSS requirements.

Global Standard shall publish the list of its approved Certification Bodies and their approved scopes on its website.

1 SCOPE

This document establishes the requirements for the approval and monitoring of Certification Bodies, ensuring consistent, impartial and competent certification of companies and their facilities according to GOTS. Certification against Global Standard’s VSS entails a thorough evaluation of both the applicant company’s management system and its environmental & social textile processing practices across relevant facilities. This document provides the conformity assessment procedures and methods necessary for Certification Bodies to evaluate the management systems and processing practices, thereby upholding the quality assurance and integrity of certified products.

2 NORMATIVE REFERENCES

To be implemented in accordance with Section 2 in EN ISO/IEC 17065

2.1 STANDARD DOCUMENTS

(A) For Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS)

In addition to the normative references listed in ISO 17065 and this document, which must be applied by all certification bodies, the documents listed below form the basis for GOTS evaluation and certification:

a) GOTS Standard 8.0
b) Manual for the Implementation of GOTS
c) Conditions for the Use of Signs – GOTS (CUS-GOTS)
d) Labelling Release for GOTS Goods
e) Labelling Release for GOTS Additives
f) Policy for Issuance of Scope Certificates and Template

g) Policy for Issuance of Transaction Certificates and Template
h) Policy and Template for Issuing Letters of Approval
i) Policy for Change or Migration of Certifier
j) Certification and Operating Parameters for GOTS Certified Gins
k) GOTS Due Diligence Handbook for Certified Entities
l) GOTS Due Diligence Handbook for Auditors

(B) For Global Responsible Textile Standard (GRTS)[1]

In addition to the normative references listed in ISO 17065 and this document, which must be applied by all certification bodies, the documents listed below form the basis for GRTS evaluation and certification:

a) GRTS Standard 1.0
b) Manual for the Implementation of GRTS
c) Conditions of the Use of Signs – GRTS (CUS-GRTS)
d) Labelling Release for GRTS Goods
e) Policy for Issuance of Scope Certificates and Template
f) Policy for Issuance of Transaction Certificates and Template
g) Other relevant documents released for GOTS but apply to GRTS as well.

Certification Bodies shall operate under the most current and valid versions of Global Standard's documents, which serve as authoritative guidance in the evaluation and certification. In cases of any divergence between this document and any other Global Standard document, the latest version shall take precedence. Certification Bodies should seek clarification on any conflicting provisions by contacting sd@global-standard.org to ensure consistent and accurate interpretation in line with Global Standard objectives.

2.2 ADDITIONAL RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

References to specific requirements in these additional relevant documents are based on the version specified in this section:

a) ISO/IEC 17011:2017[2] – Conformity Assessment – General requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies

b) ISO/IEC 17065:2012 – Conformity Assessment — Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services

c) ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015 – Conformity Assessment – Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems – Part 1: Requirements

d) ISO 9001:2015 – Quality Management Systems – Requirements

e) ISO 19011:2018 – Guidelines for Auditing Management Systems

f) IAF MD 12:2016 – Accreditation Assessment of Conformity Assessment Bodies with Activities in Multiple Countries

[1] The Global Responsible Textile Standard is under development in 2025 and some of the listed documents shall be released over the next months.

[2] This document refers to several Standards and Documents. Subsections referred to shall always be those about the latest versions, should any of the documents be revised by their relevant publishers.

2.3 UPDATES TO THE DOCUMENTS

Updates to the documents listed in section 2.2 shall be considered binding upon release by the respective issuing body. Certification Bodies and Accreditation Bodies shall monitor and implement these updates within the timelines set forth by the respective standard-setting organisation, ensuring compliance with the latest version to uphold rigorous standards of conformity.

3 TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

3.1 ENTITY

Modified from section 3.1 of ISO/IEC 17065: Entity is the organisation or person responsible to a certification body for ensuring that certification requirements, including product requirements, are fulfilled. It also applies to applicants for the Global Standard VSS certification.

3.2 CONSULTANCY

To be implemented in accordance with Section 3.2 in ISO/IEC 17065

3.3 EVALUATION

To be implemented in accordance with Section 3.3 in ISO/IEC 17065

3.4 PRODUCT

To be implemented in accordance with Section 3.4 in ISO/IEC 17065

3.5 PROCESS

To be implemented in accordance with Section 3.5 in ISO/IEC 17065

3.6 SERVICE

To be implemented in accordance with Section 3.6 in ISO/IEC 17065

3.6.1 in the context of the present certification programme, this includes the processing, manufacturing, packaging, labelling, trading, and distribution of all textiles.

3.7 CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENT

To be implemented in accordance with Section 3.7 in ISO/IEC 17065

3.8 PRODUCT REQUIREMENT

To be implemented in accordance with Section 3.8 in ISO/IEC 17065

3.9 CERTIFICATION SCHEME

To be implemented in accordance with Section 3.9 in ISO/IEC 17065

3.10 SCOPE OF CERTIFICATION

To be implemented in accordance with Section 3.10 in ISO/IEC 17065

3.11 SCHEME OWNER

To be implemented in accordance with Section 3.11 in ISO/IEC 17065

3.12 CERTIFICATION BODY

To be implemented in accordance with Section 3.12 in ISO/IEC 17065

3.13 IMPARTIALITY

To be implemented in accordance with Section 3.13 in ISO/IEC 17065

3.14 FRAUDULENT ACTIVITY

A fraudulent activity is a deliberately deceitful, dishonest or untrue claim about the compliance with the GOTS standard.

3.15 REMOTE AUDITS

An audit conducted partially or entirely off-site, using electronic means to obtain audit evidence remotely and to assess compliance with the relevant Standard criteria. This type of audit may involve the use of technology such as video conferencing, secure file sharing and/or remote access to relevant documentation. Remote audits may include a combination of off-site and on-site activities, with the auditor conducting interviews, reviewing documents and assessing compliance from a remote location.

3.16 VIRTUAL AUDITS

A type of remote audit that is conducted entirely online, using virtual tools and platforms to assess compliance with the relevant Standard criteria.

Only Certified Entities with a low risk assessment shall qualify for a virtual audit. The Certification Body shall conduct this assessment and document it properly.

3.17 INITIAL AUDIT

Initial audits are audits that are conducted for the first time to an Entity by a Certification Body.

3.18 RENEWAL AUDIT

Annual audits conducted by a Certification Body to a Certified Entity. The aim is to verify compliance with the requirements and to determine whether certification can be renewed.

3.19 GLOBAL TRACE-BASE (GTB)

The Global Trace-Base (GTB) is a tool that ensures traceability, transparency, and integrity of Global Standard's certified value chains.

4 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

4.1 LEGAL AND CONTRACTUAL MATTERS

4.1.1 LEGAL RESPONSIBILITY

To be implemented in accordance with Section 4.1.1 in ISO/IEC 17065

4.1.1.1 The Certification Body shall have documented evidence of its legal entity status and shall provide Global Standard with complete details of all owners/shareholders

4.1.1.2 The Certification Body shall identify the designated management body, group or individual responsible for the overall operation of the Certification Body, including financial oversight and certification requirements.

4.1.1.3 The Certification Body shall have legal and statutory permission to perform certification activities within the countries and regions where it seeks and holds accreditation. Such legal and statutory permission shall not be outsourced or delegated to an unrelated organisation but may be extended through a majority-owned subsidiary.

4.1.2 CERTIFICATION AGREEMENT

4.1.2.1 To be implemented in accordance with Section 4.1.2.1 in ISO/IEC 17065

a) The agreement shall describe the rights and responsibilities of Certified Entities offering certified processes and products with respective approved chemical inputs. This includes a commitment to comply with all applicable Global Standard documents as referred to in Section 2.1 of this document.

4.1.2.2 To be implemented in accordance with Section 4.1.2.2 in ISO/IEC 17065

a) To be implemented in accordance with Section 4.1.2.2, a) in ISO/IEC 17065

b) To be implemented in accordance with Section 4.1.2.2, b) in ISO/IEC 17065

c) The entity seeking certification makes all necessary arrangements for:

1) the conduct of the evaluation and surveillance (including unannounced audits), including provision for examining documentation and records, and access to all equipment, location(s), area(s), personnel, and entity's subcontractors where these are part of the textile supply chain including units where no certified products are processed, stored or administered. This includes the need for the certification body to have access to all entity information deemed relevant to the evaluation, including confidential information, including financial records and that related to the entity’s outsourced activities.

2) The investigation of all complaints related to compliance with Standard requirements, including fraud and grievances.

3) the participation of observers from Global Standard and the accreditation body to assess the certification body and gain knowledge about the practical application of the Global Standard’s VSS.

d) The entity makes claims regarding certification consistent with the scope of certification defined in the Scope Certificate.

e) To be implemented in accordance with Section 4.1.2.2, e) in ISO/IEC 17065

f) Upon suspension, withdrawal, or termination of certification, the entity discontinues its use of all advertising matter that contains any reference thereto and acts as defined in the document called “Conditions for the use of Signs - GOTS” or “Conditions for the Use of Signs – GRTS” as relevant.

g) If the entity provides copies of the certification documents to others, the documents shall be reproduced in their entirety.

h) In making reference to its product certification in communication media such as documents, brochures or advertising, the entity complies with the requirements of the certification body and as specified by the Standard in the document called “Conditions for the use of Signs – GOTS (CUS-GOTS)” or “Conditions for the Use of Signs – GRTS” as relevant.

i) The entity complies with any requirements that may be prescribed by GOTS in the document called “Conditions for the use of Signs – GOTS” related to the use of marks of conformity, and on information related to the product.

j) To be implemented in accordance with Section 4.1.2.2, j) in ISO/IEC 17065

    1) To be implemented in accordance with Section 4.1.2.2, j), 1) in ISO/IEC 17065

    2) To be implemented in accordance with Section 4.1.2.2, j), 2) in ISO/IEC 17065

k) To be implemented in accordance with Section 4.1.2.2, k) in ISO/IEC 17065

The entity shall also include the following events if applicable:

    1) Environmental or social negative impacts resulting from incidents or events at the Certified Entity.

    2) Allegations of fraud made by any person or company

l) The entity shall confirm that it does not hold, nor will it seek to hold, Global Standard certification or a Global Standard Letter of Approval (LoA) with another Certification Body at the same time

    Note: This stipulation shall not apply to subcontractors performing job work (in the field of processing or manufacturing) in the supply chain of Global Standard goods without becoming the owner of them and without assigning their own certification. Such entities may still be subcontracted by different certified entities with job work and accordingly may be inspected by different Certification Bodies and get listed on more than one certificate of compliance issued to the certified entities assigning the certification.

m) The entity shall agree to participate in relevant Global Standard surveys and to provide data to Global Trace Base (GTB) when requested.

n) The entity shall agree that audit reports may be shared with Global Standard upon request.

o) The entity shall permit the public listing of its certification status on the Global Standard website and through GTB.

p) The agreement shall include provisions to allow the Certification Body to exchange relevant information with other Global Standard-approved Certification Bodies, Accreditation Bodies and Global Standard gGmbH as part of ongoing evaluation, especially the certification status of the Certified Entity’s processes and products.

q) The agreement shall require that the Certified Entity acknowledges the right of Global Standard gGmbH to amend the standards and certification requirements as necessary.

