## SUMMARY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue Date:</th>
<th>Binding date:</th>
<th>Expiration date:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 7, 2020</td>
<td>March 7, 2020</td>
<td>March 31, 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revised 17 March, 30 March, 8 May, 24 July and 23 September, 2020</td>
<td>For Current revision 23 September, 2020</td>
<td>For Current revision 23 September, 2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Developed by:</th>
<th>Approved by:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Rainforest Alliance</td>
<td>• Director, Standards and Assurance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Linked to (code and name of documents, if applicable):

**UTZ related documents**
- UTZ Assurance Certification protocol, version 4.3 December 2018
- UTZ Code of Conduct for individual and multi-site certification, version 1.1 + relevant crop annexes
- UTZ Core Code of Conduct for group and multi-group certification, version 1.1 + relevant crop annexes
- Chain of Custody Standard + relevant crop annexes

**Rainforest Alliance related documents**
- RA Certification Rules, July 2017 version 1.2
- RA Chain of Custody Policy 2015
- Rainforest Alliance Sustainable Agriculture Standard, July 2017 version 1.2

### Reporting to RA

CBs are required to request approval from Rainforest Alliance via certification@ra.org before putting this policy in place for desk audits, remote audits and certificate/license extensions. RA reserves the right to review all extensions of certificate/license validity and volume allocation and remote audit decisions and respond accordingly. Please use the relevant COVID-19 template for these requests. The template can be found on the RA Website here.

### Applicable to:

Rainforest Alliance authorized Certification Bodies (CB) as well as Farm and Chain of Custody certified entities (for both UTZ and Rainforest Alliance programs). However, a number of country specific policies supersede the current policy and may implement different rules. Some sections of this policy are not applicable in certain countries – as indicated in the sections below.

### Regions:

All regions subject to public health and mobility restrictions due to Covid19 according to information from the public health authorities for that country and where it is impossible to conduct onsite audits following the normal audit cycle. This policy may therefore be applicable in full in countries where there are still travel restrictions, and only partly in others where restrictions have eased. CBs making use of this policy must check updates of restrictions in force in the relevant country.

### Crops:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crops:</th>
<th>Type of organizations:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>Farm and Chain of Custody entities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The table below summarizes the main changes in this version of the policy from the previous version published on 24 July 2020.

### Summary Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pg</th>
<th>Clause</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Addition clarifying that audits need to be conducted as soon as possible and in any case before 31 December 2020 to limit impact on transition to the 2020 standard and new certification cycle. Possibility for CBs to conduct fully remote audits in some contexts. Permission will be based on RA’s assessment of risk.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.2 d)</td>
<td>New Certificate Holders may request a desk audit in order to become certified. If approved, an on-site audit must take place when feasible as agreed by Certification Body and Certificate Holder.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.2 f)</td>
<td>Previous clause deleted and replaced with ‘Rainforest Alliance reserves the right to insist on an on-site audit for companies as needed. In this case an extension of the existing licence may be granted to cover the period until an on-site audit can be conducted’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.3 e)</td>
<td>Clarification that CBs must inform RA of expansion in volume and growth in group membership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.3 n)</td>
<td>Addition that CBs are not obliged to conduct the proportion of surprise audits required also by section 4.3.d of the Rules for Planning and Conducting Audits of the Rainforest Alliance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.3 o)</td>
<td>NEW Clarification that expansion of scope to completely new crops requires an onsite audit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>NEW section providing guidance on reporting results of Partial remote audits in the RA Certification Platforms (Salesforce, GIP, Multitrace)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. INTRODUCTION
Rainforest Alliance is a growing network of people who are inspired and committed to working together to achieve our mission of conserving biodiversity and ensuring sustainable livelihoods. For more information about Rainforest Alliance, visit its website: http://www.rainforest-alliance.org.

2. POLICY FOR AUDIT EXCEPTIONS DUE TO COVID-19
2.1 JUSTIFICATION
Currently, due to restrictions on travel and access to certain sites due to public health risks related to COVID-19 (Coronavirus), cases are arising in some localities where it is not possible to follow the planned schedule of audits in the annual audit cycle. Rainforest Alliance considers this to be a situation of force majeure which affects the normal implementation of our certification program. For this reason, a specific policy has been developed to govern exceptions arising from disruptions to audit activities due to corona virus or public health measures imposed by the authorities in the country of operation. This procedure is in effect as of 7th March 2020. This is a temporary measure which is currently valid for audits that should take place before 31 December 2020. Certification decisions related to these audits must be delivered no later than 31 March 2021. Licence extensions cannot exceed an end date of 31 March 2021. Information on any further extension or modification of the policy will be communicated before the end of that period.