4.1.3 USE OF LICENSE, CERTIFICATES AND MARKS OF CONFORMITY

4.1.3.1 To be implemented in accordance with Section 4.1.3.1 in ISO/IEC 17065

4.1.3.2 To be implemented in accordance with Section 4.1.3.2 in ISO/IEC 17065

4.1.3.3 The Certification Body shall operate in accordance with the provisions contained in the latest version of the Conditions for the Use of Signs - GOTS (CUS-GOTS) for GOTS and/or "Conditions for the Use of Signs – GRTS" (CUS-GRTS) for GRTS and:

a) Provide, on application, individual label releases at least for each unique artwork, product group and Certified Entity. Individual label releases at country level shall also be included within this requirement for label releases. This has the purpose of accounting for the different language versions of the label.
b) Verify that the Certified Entity indeed has a valid scope certificate, in case the applied labelling contains an identification number of the entity.
c) The Certification Bodies shall also specify authentication method for the Scope Certificates and Transaction Certificates issued by the respective Certification Body.
d) Ensure that any uncertified buyer (such as processor, manufacturer, trader, or retailer) of the Certified Entity is informed of the applicable conditions for on-product labelling (as outlined in relevant sections of the CUS_GOTS or CUS -GRTS)
e) Check during the audit on a sample basis that the Certified Entity has communicated its clients (certified and not certified) about the existence of CUS_GOTS and/or CUS -GRTS as relevant.

4.1.3.4 In case of misuse of these Signs, the Certification Body shall:

a) Apply suitable actions and sanctions to address incorrect or misleading references to the certification system, use of such Signs or labelling.

b) Retain the right to request the Certified Entity to discontinue the use of any or all such Signs.

4.1.4 PROVIDE INFORMATION ON THE CORRECT USE OF GLOBAL STANDARD TRADEMARKS

4.1.4.1 The Certification Body shall proactively engage with its clients to make them aware of the correct use of Global Standard trademarks, and shall provide assistance, as necessary, in understanding these restrictions.

4.1.4.2 The Certification Body shall provide information to their clients regarding Global Standard documents that govern and illustrate how to use the signs correctly in order to assist Global Standard in protection of Trademarks. Examples of such documents are the Conditions for the Use of Signs and Labelling Release Forms.

4.2 MANAGEMENT OF IMPARTIALITY

4.2.1 To be implemented in accordance with Section 4.2.1 in ISO/IEC 17065

4.2.2 To be implemented in accordance with Section 4.2.2 in ISO/IEC 17065

4.2.3 To be implemented in accordance with Section 4.2.3 in ISO/IEC 17065

4.2.4 To be implemented in accordance with Section 4.2.4 in ISO/IEC 17065

4.2.5 To be implemented in accordance with Section 4.2.5 in ISO/IEC 17065

4.2.6 To be implemented in accordance with Section 4.2.6 in ISO/IEC 17065

4.2.7 To be implemented in accordance with Section 4.2.7 in ISO/IEC 17065

4.2.8 To be implemented in accordance with Section 4.2.8 in ISO/IEC 17065

4.2.9 To be implemented in accordance with Section 4.2.9 in ISO/IEC 17065

4.2.10 To be implemented in accordance with Section 4.2.10 in ISO/IEC 17065

4.2.11 To be implemented in accordance with Section 4.2.11 in ISO/IEC 17065

4.2.12 To be implemented in accordance with Section 4.2.12 in ISO/IEC 17065

4.2.13 An individual auditor shall not audit the same organization for more than three consecutive years.

4.3 LIABILITY AND FINANCING

4.3.1 To be implemented in accordance with Section 4.3.1 in ISO/IEC 17065

4.3.2 To be implemented in accordance with Section 4.3.2 in ISO/IEC 17065

4.4 NON-DISCRIMINATORY CONDITIONS

4.4.1 To be implemented in accordance with Section 4.4.1 in ISO/IEC 17065

4.4.2 To be implemented in accordance with Section 4.4.2 in ISO/IEC 17065

4.4.3 To be implemented in accordance with Section 4.4.3 in ISO/IEC 17065

4.4.4 To be implemented in accordance with Section 4.4.4 in ISO/IEC 17065

4.5 CONFIDENTIALITY

4.5.1 To be implemented in accordance with Section 4.5.1 in ISO/IEC 17065

4.5.2 To be implemented in accordance with Section 4.5.2 in ISO/IEC 17065

4.5.3 To be implemented in accordance with Section 4.5.3 in ISO/IEC 17065

4.5.4 The Certification Body shall have the right to exchange or disclose information with other Certification Bodies, Accreditation Bodies and the Global Standard gGmbH when required. This exchange is permissible for purposes such as:

a) Quality control and monitoring,
b) Aggregated data reporting and impact measurement, and
c) Verification of information authenticity to prevent misrepresentation or fraud.

The form in which the information is exchanged can be adjusted to the needs and the technological status of the participants of the exchange, such as an API, GTB, email, etc.

4.5.5 Upon request, the Certification Body shall provide Global Standard gGmbH the following information for each applicant and Certified Entity, which Global Standard gGmbH shall treat as confidential:

a) Copies of audit reports, including full details of identified non-conformities and their status.
b) Copies of completed audit checklists indicating the organisation's conformity or non-conformity to each applicable requirement.

c) Copies of application forms.
d) Copies of Scope and Transaction Certificates.
e) Volume data for claimed materials.
f) Names and Scope Certificate numbers for certified subcontractors.
g) Supporting documentation for Transaction Certificates and audit findings.
h) Requests for exemptions to Standard requirements.

4.6 PUBLICLY AVAILABLE INFORMATION

4.6.1 To be implemented in accordance with Section 4.6 in ISO/IEC 17065

5 STRUCTURAL REQUIREMENTS

5.1 ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE AND TOP MANAGEMENT

5.1.1 To be implemented in accordance with Section 5.1.1 in ISO/IEC 17065

5.1.2 To be implemented in accordance with Section 5.1.2 in ISO/IEC 17065

5.1.3 To be implemented in accordance with Section 5.1.3 in ISO/IEC 17065

5.1.4 To be implemented in accordance with Section 5.1.4 in ISO/IEC 17065

5.2 MECHANISM FOR SAFEGUARDING IMPARTIALITY

5.2.1 To be implemented in accordance with Section 5.2.1 in ISO/IEC 17065

5.2.2 To be implemented in accordance with Section 5.2.2 in ISO/IEC 17065

5.2.3 To be implemented in accordance with Section 5.2.3 in ISO/IEC 17065

5.2.4 To be implemented in accordance with Section 5.2.4 in ISO/IEC 17065

6 RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

6.1 CERTIFICATION BODY PERSONNEL

6.1.1 GENERAL

6.1.1.1 To be implemented in accordance with Section 6.1.1.1 in ISO/IEC 17065

6.1.1.2 To be implemented in accordance with Section 6.1.1.2 in ISO/IEC 17065

6.1.1.3 To be implemented in accordance with Section 6.1.1.3 in ISO/IEC 17065

6.1.2 MANAGEMENT OF COMPETENCE FOR PERSONNEL INVOLVED IN THE CERTIFICATION PROCESS

6.1.2.1 To be implemented in accordance with Section 6.1.2.1 in ISO/IEC 17065

6.1.2.2 To be implemented in accordance with Section 6.1.2.2 in ISO/IEC 17065

6.1.2.3 Auditors/evaluators willing to conduct audits against the Standard(s) shall participate as an observer in five audits within a maximum period of one year before conducting their first Global Standard audit.

Five audits as an observer in Global Standard audits are on top of the basic audit requirements defined by the Certification Body. Certification Bodies may require auditors to conduct more than five audits if this is considered necessary.

If the 5 audits are completed in a period shorter than one year, the auditors may start conducting Global Standard audits.

The number of audits as an observer can be reduced to two audits if the new auditor has in the past performed audits of other textile related standards.

The observed audits shall cover each accreditation scope that the auditor will be assigned.

The requirements for new auditors can be summarized as follows and each of them shall be implemented:

a) observing a qualified auditor,
b) participating as an assistant auditor-in-training,
c) participating in at least five audits (remote, or onsite),
d) Completed a recognised or any equivalent course on auditing techniques based on ISO19011.

Certification Bodies shall take written approval for equivalent courses by writing to: sd@global-standard.org

6.1.2.4 The Certification Body shall ensure that relevant personnel attend training (e.g. courses, seminars, webinars) as required by the Global Standard.

6.1.2.5 At least one person within the certification team or certification committee assigned by the certification body to make a certification decision for Global Standard shall meet the following requirements:

a) A university or bachelor's degree in the field of textile-related degree or clothing engineering, along with demonstrated training in quality management and at least two years of experience in certification; or
b) Five years of professional experience in a technical capacity in the textile industry, along with demonstrated training in quality management; or
c) At least 2 years of professional experience as a certification decision officer or an auditor and specific training about the textile industry.

The Certification Body shall ensure that decision-makers can demonstrate experience with the context and specifics of the local textile industry and are competent to conduct audit and evaluation of compliance with relevant Standard criteria.

The Certification Body shall ensure that new decision-makers complete at a minimum three certification decisions under the supervision of a qualified certification decision-maker before making independent decisions.

6.1.2.6 The Certification Bodies approved for “Scope 4” shall ensure that for each chemical input approval decision, at least one of its personnel involved in taking decisions and evaluating the approval of chemical inputs shall have:

a) A university or bachelor’s degree in chemistry (or specifically in textile chemistry/processing). or
b) At least 5 years of professional experience in the textile chemical supply industry (e.g., chemical producers or suppliers), or with a laboratory, research institute or assessment body focused on manufacturing or environmental and toxicity assessments of chemical inputs (e.g. preparation or assessment of Material Safety Data Sheets (SDS)), or
c) At least three years of professional experience as a technician in the textile industry, with demonstrated expertise in the application of textile auxiliaries (particularly in wet processing/finishing) and environmental and toxicity assessments based on Safety Data Sheet (SDS).
d) Additionally, the Certification Body shall ensure that personnel involved in taking decisions and evaluating the approval of chemical inputs have:
    i. Adequate knowledge of global chemical regulations, including REACH, and resources from agencies like the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA).
    ii. Completed a recognised or an equivalent course on auditing techniques based on ISO19011. Certification Bodies shall take express written approval for equivalent courses by writing to sd@global-standard.org
    iii. Completion of a minimum of three evaluation and approval certification decisions under the supervision of a qualified evaluator/approval responsible

6.1.2.7 The Certification Body that approves accessories for the Standard(s) shall ensure that the personnel responsible for accessory approval have attended an internal training program provided by the Certification Body that ensures the knowledge about the requirements for standard-approved accessories.

6.1.2.8 The Certification Body shall ensure that personnel involved in chemical input approvals (including inspectors, evaluators, and committee members) maintain current technical knowledge relevant to the chemical product and manufacturing. This includes:

a) Providing necessary training on approval processes, assessment methodologies, and specific scheme requirements.
b) Participating in the Global Standard training system (e.g., courses, seminars, webinars) as offered by Global Standard.
c) Granting personnel access to the restricted area of the Global Standard website, which includes essential resources such as training materials, lists of banned companies, the latest approved chemical inputs, and binding interpretations or guidance for certification processes.
d) Ensuring personnel have access to and familiarity with relevant norms and resources, including the SDS preparation standards and databases such as the CAS registry, necessary for reviewing chemical product classifications and properties (for example, as per Section 4.2, Chemical Input Criteria, Global Organic Textile Standard, and the Manual for the Implementation of GOTS).
e) Requiring completion of training courses on SDS compilation according to accepted norms as specified in relevant VSS Sections, (such as section 4.2.1 of the Manual for the Implementation of GOTS).
f) Ensuring that personnel involved in audits and approvals related to relevant sections of the VSS (such as Sections 4.2.4 and 4.2.5 of GOTS) receive specialised training to evaluate and audit formulator sites effectively.

6.1.2.9 The Certification Body shall ensure that auditors maintain their qualifications by meeting the following requirements:

a) Participate in ongoing training on updates to Global Standard VSS and associated requirements.
b) Conduct at least one on-site audit per Standard every 12 months.
c) Complete a shadow audit for each Standard at least once every three years, during which the auditor's performance is evaluated by another qualified auditor. The evaluating auditor shall prepare a report recommending whether the auditor retains their qualification.

6.1.2.10 Auditors evaluating other auditors (shadow auditors) shall:

a) Be qualified auditors,
b) Be independent of the organisation being audited,
c) Not be involved in the certification decision for the audit, and
d) Not have a familial relationship with the auditor being evaluated.

6.1.2.11 If a Certification Body seeks to qualify an auditor previously qualified by another Certification Body, it shall ensure that all applicable requirements from this section have been met based on the applicable scope.

6.1.2.12 The Certification Body shall conduct annual performance reviews of auditors, certification decision-makers, and other personnel involved in the certification process.

6.1.2.13 The Certification Body shall include the overall feedback of entities into the continuous improvement management system of the Certification Body. The feedback may be collected at least once a year.

6.1.2.14 If a Certification Body cannot qualify new auditors or certification decision-makers according to the above requirements (e.g., due to being newly in the accreditation process or the departure of key personnel), the Certification Body shall:

a) Develop a documented plan to qualify initial personnel, and
b) Obtain approval from the Accreditation Body before proceeding with personnel qualification.

6.1.3 CONTRACT WITH PERSONNEL

The certification body shall require personnel involved in evaluations and certification decisions by means of a contract or other document to commit themselves to the following:

a) To be implemented in accordance with Section 6.1.3, a) in ISO/IEC 17065.
b) To be implemented in accordance with Section 6.1.3, b) in ISO/IEC 17065.
c) To be implemented in accordance with Section 6.1.3, c) in ISO/IEC 17065.
d) To comply with the applicable rules and requirements set by the Global Standard and contained in the documents in section 2.1 of this document.

6.2 RESOURCES FOR AUDIT EVALUATION

6.2.1 To be implemented in accordance with Section 6.2.1 in ISO/IEC 17065

In addition to the requirements in the norm ISO/IEC 17065, the Certification Body shall ensure that auditors meet the minimum qualification requirements as set by the Global Standard below:

6.2.1.1 Auditors conducting audits shall demonstrate cultural sensitivity, knowledge of sector-specific risks, and gender-responsive audit techniques as provided in the Due

Diligence Handbook for Auditors (To be implemented in accordance with Section 2.2 Gender Perspectives and Cultural Sensitivity in Audits).

6.2.1.2 Auditors shall have one of the following educational and professional experience backgrounds:

a) More than one year of experience as an auditor and specific training about textile industry, or
b) A university or bachelor's degree in the field of textile or clothing engineering plus expertise in quality management issues, or
c) Tertiary education (college/university degree) and two years of relevant professional experience in the textile sector, or
d) Secondary education (high school diploma) and four years of relevant professional experience, and
e) Completed a recognised or any equivalent course on auditing techniques based on ISO19011. Courses can be sent for recognition to the following email: sd@global-standard.org.

6.2.1.3 Auditors who assess the social and human rights criteria shall complete an approved social auditing training. Global Standard gGmbH considers the following training as acceptable:

a) SA 8000 Basic Auditor Course,
b) Global Standard/SAI Social Training Programme (offered or approved by the SAI), or
c) Equivalent programme (subject to approval by Global Standard gGmbH).

6.2.1.4 Certification Bodies shall ensure that the auditors performing audits under the Global Standard demonstrate and maintain the following qualifications and competencies:

a) Comprehensive understanding of the Certification Body's procedures and protocols,
b) Familiarity with production methods and processes relevant to the organisations to be audited,
c) Ability to produce clear, accurate, and complete audit reports which effectively detail audit findings and their relation to the Standard and other applicable requirements.
d) In-depth knowledge of the Global Standard criteria, including environmental, social, human rights, governance, and due diligence requirements;
e) Familiarity with interpretations and guidance provided in the Implementation Manual, the Global Standard Due Diligence Handbooks, and other official Global Standard documents;
f) Proficiency in Global Standard auditing methodology, including ISO/IEC 17065-aligned conformity assessment techniques, risk-based audit planning, and evaluation of due diligence systems through structured assessments (e.g., "stress testing");
g) Awareness of relevant international and national frameworks for human rights and environmental due diligence, including the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and OECD Due DiligencCere Guidance;
h) The ability to conduct audits with impartiality, professional integrity, and sensitivity to gender, cultural, and contextual factors.

6.2.1.5 Certification Bodies shall:

a) Ensure that auditors meet and maintain the qualifications and competencies described in Section 6.2.1.4 before performing any Global Standard audits;
b) Periodically assess auditor competence as part of their internal quality management system in accordance with ISO/IEC 17065;

c) Maintain documented and verifiable evidence of each auditor's qualifications, experience, and professional development activities.

6.2.1.6 To ensure auditors remain competent in light of changes to the Global Standard, regulatory developments, and emerging sustainability risks, Certification Bodies shall ensure their auditors engage in continuous learning and professional development. Auditors shall maintain up-to-date knowledge of:

a) Amendments to the Global Standard and its Implementation Manual,
b) Developments in due diligence laws and frameworks at national, regional, and international levels,
c) Evolving audit methods, including risk-based techniques, verification practices, and report writing skills,
d) Cross-cutting sustainability and human rights issues relevant to the Global Standard (e.g., gender equality, living wage, child and forced labour indicators, environmental compliance).

6.2.1.7 Equivalent training programmes referenced under Section 6.2.1.3(c) shall be subject to review and approval by Global Standard gGmbH.

6.2.1.8 The Procedure for Approval of External Training, issued by Global Standard gGmbH, shall apply to the evaluation and approval of all training programmes described in Sections 6.2.1.3(c) and 6.2.1.7.

6.2.2 EXTERNAL RESOURCES (OUTSOURCING)

6.2.2.1 The certification body shall not outsource audit/evaluation activities to any organizations other than those that are GOTS Approved Certification Bodies.

6.2.2.2 To be implemented in accordance with Section 6.2.2.2 in ISO/IEC 17065

6.2.2.3 To be implemented in accordance with Section 6.2.2.3 in ISO/IEC 17065

6.2.2.4 To be implemented in accordance with Section 6.2.2.4 in ISO/IEC 17065

6.2.2.5 Certification Bodies may engage individual external personnel under contract (referred to as "Assignees") with the following conditions:

a) Assignees must be fully trained, capable, and competent to meet Global Standard requirements as defined in 6.1 and 6.2.1.
b) Assignments shall only proceed after prior notification to Global Standard gGmbH and the respective Accreditation Body and the execution of a legal contract between the Certification Body and the Assignee,
c) Certification Bodies shall assume full responsibility for the actions, training, and decisions of Assignees.

6.2.2.6 Allocating audits within wholly owned Certification Body group offices or companies shall not be considered subcontracting. Exemptions may be granted where national law limits company ownership. In such cases, a valid formal contract or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) should be in place.

6.2.2.7 Requirements for Laboratories testing – residues, chemical inputs, GMO tests, quality parameters, etc, as required or specified within the Global Standard schemes:

a) Laboratories conducting analyses for Global Standard VSS requirements shall hold accreditation in accordance with ISO/IEC 17025 or be accredited under Good

Laboratory Practices (GLP) by recognised national accreditation bodies, such as COFRAC, NATA or equivalent organisations.

b) Global Standard gGmbH mandates that recognised GMO testing for cotton shall only be performed by those laboratories which have passed the latest Global Standard/OCA/OCS proficiency testing exercise.

c) Exceptions to these requirements are not routinely issued but can only be confirmed, specifically by Global Standard. Requests can be sent to the following email: sd@global-standard.org.

7 PROCESS REQUIREMENTS

7.1 GENERAL

7.1.1 For Global Standard VSS, the certification body shall apply the certification program outlined in this document.

7.1.2 The Certification Body shall apply the latest normative and reference documents of the Global Standard for the evaluation and certification of the entity. This includes adhering to the definitions and glossary contained in these documents.

7.1.3 For any uncertainties or clarifications, the Certification Body shall request official interpretations directly from Global Standard[3] to ensure consistent application of the Standard.

7.1.4 Additional requirements apply to a Certification Body depending on the scope to which they are authorised as described in Section 9.2.3 g) of this document.

7.1.5 Assessment and approval of textile auxiliary chemicals (chemical inputs) may only be conducted by Certification Bodies accredited and approved under the 'Certifiers Contract' for this specific accreditation scope ('Scope 4').

7.2 APPLICATION

7.2.1 The required information that the entity must submit to the certification body as part of the application should include:

a) List of products to be certified
b) General features of the entity, such as the name of the company, the address of its physical locations
c) Description of the facilities (type and number of facilities, number of workers)
d) Person responsible for VSS certification at the entity.
e) Scope of the certification that the entity is applying to.
f) Previous certifications
g) Information on other certifications related to textile production.

7.2.2 The Certification Body authorised for Scopes 1,2, and 3 shall provide entities applying for certification with an up-to-date description of certification procedures and inform them of the following:

[3] The designated email address for these clarifications is sd@global-standard.org

a) Contractual conditions, including fees, the distinction between the Global Standard annual fee and fees from approved Certification Bodies, and potential contractual penalties.
b) The Certified Entity's rights and duties, including the appeals procedure.
c) The current version of the Standard and corresponding relevant documents released by Global Standard (including the Due Diligence Handbook for Certified Entities).
d) Program changes, including updates to procedures and standards.
e) Evaluation and audit procedures applied by the Certification Body during certification.
f) Documentation requirements for entities to enable the Certification Body to verify compliance with the Standard (Please refer to Annex 2 of this document).

7.2.3 The Certification Body shall ensure that entities applying for approval of chemical inputs complete and sign an application form.

7.2.4 The application form for Scope 4 shall include the following requirements:

a) Declare understanding of the Global Standard requirements for the applied chemical inputs and confirm, to the best of their knowledge, compliance with these requirements.
b) Provide a Product Stewardship plan and relevant documents.
c) Submit an SDS for each applied chemical input, prepared according to a recognised norm or directive. Additional guidance and resources are available in the respective Manuals for the Implementation of the standard(s).
d) Disclose if another Certification Body has denied, withdrawn, or suspended approval of any applied input(s).
e) Grant the Certification Body the right to exchange information with other Certification Bodies, accreditation bodies, and Global Standard gGmbH for verification purposes.
f) Provide environmental and chemical management, as well as occupational health and safety documents for formulator facilities, if applicable.
g) Notify the Certification Body of any relevant changes to applied or already approved inputs, such as:
    1) Changes in the supplier of raw materials,
    2) Changes in processing method or technologies used.
    3) Changes in composition or concentration of raw materials, new formulator sites, or ingredients used.