Certificate Holders and Certification Bodies are encouraged to plan for and conduct audits as soon as possible. In cases where onsite auditing is still not possible, the remote parts of the audit should be conducted before 31 December 2020 to limit the impact on Certificate Holders transition to the 2020 Certification Program and the need to conduct multiple audits in 2021. Full remote audits may be allowed in certain contexts based on RA’s assessment of risk. The CB should use the same template to request full remote audits with sufficient justification of the same. This clause is not applicable to certificate holders in Cote d’Ivoire or Ghana or India (Assam).

2.2 POLICY FOR CURRENT UTZ AND RA CHAIN OF CUSTODY STANDARDS
a) All rules in the current certification document apply and continue to be mandatory (UTZ Assurance Certification protocol, version 4.3 December 2018 and RA Chain of Custody Policy.
b) For existing certificate holders, where it is not possible for an Auditor to conduct an in-person audit, Rainforest Alliance authorizes CBs to carry out remote CoC audits of Participating Operators (CoC POs). These will replace the onsite audits required for the current audit cycle per the relevant certification documents.
c) For existing certificate holders where a desk audit is also not possible, an extension of license/certificate is allowed up to 31 March 2021. All pending desk and on site audits must be
conducted before 31 December 2020 to allow for new certificates to be issued as soon as possible thereafter, and no later than 31 March 2021. This applies to all audits including RA surveillance and verification audits. Once the surveillance/verification audit has been completed the CB should indicate in Salesforce that the delay was due to COVID-19. This clause is not applicable to certificate holders in Cote d’Ivoire or Ghana.

d) New certificate holders are those that either have never had UTZ or Rainforest Alliance certification or did not have a valid certificate/license as at 31 December 2019. New certificate holders are permitted to enter the program based on a desk audit now, followed by an on-site audit when feasible. The desk audit does not eliminate the need for the on-site audit. It is the responsibility of the CB and the new Certificate Holder to determine when it is safe to conduct an on-site audit following local and national COVID-19 health and safety recommendations set forth by the origin of the CB and the new Certificate Holder. This also applies to entities that were once audit exempted/endorsed and no longer fall into that category. The certificate and/or license will be issued as a result of the desk audit.

e) For entities who had a valid certificate on or after January 1, 2020 and that certificate has been cancelled, a desk audit can be conducted to initiate a new certification cycle. This is not considered a new certification. Entities that did not have a valid certificate on or after December 31, 2019 are required to conduct an on-site audit to initiate a new certification cycle.

f) Rainforest Alliance reserves the right to insist on an on-site audit for companies as needed. In this case an extension of the existing licence may be granted to cover the period until an on-site audit can be conducted.

2.3 POLICY FOR CURRENT UTZ CODE OF CONDUCT AND RA SAS 2017 FARM STANDARD

a) All rules in the current certification document apply and continue to be mandatory (UTZ Assurance Certification protocol, version 4.3 December 2018 and RA Certification Rules, July 2017 version 1.2).

b) Existing certificate holders with certificates expiring on or before 31 October 2020, may be granted a license extension for a period up to 31 March 2021. Audits must be conducted before 31 December 2020 to allow for new certificates to be issued no later than 31 March 2021. This clause is not applicable to certificate holders in Cote d’Ivoire or Ghana or India (Assam).

c) Certificate validity extensions may change the dates of the current audit cycle. However, certificate holders must maintain an annual cycle and schedule the next audit no later than 12 months following the audit conducted at the end of the certificate extension. This clause is not applicable to certificate holders in Cote d’Ivoire or Ghana or India (Assam).
d) License extensions may be granted for a maximum of 50% additional certified volume. The additional authorized volume of 50% will be based on the current approved volume and will be deducted from the total volume certified when the in-person audit takes place. The final authorized volume for the certificate will be verified during the on-site audit. The CB must indicate the total amount verified and approved in the report and certificate/license. Only 1 volume extension will be allowed as per this policy which will only apply for the 2020 harvest. **This clause is not applicable to certificate holders in Cote d'Ivoire or Ghana or India (Assam).**

e) Expansion of volume beyond a maximum 10% volume extension and a maximum 10% growth in group members can only be granted following either a remote or an onsite audit. A CB can allow for more than 10% growth of group members, only if internal inspections have taken place on all additional new members and the CB is satisfied with the proof provided. CBs must inform RA of requested extensions of growth of group membership and volume using the template provided here. **Group membership growth beyond 10% is not permitted in certificate holders in Cote d'Ivoire or Ghana or India (Assam).**

f) New certificate holders are those that either have never had UTZ or Rainforest Alliance certification or did not have a valid certificate/license as at 31 December 2019. No certifications will be issued for new farm operations without an on-site certification audit using the normal procedure. Members who had a valid certificate on or after January 1, 2020 and that certificate has been cancelled, suspended, and/or received a non-certification decision, will need to receive an onsite audit using the normal procedure, if they wish to apply for recertification. **This clause is not applicable to certificate holders in Cote d'Ivoire or Ghana or India (Assam).**