7.3 APPLICATION REVIEW

7.3.1 To be implemented in accordance with Section 7.3.1 in ISO/IEC 17065

7.3.2 To be implemented in accordance with Section 7.3.2 in ISO/IEC 17065

7.3.3 To be implemented in accordance with Section 7.3.3 in ISO/IEC 17065

7.3.4 To be implemented in accordance with Section 7.3.4 in ISO/IEC 17065

7.3.5 To be implemented in accordance with Section 7.3.5 in ISO/IEC 17065

7.3.6 The certification body shall submit a proposal to each applicant with all necessary details for their consideration.

7.3.7 ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR APPLICATION REVIEW FOR CERTIFICATION BODIES WITH SCOPES 1,2, AND 3.

7.3.7.1 The Certification Body require completion of an application form, signed by a duly authorized representative of the operator. To enable evaluation and assignment of qualified personnel, the Certification Body shall require operators to:

a) Provide information about the scope of the desired certification, including a description, as specified by the Certification Body, of the production, products and facilities and sub-contractors to be certified
b) Provide information as to whether another Certification Body has denied certification and any known reasons for that denial. Additionally, the operator shall provide a copy of their last assessment report, if one was performed to the standard, in order to ensure that unresolved non-conformities on the part of the operator are taken into account by the new Certification Body.
c) Provide information about any past applications made; approvals received; approvals suspended or withdrawn or lapsed.
d) Provide information about any other certifications and Certification Body relationships that share the same scope as the Standards to which approval is being sought (e.g. use of organic fibre under any organic content standards).

7.3.8 ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR APPLICATION REVIEW FOR CERTIFICATION BODIES WITH SCOPE 4.

7.3.8.1 The Certification Body shall review the application to ensure the evaluation is feasible and all requirements in the standard can be applied. The review shall contain:

a) Completeness of the documents submitted by the applicant.
b) Whether another Certification Body has already issued a Letter of Approval (LoA).
c) Applicant understanding of the relevant assessment requirements and applicable procedures.

7.4 EVALUATION

7.4.1 PLANNING THE EVALUATION

To be implemented in accordance with Section 7.4.1 in ISO/IEC 17065

7.4.1.1 The certification body shall develop individual evaluation plans for each entity for the all the evaluation activities.

7.4.1.2 The evaluation plan for Scopes 1,2 and 3 shall include the following elements to ensure that the necessary arrangements are in place and managed effectively:

a) Complete description of the operation and its facilities
b) List of products to be included in the scope of certification.
c) List of suppliers, premises/sites, sub-contractors
d) List of used chemicals
e) Description of all production processes.

7.4.1.3 Additional elements to be included in the evaluation plan for Certified entities for Scopes 1, 2, 3

a) Assessment of all processing systems, including visits to processing and storage units.
b) Review of records and accounts to verify the flow of goods (input/output volume reconciliation and traceability). This includes:

1) Verification of traceability and volume reconciliation for each certified material from the previous annual audit.
2) Evaluation of loss rates, initial stock, total purchases, reprocessing, production, sales, and final stock for the period.
3) Spot checks for process details and loss rates, including transport documents and financial records. This should include a trace-back audit.

c) Verification of production and sales against facility capacity, including both certified and non-certified production. Spot checks shall evaluate the feasibility of storage capacity and review records related to input materials used in Global Standard production. Such checks shall include, as applicable, transaction certificates, invoices and delivery documents, transport documents and financial records.
d) Identification of risks to product integrity, including the elements in section 11 of this document.
e) Audit of wastewater or effluent treatment plant, including pre-treatment systems for wet processors.
f) Verification of the Certified Entity's risk assessment and residue testing policy, including sampling for residue testing either randomly or when contamination or non-compliance is suspected.
g) Verification of adherence to Human Rights and Social Criteria as per respective Due Diligence Handbook for Auditors, including:
    1) Confidential interviews with workers and workers' representatives and management interviews.
    2) Facility walkthrough, including processing and storage units, toilet facilities, rest areas, and other worker-accessible sites.
    3) Documents review, including review of personnel files, such as employee lists, contracts, payrolls, working time records, age verification, and social insurance documents.

7.4.1.4 Risk Assessment and Sampling

The Certification Body shall conduct a documented risk assessment prior to each audit and assign a risk level (e.g., very low, low, medium, or high) for each Certified Entity, associated facility, and subcontractor. The risk assessment shall include the following:

a) Conduct risk assessments prior to each audit and when changes in certificate scope or additional audits are necessary. This includes new entities, facilities, or subcontractors before issuing or amending scope certificates. Independently certified subcontractors are exempt.
b) Include a background check in the risk assessment, considering feedback (solicited or unsolicited) and reviewing legal compliance history and ownership information.
c) Document the risk assessment and may communicate the assigned risk level to the Certified Entity
d) Evaluate each facility and subcontractor individually, considering additional relevant criteria and using both quantitative and qualitative tools.

7.4.1.5 Evaluation plan for Certified Facilities for Scope 4

Formulators and their subcontractors shall undergo on-site audits to assess product stewardship, environmental management systems, and safety compliance as per respective VSS Sections. On-site audits shall be conducted once per standard version, unless there are changes in the approved scope.

The Certification Body shall use an SDS document(s) provided by the entity as the basis for planning the evaluation against all applicable VSS requirements.

The SDS document(s) shall be based on applicable recognized norms or directives as specified in respective sections of the Manual for the Implementation.

Whenever necessary and based on the risk assessment the Certification Body shall consider additional sources of information, such as:

a) Toxicological and environmental data on specific components of the auxiliary agents.
b) Current and valid test reports.
c) Independent third-party laboratory analyses.
d) Traceability checks of ingredients.

The on-site evaluation plan shall include, at a minimum:

e) Visits to chemical input production areas and storage units, including non-approved input areas where relevant.
f) Evaluation of chemical inputs for compliance with product safety guidelines, release of certain substances during synthesis, and other applicable VSS criteria.
g) Review of records for chemical management to verify the flow of intermediates and final chemical inputs.
h) Identification of risks to product integrity.
i) Verification of the formulators or subcontractor's risk assessment of contamination and residue testing policy, including sampling for residue testing (either random or based on suspicion of contamination or non-compliance).
j) Verification of environmental management, occupational health and safety requirements as per respective VSS sections (e.g. GOTS Section 4.2.5).
k) Audit of the internal (onsite) effluent treatment plant (if applicable). For internal and external (offsite) effluent treatment plants, relevant records shall be assessed in accordance with respective VSS sections (e.g. GOTS Sections 4.2.5 and 4.3.2).
l) Verification of adherence to defined Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) standards, including:
m) Audit of processing and storage units, toilet facilities, rest areas, and other worker-accessible sites.
n) Interviews with individuals responsible for OHS.
o) Verification of the SDS of incoming raw materials and implementation of chemical safety norms.
p) Confirmation that changes to the standards and related requirements have been effectively implemented.
q) Verification that corrective actions have been implemented effectively, if any.

7.4.2 PERSONNEL FOR EVALUATION ACTIVITIES

To be implemented in accordance with Section 7.4.2 in ISO/IEC 17065

7.4.2.1 The composition of the evaluation team shall depend on the needs of the Certification Body and the evaluation plan. The team may include one or more of the following roles:

a) A lead auditor, designated if more than one auditor is part of the team, shall take overall responsibility for ensuring the audit is completed.
b) One or more auditors in training.
c) One or more translators or interpreters, if necessary.
d) One or more technical experts who are not qualified auditors, if required.

7.4.2.2 When technical experts and translators are involved in audits:

a) They must be independent of the organisation being evaluated.
b) Their names, qualifications, and affiliations shall be documented and included in the audit report.

7.4.3 NECESSARY INFORMATION FOR PERFORMING EVALUATION TASKS PLAN

To be implemented in accordance with section 7.4.3 in ISO/IEC 17065

7.4.3.1 **Basic information on the evaluation**

The Certification Body shall review and verify financial records related to Transaction Certificates, such as bank receipts, payments, transfers, letters of credit, and income tax records.

The purpose of these checks is to detect potential substitution of certified and non-certified materials during the previous scope certificate validity period.

7.4.3.2 **Sampling approaches for financial records:**

Sampling approaches shall be based on the total number of Transaction Certificates issued to the Certified Entity in the preceding certification period.

Sampling shall follow a reducing scale methodology, subject to a minimum of five Transaction Certificates but not exceeding the square root of the total number of issued Transaction Certificates.

The Certification Body shall verify material flow records to ensure traceability and reconcile input-output volumes for each Certified Entity.

7.4.3.3 **Requirements to Address High-Risk Situations for Scopes 1,2,3 Evaluations**

a) In facilities with parallel processing of Certified and Non-Certified Products, the certification shall verify that processes, storage, and documentation clearly distinguish certified products from non-certified ones.
b) If a Certified Entity is also certified by other Certification Bodies for standards with overlapping scopes related to organic content, the Certification Body shall seek information exchange with the other certification bodies to prevent misuse of certificates.
c) Global Standard considers first processing, e.g. ginning, as a high-risk process.
d) In the case of ginning, it is suggested that, based on risk assessment, the Certification Body conducts two audits, one during the peak season to verify on-site operations, including machines, capacity, and compliance with human rights and social requirements and the second, as a remote audit before the end of the respective ginning season to review records and perform full volume reconciliation after all raw material has been purchased and processed.
e) Based on risk assessment, this shall apply to all first processors such as wool, silk, cotton etc. If Certified Entities receive a low-risk score in their risk assessment, Certification Bodies are entitled to conduct remote audits.

7.4.4 IMPLEMENTATION OF EVALUATION ACTIVITIES.

To be implemented in accordance with section 7.4.4 in ISO/IEC 17065

7.4.4.1 Evaluation activities should include the following, according to the scope of the certification:

a) Document review
b) Inspection and audit of facilities
c) Risk analysis-based testing as described in section 7.4.1.3, f).

7.4.5 RECOGNITION OF OTHER EVALUATION RESULTS

To be implemented in accordance with Section 7.4.5 in ISO/IEC 17065

7.4.5.1 The Certification Body shall accept certificates and Letters of Approval issued by other Global Standard Approved Certification Bodies in accordance with the Global Standard to conclude final certification.

7.4.5.2 Further, the Certification Body shall accept certificates and residue analysis reports from other Certification Bodies and laboratories in accordance with the provisions of the Standard. Based on the risk analysis conducted by the Certification Body, further analysis of the incoming material may be conducted.

7.4.5.3 Notwithstanding the above, Certification Bodies are required and encouraged to have their own risk assessments in place at all stages, including the elements defined in section 12 of this document.

7.4.5.4 Should it be necessary, Certification Bodies are encouraged to discuss matters of dispute among themselves as it pertains to the mutuality of document or certification acceptance.

7.4.6 INFORM THE ENTITY OF ALL NONCONFORMITIES

To be implemented in accordance with Section 7.4.6 in ISO/IEC 17065

7.4.6.1 The Certification Body shall, within a specified timeframe, notify the Certified Entity of any identified non-conformities.

7.4.7 INFORMATION REGARDING THE ADDITIONAL EVALUATION TASKS NEEDED TO VERIFY NONCONFORMITIES

To be implemented in accordance with Section 7.4.7in ISO/IEC 17065.

7.4.7.1 The Certification Body shall define a specified timeframe so that the entity can resolve the nonconformities.

7.4.7.2 For renewal audits the maximum time frame to resolve nonconformities shall not exceed 90 calendar days from the completion of the audit.

7.4.7.3 The Certification Body with Scope 4 shall require the applicant to incorporate any information derived during the evaluation procedure deemed relevant to the SDS into an updated version of the SDS before approving the corresponding input. The list of valid reasons for incorporating further information into the SDS is included in relevant sections of the Manual for Implementation (such as Section 4.2 of the Manual of Implementation of GOTS).

7.4.8 ADDITIONAL EVALUATION TASKS

To be implemented in accordance with Section 7.4.8 in ISO/IEC 17065.

7.4.8.1 The Certification Body shall document the measures to verify the effectiveness of corrective actions taken by Certified Entities, formulators, and subcontractors.

7.4.9 DOCUMENTING THE RESULTS OF THE EVALUATION ACTIVITIES

To be implemented in accordance with Section 7.4.9 in ISO/IEC 17065

7.4.9.1 The Certification Body shall report evaluation findings to the Certified Entity following documented reporting procedures, ensuring transparency and objectivity. The Certification Body shall follow the guidance provided in Section 2.11 of the Due Diligence Handbook for Auditors.

7.4.9.2 Audit reports shall follow a standardised protocol designed for different types of operations (processing, manufacturing, or trading). Reports shall facilitate a non-

discriminatory, objective, and comprehensive analysis of the Certified Entity's compliance with certification requirements.

7.4.9.3 Audit reports shall include all relevant aspects of the standards and validate the information provided by the Certified Entity. Each report shall include, at a minimum:

a) A statement of any observations regarding conformity with certification requirements.
b) The date and duration of the audit, number of individuals interviewed (the Certification Bodies shall abstain from disclosing workers' names due to safety considerations), and facilities visited.
c) A full evaluation of any non-conformities issued in a previous audit (if conducted by another Certification Body within two years), regardless of whether they were previously closed.
d) A list of reviewed documents, including type and relevance to certification.

7.5 REVIEW

7.5.1 To be implemented in accordance with Section 7.5.1 in ISO/IEC 17065

7.5.2 To be implemented in accordance with Section 7.5.2 in ISO/IEC 17065

7.5.3 The review shall include an evaluation of the audit report by a qualified certification decision-maker. This applies to reports related to Scopes 1, 2, 3 and 4, as relevant to the certification process.

7.6 CERTIFICATION DECISION

7.6.1 To be implemented in accordance with Section 7.6.1 in ISO/IEC 17065.

7.6.2 To be implemented in accordance with Section 7.6.2 in ISO/IEC 17065.

7.6.3 To be implemented in accordance with Section 7.6.3 in ISO/IEC 17065.

7.6.4 To be implemented in accordance with Section 7.6.4 in ISO/IEC 17065.

7.6.5 To be implemented in accordance with Section 7.6.5 in ISO/IEC 17065.

7.6.6 To be implemented in accordance with Section 7.6.6 in ISO/IEC 17065.

7.6.6.1 **Additional requirements for the decisions related to chemical inputs approval:**

a) Chemical input approval decisions shall be finalised and communicated to the applicant within 60 calendar days of the last audit day of chemical formulators or the evaluation of the chemical inputs.
b) If a chemical input listed in the latest circulated summary requires removal from a 'Letter of Approval' due to non-conformities, the Certification Body shall notify the designated responsible person at Global Standard gGmbH[4] . This notification must include the type of non-conformity identified to assess the risk potential of the input.
c) Exceptions to certification or input approval requirements shall only be granted if explicitly allowed under the latest version of the VSS or other official Global Standard gGmbH documentation (e.g., specific allowances for bleaching auxiliaries for non-cotton fibre products or audit cycles for low-risk small-scale subcontractors

[4] At this moment, the designated responsible is the Implementation Specialist, Global Standard gGmbH; sd@global-standard.org

and traders). The Certification Body shall maintain clear criteria and procedures for granting exceptions and document the basis for each exception.

d) In cases where one Certification Body approves a chemical input that another declines or disputes, the Approved Certification Bodies shall aim to achieve a consistent assessment through consensus, sharing proof of their assessments. If consensus cannot be reached, the designated responsible person at Global Standard gGmbH or Standards Committee shall make the final decision, based on the provided technical information.

7.6.6.2 The Certification Body shall clearly state the reasons for denial, withdrawal, or suspension of certification or input approval, with specific references to the VSS criteria or other relevant requirements.

7.6.6.3 If denial or withdrawal of certification or input approval is due to fraudulent activities:

a) The Certification Body shall promptly notify Global Standard gGmbH.
b) Global Standard gGmbH will circulate details of the affected entities to all Approved Certification Bodies.
c) Certification Bodies shall not offer certification or input approval to such entities for a period specified by Global Standard.
d) The cooling-off period for such entities shall be a minimum of 12 months from the date of suspension or withdrawal, whichever is later.

7.7 CERTIFICATION DOCUMENTATION

7.7.1 To be implemented in accordance with Section 7.7.1 in ISO/IEC 17065

7.7.1.1 **Scope Certificates**

a) The Certification Body shall issue a Scope Certificate to Certified Entities.
b) Scope Certificates shall adhere to the latest versions of the Policy for the Issuance of Scope Certificates and the Template for Issuing Scope Certificates as provided by the Global Standard gGmbH.
c) The Certification Body shall, under the scope of this certificate, include a list of all the facilities that have been audited and found in conformity with the standard. This includes a Facility Appendix, Non-Certified Subcontractor Appendix and Independently Certified Subcontractor Appendix.
d) Certification Bodies shall issue a Scope Certificate within 30 days (from the last audit day) of a successful audit (day) and within 15 days of the closure of open non-conformities. A successful audit is defined as an audit in which there were no non-conformities identified. The closure of open non-conformities means that the corrective actions implemented by entities have been accepted by the Certification Body.
e) Certification bodies may initiate a recertification process up to 90 days before scope certificate expiration date.

7.7.1.2 The validity of a Scope Certificate may only be extended with specific written approval from Global Standard for reasons beyond the control of the Certification Body and the certified entity (e.g., force majeure).

7.7.1.3 The evaluation personnel shall request the Entity to develop a corrective action plan for any non-conformities or improvement measures and send it to the Certification body within two weeks of the evaluation and always before the certification decision.

Evaluation results may include requests for the implementation of improvement measures and non-conformities within a specified time frame. In case of non-conformities, a certificate shall be withheld until the implementation of corrective

actions can be demonstrated. In serious cases, certification shall be denied or immediately withdrawn.

The following table outlines the classification of the evaluation results:

Classification of the evaluation results	Explanation	Consequences / timelines to address results
✓**FULFILLED**	If no nonconformities and no improvement measures have been identified.	Certification Bodies shall issue a Scope Certificate within 30 calendar days of the completion of audit.
! IMPROVEMENT MEASURES	The Certified Entity partially meets the requirements in the standard and only minor improvements are needed. Improvements are achievable within a short period of time, are not systemic, are not recurrent. The audit personnel shall document improvement measures in their audit report.	Certification Bodies give Certified Entities a maximum of 45 days to address improvement measures after completion of a renewal audit.
✘ NOT FULFILLED (Non-Conformity)	The requirement in the standard is not fulfilled and there is a deviation. Non conformities: last over a long period of time, are systemic, and compromise the integrity of GOTS products The audit personnel document nonconformities in the audit report.	When nonconformities have been identified Certification Bodies give Certified Entities a maximum timeframe of 90 calendar days to correct such non-conformities after completion of a renewal audit.

7.7.1.4 Letters of Approval

a) Following a positive approval decision, the Certification Body shall issue Letters of Approval to chemical input producers or suppliers in accordance with the Policy and Template for Issuing Letters of Approval for Colourants/Textile Auxiliaries.
b) Certification Bodies accredited for Scope 4 shall provide quarterly summary lists of approved chemical inputs (as issued with Letters of Approval) to the Global Standard gGmbH and other Approved Certification Bodies.
c) These summary lists shall follow the reporting dates and formats specified by the Global Standard gGmbH and serve as a reference tool for all Approved Certification Bodies and certified entities.
d) Inputs marked as confidential (e.g., those developed for specific processing and applied exclusively in that context) shall not be disclosed to other Certification Bodies or entities.

7.7.1.5 Transaction Certificates

a) Transaction Certificates shall be issued by Approved Certification Bodies strictly in accordance with the Policy for the Issuance of Transaction Certificates and using the latest operative version of the Transaction Certificate Template provided by the Global Standard gGmbH.

b) Before issuing Transaction Certificates, Certification Bodies shall perform scrutiny and validity checks, which must include 1) Traceability verification and volume reconciliation. 2) Verification of financial transactions as an essential component of validity checks.
c) Certification Bodies shall apply additional validity checks for first-process Transaction Certificates to prevent fraud. These checks shall include: 1) Evaluation of first processing site capacities. 2) Assessment of stock positions. 3) Full traceability evidence back to the farm. 4) Verified financial transactions between relevant parties.
d) Transaction Certificates shall be issued within the established timelines in section 2.8 of the Policy for the Issuance of Transaction Certificates to ensure consistency and reliability in the certification process.

7.7.2 To be implemented in accordance with Section 7.7.2 in ISO/IEC 17065.

7.7.3 To be implemented in accordance with Section 7.7.3 in ISO/IEC 17065.

7.8 DIRECTORY OF CERTIFIED PRODUCTS

The Certification Body shall maintain a directory of certified products in accordance with ISO/IEC 17065 Section 7.8.

7.8.1 Certification Bodies shall participate in and use Global Trace-Base and all its functionality, including Scope Certificates, Transaction Certificates, Impact data, etc.

7.8.2 Scope 4 Certification Bodies shall ensure the Global Standard database[5] for approved chemical inputs remains updated in addition to maintaining a directory of approved chemicals at their end.

7.9 SURVEILLANCE AND RECERTIFICATION

7.9.1 To be implemented in accordance with Section 7.9.1 in ISO/IEC 17065.

7.9.2 To be implemented in accordance with Section 7.9.2 in ISO/IEC 17065.

7.9.3 To be implemented in accordance with Section 7.9.3 in ISO/IEC 17065.

7.9.4 To be implemented in accordance with Section 7.9.4 in ISO/IEC 17065.

7.9.5 **Planning of surveillance**

7.9.5.1 Surveillance evaluations shall be carried out annually based on the latest version of the Standard.

7.9.5.2 Exceptions to the annual on-site audit cycle may be granted by the Certification Body, but only in accordance with the criteria specified in GOTS and the Manual for Implementation.

7.9.5.3 In addition to regular audit visits, the Certification Body shall conduct unannounced on-site audits of certified entities. These unannounced audits shall comply with the provisions outlined in the latest version of the Manual for Implementation.

7.9.5.4 Certification Bodies may schedule surveillance audits up to 90 calendar days before the date of SC expiry, with the consent of the Certified Entity.

[5] The approved chemical inputs database shall be integrated with the Global Trace-Base in the future.

7.10 CHANGES AFFECTING CERTIFICATION

7.10.1 To be implemented in accordance with Section 7.10.1 in ISO/IEC 17065.

7.10.1.1 **Requirements for the approval of chemical inputs:**

a) When a new version of a VSS comes into force (12 months after its release unless another period is specified), the validity of any Letter of Approval issued under the previous version shall terminate.
b) Re-assessment shall be conducted based on the requirements of the new version of the Standard.
c) Certification Bodies may specify a shorter validity period for Letters of Approval based on their procedures and risk assessment, with a subsequent re-assessment required.

7.10.2 To be implemented in accordance with Section 7.10.2 in ISO/IEC 17065.

a) The Certification Body shall evaluate any changes made by the Certified Entity that could affect compliance with certification requirements. This includes but is not limited to1) Changes in ownership, management, or organisational structure.2) Modifications to production methods, facilities, or processes.3) Introduction of new products or changes to existing product lines within the scope of certification.
b) The Certification Body shall determine whether any changes made by the Certified Entity require amendments to the existing certification.
c) Where required, the Certification Body shall conduct appropriate evaluations to verify continued compliance before issuing any amendments.
d) The Certification Body shall document all changes and the actions taken to address their impact on certification.
e) The Certification Body shall promptly notify Certified Entities of any changes to the certification requirements or processes that may affect their certification.
f) The Certification Body shall verify the Certified Entity's implementation of such changes within the specified implementation periods, ensuring compliance in a timely manner.

7.10.2.1 **Notification of changes made by the certified entity:**

a) The Certification Body shall require the Certified Entity to promptly inform it of any changes that could affect their compliance with certification requirements.
b) The Certification Body shall assess whether the reported changes necessitate further investigation. If further investigation is required, the Certified Entity shall not release certified products produced under the changed conditions until the Certification Body has reviewed the changes and granted explicit approval.
c) When a Certified Entity applies for an amendment to the scope of an existing certificate, the Certification Body shall determine the appropriate evaluation procedure, if any, to assess the proposed amendment and conduct the evaluation as required and decide whether the amendment should be approved or denied.

7.10.3 To be implemented in accordance with Section 7.10.3 in ISO/IEC 17065.

7.11 TERMINATION, REDUCTION, SUSPENSION OR WITHDRAWAL OF CERTIFICATION

7.11.1 To be implemented in accordance with Section 7.11.1 in ISO/IEC 17065.

7.11.2 To be implemented in accordance with Section 7.11.2 in ISO/IEC 17065.

7.11.3 To be implemented in accordance with Section 7.11.3 in ISO/IEC 17065.

7.11.3.1 If certification is terminated (by request of the entity), suspended or withdrawn, the certification body shall update GTB within 3 working days so that there is no indication that the entity continues to be certified.

7.11.3.2 In case of suspension, withdrawal or termination of certification, the certification body shall inform the entities to refrain the usage of public information, use of trademarks that refer to being certified, in order to ensure the reduced scope of certification is clearly communicated to the entity and clearly specified in certification documentation and public information.

7.11.4 To be implemented in accordance with Section 7.11.4 in ISO/IEC 17065.

7.11.4.1 Upon suspension, the Certification Body shall inform the entity and Global Standard immediately in writing and give them the opportunity to correct the nonconformities within 90 calendar days.

7.11.4.2 The Certification Body shall withdraw the certification of an Entity that after a renewal audit does not correct the nonconformities within 90 calendar days.

7.11.5 To be implemented in accordance with Section 7.11.5 in ISO/IEC 17065.

7.11.6 To be implemented in accordance with Section 7.11.6 in ISO/IEC 17065.

7.11.7 **Withdrawal of Scope Certificates:**

7.11.7.1 When a Scope Certificate is withdrawn by the Certification Body, the Certification Body shall notify the following parties in writing:

a) The Entity
b) Global Standard gGmbH (email, or GTB).
c) The relevant Accreditation Body (email or during the audit of the Certification Body).
d) Members of the certifier's council (email)
e) Affected certified entities of the Supply Chain who have received Transaction Certificates from the decertified Entity within the previous 12 months.

7.11.7.2 The Certification Body shall update the certification status on the Global Trace-Base.

7.12 RECORDS

7.12.1 To be implemented in accordance with Section 7.12.1 in ISO/IEC 17065.

7.12.2 To be implemented in accordance with Section 7.12.2 in ISO/IEC 17065.

7.12.3 To be implemented in accordance with Section 7.12.3 in ISO/IEC 17065.

7.12.4 The Certified Entity's records shall be kept up to date and shall include all relevant information, such as audit reports and certification history.

7.12.5 The Certification Body shall also maintain records of exceptions granted, appeals received, and the subsequent actions taken.

7.12.6 Records shall be retained for a minimum of five years, or as required by applicable law, to demonstrate how certification procedures have been applied.

7.13 COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

7.13.1 To be implemented in accordance with Section 7.13.1 in ISO/IEC 17065.

7.13.2 To be implemented in accordance with Section 7.13.2 in ISO/IEC 17065.

7.13.3 To be implemented in accordance with Section 7.13.3 in ISO/IEC 17065.

7.13.4 To be implemented in accordance with Section 7.13.4 in ISO/IEC 17065.

7.13.5 To be implemented in accordance with Section 7.13.5 in ISO/IEC 17065.

7.13.6 To be implemented in accordance with Section 7.13.6 in ISO/IEC 17065.

7.13.7 To be implemented in accordance with Section 7.13.7 in ISO/IEC 17065.

7.13.8 To be implemented in accordance with Section 7.13.8 in ISO/IEC 17065.

7.13.9 To be implemented in accordance with Section 7.13.9 in ISO/IEC 17065.

7.13.10 The complaints and appeals procedures shall be designed and implemented based on the Due Diligence Handbook for Certified Entities and UNGPs and OECD Guidance Documents.

7.13.11 Certification Bodies shall fully cooperate with investigations conducted by Global Standard regarding fraud or complaints. They shall provide all relevant documentation and information, including inspection reports, certificates, material volumes, and related details. Investigations may proceed without involving the Certification Body's Accreditation Body.

8 Management system requirements

8.1 OPTIONS

8.1.1 To be implemented in accordance with Section 8.1.1 in ISO/IEC 17065.

8.1.2 To be implemented in accordance with Section 8.1.2 in ISO/IEC 17065.

8.1.3 To be implemented in accordance with Section 8.1.3 in ISO/IEC 17065.

8.2 GENERAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM DOCUMENTATION

8.2.1 To be implemented in accordance with Section 8.2.1 in ISO/IEC 17065.

8.2.2 To be implemented in accordance with Section 8.2.2 in ISO/IEC 17065.

8.2.3 To be implemented in accordance with Section 8.2.3 in ISO/IEC 17065.

8.2.4 To be implemented in accordance with Section 8.2.4 in ISO/IEC 17065.

8.2.5 To be implemented in accordance with Section 8.2.5 in ISO/IEC 17065.

8.3 CONTROL OF DOCUMENTS

8.3.1 To be implemented in accordance with Section 8.3.1 in ISO/IEC 17065.

8.3.2 To be implemented in accordance with Section 8.3.2 in ISO/IEC 17065.

8.4 CONTROL OF RECORDS

8.4.1 To be implemented in accordance with Section 8.4.1 in ISO/IEC 17065.

8.4.2 To be implemented in accordance with Section 8.4.2 in ISO/IEC 17065.

8.5 MANAGEMENT REVIEW

8.5.1 To be implemented in accordance with Section 8.5 in ISO/IEC 17065.

8.5.1.1 To be implemented in accordance with Section 8.5.1.1 in ISO/IEC 17065.

8.5.1.2 To be implemented in accordance with Section 8.5.1.1 in ISO/IEC 17065.

8.5.2 To be implemented in accordance with Section 8.5.2 in ISO/IEC 17065.

8.5.3 To be implemented in accordance with Section 8.5.3 in ISO/IEC 17065.

8.6 INTERNAL AUDITS

8.6.1 To be implemented in accordance with Section 8.6.1 in ISO/IEC 17065.

8.6.2 To be implemented in accordance with Section 8.6.2 in ISO/IEC 17065.

8.6.3 To be implemented in accordance with Section 8.6.3 in ISO/IEC 17065.

8.6.4 To be implemented in accordance with Section 8.6.4 in ISO/IEC 17065.

8.7 CORRECTIVE ACTIONS

8.7.1 To be implemented in accordance with Section 8.7.1 in ISO/IEC 17065.

8.7.2 To be implemented in accordance with Section 8.7.2 in ISO/IEC 17065.

8.7.3 To be implemented in accordance with Section 8.7.3 in ISO/IEC 17065.

8.7.4 To be implemented in accordance with Section 8.7.4 in ISO/IEC 17065.

8.8 PREVENTIVE ACTIONS

8.8.1 To be implemented in accordance with Section 8.8.1 in ISO/IEC 17065.

8.8.2 To be implemented in accordance with Section 8.8.2 in ISO/IEC 17065.

8.8.3 To be implemented in accordance with Section 8.8.3 in ISO/IEC 17065.

9 APPROVAL AND MONITORING PROCEDURE

9.1 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

9.1.1 Certification Bodies applying to become an Approved Certification Body for Global Standard shall hold a valid accreditation to perform certification for at least one standard according to ISO/IEC 17065: 2012 "Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services".

9.1.2 Applicant Certification Bodies, as organisations, shall be required to demonstrate at least five years of experience in certifying organisations in the textile sector to other sustainability standards or related certifications.

9.1.3 Applicant Certification Bodies, as organisations, shall have at least five years of experience conducting social audits in the textile sector.

9.1.4 To uphold the validity and to identify areas of improvement in the standard[6] as part of transitioning to a new standard version, Certification Bodies shall permit Global Standard to conduct test audits to evaluate:

9.1.4.1 the consistency in the interpretation of the new requirements,

9.1.4.2 the availability and adequacy of documentation,

9.1.4.3 impact on traceability, and compliance.

9.2 APPLICATION PROCEDURE

9.2.1 Newly applying Certification Bodies shall submit their applications by email to the designated email address, using the corresponding application form available on the Global Standard's website.

9.2.2 All application materials and their contents shall be treated as confidential and accessed only by Global Standard personnel directly involved in the Certification Body approval process.

9.2.3 Applications will be considered only if they contain the following information/declarations:

a) Legal name, legal status, address and legal representative of the applicant
b) Current legal registration documentation
c) Names of all shareholders. For publicly listed companies, an indication of "Publicly Listed" is sufficient
d) Declaration confirming no business interests in the textile value chain (including chemical inputs) beyond certification, audit, inspection or quality control services by the applicant company, principal shareholders and senior management
e) List of all offices and branches of the applicant, including their legal status and ownership
f) Scope(s) for which Global Standard accreditation is sought
g) Accreditation can be applied according to one/or a combination of/or all of the following scopes:
    1) Scope 1: Certification of mechanical textile processing and manufacturing operations and their products, Approval of Accessories[7].
    2) Scope 2: Certification of wet processing and finishing operations and their products.
    3) Scope 3: Certification of trading operations and related products.
    4) Scope 4: Approval of dyes and textile chemical inputs on positive lists.
h) A copy of existing, current ISO/IEC 17065 accreditation certificates and scopes list.
i) Statement identifying intended Accreditation Body for Global Standard accreditation procedure.
j) Copy or verification of valid MOU between proposed Accreditation Body and Global Standard.

[6] The feedback from such test audits shall be collected and analyzed to refine new requirements, to improve clarity, reduce ambiguity, or adjust implementation timelines.

[7] Please refer to Annex 1 for the approval procedure of accessories under Scope 1.

k) Declaration of agreement to comply with the procedures and requirements in this document, including the commitment to enter into the formal Certifier's Contract upon approval.
l) Summary presentation of relevant professional qualifications and experience in the textile sector, including CVs of all designated personnel.

9.2.4 The Applicant shall pay a non-refundable Processing Fee[8] (currently € 400) plus applicable taxes, if any, and a non-refundable Application Fee (currently € 5.000), plus taxes, if any, to Global Standard. Payment shall be due upon receipt of the corresponding invoice(s) from Global Standard.

9.2.5 Certification Bodies seeking to migrate to a different Accreditation Body shall adhere to the Procedure for Migration of Certification Bodies.

9.2.6 An application for approval of an Applicant Certification Body may progress as follows[9]:

a) The applicant Certification Body submits a complete application package via email to Global Standard.
b) Global Standard reviews the application for completeness and requests clarifications if needed
c) In a scheduled Management Meeting (typically held every 30 to 45 days), Global Standard Management shall make a preliminary decision to accept or reject the application. This decision is communicated to both the Applicant Certification Body and its chosen Accreditation Body.
d) Global Standard shall issue invoice for Processing Fee and Application Fee, which the Applicant Certification Body shall pay.
e) Global Standard shall officially inform the chosen Accreditation Body to proceed with their accreditation activities on receipt of payment.
f) The applicant's chosen Accreditation Body shall commence its formal accreditation procedure following Global Standard's preliminary acceptance decision.
g) The Accreditation Body shall formally and directly inform Global Standard of their final decision. If accreditation is granted, the AB shall always specify the scope(s) (Scopes 1, 2, 3, or 4) and geographical coverage of the accreditation.
h) Global Standard formally accepts the accreditation of the Certification Body at the next scheduled Management Meeting.
i) Global Standard shall send a Certifiers Contract for acceptance and signature. The terms of the Certifiers Contract are standardized for all Global Standard Approved Certification Bodies and are not open to negotiation
j) Once the Certifiers Contract is signed, the Certification Body is authorised to conduct certification activities under VSS, including issuing Scope and Transaction certificates in accordance with published policies.
k) The Certification Bodies shall also specify authentication method for the Scope Certificates and Transaction Certificates issued by the respective Certification Body.
l) All scope and transaction certificates shall comply with ISO/IEC 17067 section 6.5.1(I), ensuring unambiguous identification of certified products and processes.
m) Approved Certifiers shall nominate a representative to the Global Standard Certifier Council, which meets annually in person or virtually if circumstances require.
n) Approved Certification Bodies can, at their discretion, provide their logo and photograph of their representative to the Certifier Council for Global Standard website.

9.2.7 Global Standard reserves the right to accept or reject any application from a prospective Certification Body. If an application is rejected, Global Standard may provide a general

[8] Global Standard reserves the right to modify any fees mentioned within this document at its discretion and shall not require any confirmation from applicants to do so

[9] This is an illustrative example of a general application case. For certain applicants, the process may follow different steps. Global Standard reserves the right to modify this procedure at any time without prior notice to any stakeholder.

explanation upon request. The decision made by Global Standard Management is final, and applicants may request a review for procedural fairness within 14 days of notification

9.2.8 Global Standard reserves the right to suspend new applications from any country or region worldwide for a period determined by the Global Standard Management.

9.2.9 Approved Certification Bodies shall maintain, at all times, accreditation to at least one standard according to ISO/IEC 17065, as well as 'Global Standard accreditation'. Global Standard reserves the right to suspend or terminate the contract, limit the approved scope as detailed in the Certifier Contract and call on the Accreditation Body to investigate any issues.

9.3 PUBLICATION OF APPROVED CERTIFICATION BODIES AND THEIR CONDITIONS

9.3.1 The approval for certification and their approved scope(s) shall be published, without exception, on the Global Standard website. Further, this document shall be published on the Global Standard website to enable reporting of any perceived violations thereof to the Global Standard gGmbH and/or the applicable accreditation body.

9.4 ACTIONS DURING SUSPENSION OR WITHDRAWAL OF ACCREDITATION

9.4.1 Certification Bodies shall comply with Global Standard policies in the event of suspension or withdrawal of their accreditation:

a) In the case of suspension, the certified entities remain as clients, and all policies still apply with applicable restrictions.
b) In case of withdrawal after all clients need to transfer to another Certification Body.

9.4.2 Certification Bodies shall inform Global Standard of any accreditation status changes within two working days.

9.4.3 Certification Bodies shall notify their entities of such status changes, the implications, and options for continued business within seven working days.

10 FURTHER SPECIFIC CONDITIONS FOR APPROVED CERTIFICATION BODIES

The requirements in this section define the conditions that Global Standard gGmbH will review during the process of an approval of certification bodies. It set a clear and transparent process for Certification Bodies to become approved for the implementation and certification of the Global Standard VSS. From this section, Accreditation Bodies will review requirements 10.1.6.1, 10.1.6.2, 10.1.7.1 and 10.1.7.3.

10.1.1 The Certification Body shall ensure continuous compliance with the terms of its Contract with Global Standard gGmbH.

10.1.2 The Certification Body shall comply with all requirements and policies established by Global Standard, including obligations relating to the collection and payment of fees, reporting of relevant information, and maintaining ethical business behaviour in accordance with the Code of Conduct of Global Standard gGmbH.

10.1.3 The Certification Body shall ensure that contracts with its entities include a clause granting Accreditation Bodies the right to visit entity premises when deemed necessary to verify the quality of the Certification Body's audits.

10.1.4 Certification Body Annual Fee: The Certification Body shall pay an annual fee per calendar year (including incomplete calendar years) for each facility inspected and/or certified, as stipulated in the latest relevant published Global Standard documents and the Certifier Contract.

10.1.5 Certified Entity Annual Fees, Additive Registration Fees, and Additive Annual Fees: The Certification Body shall collect and transfer fees on behalf of Global Standard gGmbH in accordance with the provisions outlined in the latest relevant published Global Standard documents[10] and the Certifier Contract. These fees include:

a) Entity Annual Fees: Certification Bodies shall collect annual fees from certified entities and transfer them to Global Standard.
b) Additives Registration Fees: Certification Bodies shall collect registration fees for additives and transfer them to Global Standard.
c) Additives Annual Fees: Certification Bodies shall collect annual fees for approved additives and transfer them to Global Standard.

10.1.6 COMPETITION RESTRICTIONS:

10.1.6.1 Approved Certification Bodies shall not inspect or certify to their own textile processing standards involving the use of organic fibres. This restriction also applies to their subsidiaries or affiliates.

10.1.6.2 Certification Bodies shall refrain from using promotional language suggesting easier certification processes or comparisons with other Approved Certification Bodies in contracts, offers, or invoices.

10.1.7 REPORTING AND USE OF GLOBAL TRACE-BASE (GTB):

10.1.7.1 Certification Bodies shall participate in and use Global Trace-Base and all its functionality, including Scope Certificates, Transaction Certificates, Impact data, etc.

10.1.7.2 The Certification Body shall ensure that the GTB remains updated with all required information regarding Certified Entities. This includes names, addresses, contact details, product specifications, fields of operation, and the validity dates of certificates.

10.1.7.3 The Certification Body shall provide documentation related to audit certification and, if applicable, chemical approval activities, upon request by the Global Standard Standards Committee. This is to ensure adherence to the relevant requirements of the Standard, the Manual for Implementation, and any procedural rules or interpretation advice issued by the Standards Committee. All information provided to the Standards Committee shall be treated confidentially.

10.1.7.4 In cases where Global Standard receives a complaint, the Certification Body shall, upon request, provide the Global Standard Evaluator (such as the Managing Director, assigned staff member, or designated representative) with all relevant documentation and information necessary to address the issue. This includes all records related to the implementation of the Global Standard's quality assurance and labelling requirements.

[10] For *GOTS*, the current operative document is the "Revision of GOTS Fees March 2024"

10.1.7.5 Further details on obligatory reporting and the use of the GTB shall be outlined in the Certifiers' Contract.

10.1.8 DEVELOPMENT OF DATABASES:

10.1.8.1 Certification Bodies shall participate in the development and enhancement of databases, such as the GTB, when requested. Scope 4 Certification Bodies must ensure the Global Standard database for approved chemical inputs remains updated as required.

10.1.9 COOPERATION BETWEEN APPROVED CERTIFICATION BODIES

10.1.9.1 Certification Bodies shall collaborate with other Approved Certification Bodies through the Certifiers Council to ensure consistent application of GOTS criteria and procedures globally, under the supervision of Global Standard's Managing Director.

10.1.10 PARTICIPATION IN INVESTIGATIONS

10.1.10.1 Certification Bodies shall fully cooperate with investigations conducted by Global Standard regarding fraud or complaints. They shall provide all relevant documentation and information, including inspection reports, certificates, material volumes, and related details. Investigations may proceed without involving the Certification Body's Accreditation Body.

10.1.10.2 Certification Bodies shall implement all VSS documents and instructions relevant to their scope of operation and tools designed to ensure system transparency.

10.1.11 PARTICIPATION IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE STANDARD

10.1.11.1 Certification Bodies shall actively engage in the development and refinement of standards, policies, and procedures operated by Global Standard. This includes contributing to quality assurance programmes and participating in surveys and other initiatives aimed at enhancing the effectiveness and integrity of the system.

10.1.12 CHANGE IN ACCREDITATION STATUS OF CERTIFICATION BODIES

10.1.12.1 Certification Bodies shall comply with Global Standard policies in the event of suspension or withdrawal of their accreditation.

10.1.12.2 Global Standard shall be informed in writing of any accreditation status changes within two working days along with details such reasons, timelines (if applicable).Certification Bodies shall notify all their certified entities of such status changes, the implications, the timelines for suspension/withdrawal as officially communicated by their accreditation body (if applicable) and convey the options for continued business within seven working days.

10.1.12.3 Certification Bodies shall share with Global Standard a current list of certified entities, with details of their current scope certificates, a current list of issued letters of approval for approved chemical inputs and accessories (if applicable), within 15 working days.

10.1.12.4 In case of loss of accreditation, the Certification Bodies are liable to settle all dues to Global Standard within 15 working days of issuance of invoice.

10.1.12.5 Certification Bodies shall also provide a list of all currently pending Transaction Certificate applications.

10.1.12.6 Certification Body who faces suspension or withdrawal of accreditation are required to act as a responsible contract partner and provide their clients with an overview of eligible alternative options within their region and support their transition to a new Certification Body.

10.1.12.7 Approved chemical inputs will continue to have validity for the currency of the Standard Version they have been approved for unless the Certification Body has lost accreditation / approval due to shortcomings in the chemical approval process followed. In such cases, chemical inputs will immediately lose their approvals and must be reapproved by another suitable Certification Body before use in certified processing.

10.1.12.8 Certification Body that is presently suspended/withdrawn by the accreditation body shall not change the accreditation body until the suspension/withdrawal is lifted.

11 Risk assessment

11.1 RISK LEVEL

Before each audit, Certification Bodies shall assign a risk level for every entity based on the following criteria:

Risk Level	Score
Very low	0-1
Low	2-4 (but no high-risk elements)
Medium	4-12
High	12-24

The score is the result of adding the points corresponding to the risk elements present before considering the application of an entity and in preparation for an audit.

11.1.1 VERY HIGH-RISK ELEMENTS

Each of the risk elements in this list has an individual value of 12 points:

a) The entity has been previously banned from certification by Global Standard.
b) An entity that may have been suspected of fraudulent behaviour in the past. This shall be clarified through Global Standard's Quality Assurance Unit.

11.1.2 HIGH RISK ELEMENTS

Each of the risk elements in this list has an individual value of 4 points:

a) The entity has a previous or current certification suspended or withdrawn.
b) Sites that include the first processing stage for cotton, that is, ginning.
c) Sites that include spinning.

d) Facilities with parallel processing of Certified and Non-Certified Products.
e) Certified Entity is also certified by other Certification Bodies for standards with overlapping scopes (e.g., organic fibre content related standards.

11.1.3 MEDIUM RISK ELEMENTS

Each of the risk elements in this list have an individual value of 2 points:

a) The audit is an initial audit.
b) The entity had one or more non-conformities issued for the scope certificate in the past 12 months, including during the previous audit.
c) The site has several subcontractors.
d) The site has a dyeing, printing, finishing process or other wet processing, excluding washing/ laundering.

11.1.4 LOW RISK ELEMENTS

Each of the risk elements in this list have an individual value of 1 point:

a) The entity has no wet processing.
b) The entity is a trading company.
c) The entity has warehousing.
d) The background check has revealed that the Entity administers several legal entities.

11.2 MEASURES RESULTING FROM RISK ASSESSMENT

Based on the results of the risk assessment, the certification body should take appropriate measures for the planning and implementation, such as:

a) Additional Follow-up audits
b) Increased sample size for document review
c) Increased sample size for interviews with management, workers, workers representatives or any other person relevant for the verification of the criteria in the respective standard(s).
d) Increased frequency of stock verification
e) Analysis of product traceability and trace-back audits.

12 Additional List of Definitions[11]

Additional definitions used in this document that are part of the normative documents of the respective *VSS*:

TERM	DEFINITION FOR THE PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT
Accreditation Body	An authoritative body or organization which evaluates and confirms that a conformity assessment body, e.g., a Certification Body, is deemed capable of carrying out certain assessment tasks, e.g., certification, inspection, or testing, regarding a particular formally defined standard. This attestation relies primarily on a formal demonstration of its task-specific competence by the conformity assessment body, evaluated via professional and objective audits by the Accreditation Body, typically by way of ISO/IEC 17065 : "Conformity

[11] For authoritative clarification of any term stated in this document, please contact sd@global-standard.org

	assessment — Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services".
Approved Certification Body	A Certification Body, having been duly accredited by an Accreditation Body and by way of signing a contract with Global Standard gGmbH has been permitted to implement the Global Organic Textile Standard over a designated geographical area and for specific scopes of the Standard. An updated list of Approved Certification Bodies and their scopes is available at: www.global-standard.org
Certification Body	A Certification Body, having been duly accredited by an Accreditation Body and by way of signing a contract with Global Standard gGmbH has been permitted to implement the Global Organic Textile Standard over a designated geographical area and for specific scopes of the Standard.
Certified Entity	A processor, manufacturer, trader, or retailer involved in the production, handling, or distribution of certified products (GOTS Goods) and that has been officially certified by an Approved Certification Body.
Certified Goods	Textile goods (finished or intermediate) produced in compliance with a VSS scheme operated by *Global Standard;* by a *Certified Entity* and certified by an *Approved Certification Body*.
Certifiers Council	A body or forum formed by one nominated person from each Approved Certification Body, convened by a designated officer of Global Standard gGmbH (currently the Managing Director), to discuss matters of mutual interest. The Certifiers Council is coordinated by an official of the Global Standard gGmbH, the Managing Director.
Global Standard gGmbH (Global Standard gemeinnützige GmbH)	Mission-driven, non-profit legal entity, operating voluntary sustainability standards. Mission: to ensure the highest level of social and environmental impact in textile value chains through voluntary sustainability standards and related activities. *"Global Standard" "Standard Body"*
Certification Scope or "Scope"	Industry sectors for which certification bodies have been approved by their respective accreditation bodies to offer certification services to Global Standard VSS requirements. Global Standard has defined Scopes 1,2,3,4 for their processing standards (including GOTS, GRTS)
Certification Scope 1	Certification of mechanical textile processing and manufacturing operations and their products, approval of accessories
Certification Scope 2	Certification of wet processing and finishing operations and their products
Certification Scope 3	Certification of trading operations and related activities
Certification Scope 4	Approval of textile auxiliary agents (chemical inputs) for use in the processing of certified Goods
GOTS	*Global Organic Textile Standard* *The worldwide leading voluntary sustainability standard for the post-harvest textile value chain for certified organic fibres, covering environmental criteria, human rights, social criteria and business conduct.*
GRTS	*Global Responsible Textile Standard* *Global Responsible Textile Standard defines requirements to ensure the sustainable processing of textiles made with specific responsible fibres, from the production of the raw materials, through environmentally and socially responsible manufacturing up to labelling in order to provide a credible assurance to the end consumer*
Standard	A set of rules defined and published by the *Standard Body*, about criteria a product or process must meet to claim conformance with the Standard.
Reassessment	Reassessment is similar to an initial assessment as described in 7.5 to 7,9 of ISO/IEC 17011 except that experience gained during previous assessments shall be taken into account.
Shadow audit	An audit conducted in parallel to or in conjunction with a primary audit, typically by a different, but experienced internal or external auditor to validate the findings and procedures of the original audit. The purpose is to ensure accuracy, consistency, and objectivity in the audit process.

Surveillance	set of activities, except reassessment, to monitor the continued fulfilment by accredited Certification bodies of requirements for accreditation
Suspension	The limitation of a *scope certificate* or *accreditation* due to a specific *non-conformity* or issue. A suspension may be lifted when the non-conformity or issue is resolved, and the scope certificate or accreditation becomes active again immediately.
Withdrawal	The revocation of a *scope certificate* or *accreditation* due to a specific non-conformity or issue, or at the request of the *accredited*/*certified* party. Following a withdrawal of accreditation/certification, a new *assessment*/*audit* is required for accreditation/certification to return to active status.3
VSS	Voluntary Sustainability Standard(s), in this document severally referring to those operated by *Global Standard*. This term includes the *Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS)* and *Global Respobsible Textile Standard (GRTS*).

ANNEX I - APPROVAL OF ACCESSORIES AND CONCERNED PROCEDURES[12]

a) Approval of Accessories is voluntary and not mandatory for accessory manufacturers.

b) Accessories seeking approval shall be evaluated and approved through the issuance of a Letter of Approval.

c) Only Certification Bodies with Scope 1 accreditation are authorised to carry out the accessory approval process.

D) The following table details the requirements that must be adhered to during this process.

REQUIREMENTS FOR ACCESSORY APPROVAL
Application for approval of accessories under Scope 1:
1. Assessment and approval of accessories may only be conducted by Certification Bodies accredited and approved under the 'Certifiers Contract' accreditation scope 1. 2. The Certification Body shall ensure that applicants for accessory approval complete and sign an application form. 3. The applicant shall: a. Declare understanding of the Global Standard requirements for the applied accessories and confirm, to the best of their knowledge, compliance with these requirements. b. Disclose if another Certification Body has denied, withdrawn, or suspended approval of any applied accessories. c. provide necessary documents e.g. chemical residue test reports as necessary for the assessment. d. Grant the Certification Body the right to exchange information with other Certification Bodies, accreditation bodies, and Global Standard gGmbH for verification purposes. e. Notify the Certification Body of any relevant changes to applied or already approved accessories e.g. changes in composition of raw materials used.
Review of the application and assessment:
1. For accessory approval, valid test reports verifying to conformance to the relevant Standard criteria shall be obtained and considered as the basis for the assessments. 2. For relevant criteria Certification Bodies shall refer to the latest version of the relevant Standards, e.g. Section 3.3.1 - Allowed and Prohibited Accessories and Section 5.2.8 - Limit Values for Residues in Additional Fibers and Accessories, in GOTS 7.0. 3. For the layout and format of the Letter of Approval, general guidelines provided in the relevant sections of the Policy for Issuing Letters of Approval for Additives shall be referred to and the Template for Issuing Letters of Approval for Accessories shall be used. 4. An onsite audit for accessory approval is not mandatory.

[12] Accessory Approval Procedure Under GOTS

ANNEX II - DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

This annex gives an overview of the documents and records that can be considered as evidence to demonstrate the compliance with respective VSS. Certification Bodies shall require additional documents based on their own risk assessment. Additionally, it should be noted that this list shall be adjusted according to the scope of the certification of the Certified Entity. This list shall not be considered as an exhaustive list as document names and formats might also change according to the countries of operation and processes. The Certification Bodies shall require documents such as:

- General Documents
- Roles and responsibility chart
- Label artwork approvals by Certification Body
- Certification agreement,
- Operations: Production records, floor plans, equipment lists
- Relevant certificates (e.g. recognized certification labels, DIN EN ISO 9001, DIN EN ISO 14001, sustainability standards)
- Internal Controls: SOPs, staff training, internal checks
- Screenshots or samples of certified claims in use
- Correspondence with clients
- Corrective Action Records (if applicable)
- Supply Chain
- Scope Certificates in the respective Farm Standards (e.g. NOP, NPOP, EU or GB)
- GMO test reports of Fiber
- Supplier Declarations (labour, animal welfare, land use)
- Traceability documents (TCs, invoices)
- Animal welfare certification (if applicable)
- Risk assessment: Screening report, internal matrix, source classification
- Supplier commitment: Signed declaration to ILO and Standard Social Criteria
- Scope Certificates (SCs)
- SC expiry tracking log
- Stock registers
- Internal reconciliation reports
- Purchase and sales invoices
- Work Orders / Job Cards Issued to Subcontractors
- Stock Ledger / Inventory - Movement Records
- Sales records, packing lists, outgoing TCs
- Internal Goods Receipt Records
- Packaging Integrity Check Records
- Product Marking Verification Record
- SOP or Work Instruction for Incoming certified Goods
- Specification sheets, lab reports, blending logs
- Matching invoices/delivery notes
- Input-output volume checks for labelled goods
- Traceability + verification: Purchase orders, invoices, batch data, internal tracking system
- Chemical Management and Environmental Criteria
- List of chemicals used
- Letters of Approval
- Chemical Management Policy document
- MSDS of all chemicals
- Environmental and Chemical Management Policy
- Environmental Management System

- Chemical Management Policy document
- Chemical Handling Procedure
- Test Reports of input
- Test Reports on outputs
- Chemical Formulation Recipe
- Documents of Inputs Materials
- SOP of chemical Manufacturing
- Occupational Health and Safety Policy
- Due diligence Management/ Human Rights and Social Compliance
- Due Diligence Management Policy
- Human Right policies
- Policy on fair labour practices
- Occupational Health and Safety Policy
- Equal Pay Policy
- Anti-harassment Policy
- Freedom of Association Policy
- Accommodation Policy
- Organizational Chart
- Supply Chain Maps
- Risk Registers
- Mitigation Plans
- Action Tracking reports
- Supplier communication
- Complaints records
- Outcomes of disputes
- Escalation records
- Training plans with participants lists
- Grievance Policy
- Employment contracts
- Payroll records
- Attendance logs
- Shift Schedules
- Job descriptions
- Living Wage Assessment Report
- PPE Inventory
- Media/ Marketing Material in connection with due diligence

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