g) All pending on-site audits, including RA surveillance audits, must be conducted before 31 December 2020 to allow for new certificates to be issued as soon as possible. Verification Audits may be conducted later as long as the final certification decision is made by 31 March 2021. Once the surveillance/verification audit has been completed the CB should indicate in Salesforce that the delay was caused by COVID-19. **This clause is not applicable to certificate holders in Cote d'Ivoire or Ghana or India (Assam).**

h) Requests by CBs to carry out remote audits for existing farm level certification will be reviewed case by case. Remote audits – either fully remote or partially remote, must be carried out in conformity with the Rainforest Alliance Guidance on conducting Remote Audits.

i) When conducting onsite audits or an onsite verification as part of a partial remote audit, auditors and certificate holders must take full precautions to comply with public health measures to stop the spread of COVID19. These include respecting social distancing, regular hand washing, wearing of masks that cover the mouth and nose, and any other measures mandated by the relevant national or local authorities. Auditors must respect measures put in place by certificate holders to protect staff and workers from the risk of the spread of infection.
j) CBs must inform and agree with certificate holders the measures they will implement to limit the risk of the spread of COVID-19 when they propose an audit date and/or audit plan involving any onsite visit. CBs are responsible for ensuring that auditors implement these measures effectively.

k) For Certificate Holders in Cote D’Ivoire and Ghana partial remote audits may be conducted where it is not possible for auditors to conduct onsite audits immediately. Partial remote audits must be carried out in conformity with the Rainforest Alliance Guidance on conducting Remote Audits. A certificate may be issued based on the remote part of the audit with a volume allocation determined by the risk level of the Certificate Holder. CBs will be informed of the risk level during the audit allocation process. The volume allocation may be adjusted once the onsite audit has been performed. Onsite audits conducted as part of partial remote audits must be completed by 30 September 2020.

l) For Certificate Holders in India (Assam) a separate policy will be developed and communicated separately to stakeholders.

m) For Short-Harvest Window crops for which the harvest window falls within the validity of this policy, a fully remote audit is possible if the harvest season will finish within the validity of this policy. Fully remote audits must be carried out in conformity with the Rainforest Alliance Guidance on conducting Remote Audits. The auditor must assess compliance with the internal inspection carried out by the certified organization before making the certification decision. The CB has the right to charge for these services. The following audit in the audit cycle should be semi-announced or unannounced. This clause is not applicable to certificate holders in Cote d’Ivoire or Ghana or India (Assam).

n) CBs are not obliged to conduct the proportion of surprise audits required under section 3.4 of the UTZ certification protocol or by the section 4.3.d of the Rules for Planning and Conducting Audits of the Rainforest Alliance during the validity of this policy. If you have any doubts about not being able to conduct surprise audits still this year, please inform us on cbmanagement@ra.org.

o) Certificate Holders who wish to include an additional crop in scope during a fully or partially remote audit, can only do so if the crop is farmed using the same cultivation practices as the existing crop e.g. if a producer wants to add another herb to an existing one like chamomile on top of peppermint. To request a completely new crop in scope e.g. tea in current coffee scope, can only be done through an on-site audit.

3 REPORTING RESULTS OF PARTIAL REMOTE AUDITS IN THE CERTIFICATION PLATFORMS

For Full Remote Audits, the normal procedure in the certification platforms shall be followed. For Partial Remote Audits, below guidelines shall be followed:
3.1 SALESFORCE
Both the results of the remote part and the on-site part of the audit must be uploaded in the same Engagement:

a) Following the certification decision based on the remote part of the audit, CBs shall upload the information from the remote part in the engagement, indicate the not evaluated criteria as NA (not applicable) and close the engagement;

b) After the second part of the audit (on site part of the audit) the engagement must be updated. To do so, CBs must open the engagement again via the section “Job Completed” and upload the new Checklist and Audit Plan.

3.2 GIP

a) Following the certification decision based on the remote part of the audit, CBs shall submit a license request in GIP, according to the regular procedure.

b) If the member received a Force Majeure Volume extension before, the Certification Body must subtract this volume from the requested certified volume in the license request.

c) Once the on-site part of the audit and the corresponding certification process is finalized, the Certification Body needs to send the results of the on-site audit to Rainforest Alliance, this includes the updated checklist and the audit plan. This documentation must be sent to cbcert@ra.org with the following information in the title of the e-mail: COUNTRY – Member ID – Onsite Audit Documentation. The timelines as stated in the Protocol are applicable.

d) If the Certification Body finds a severe Non-Conformity (refer to UTZ Certification Protocol 2.3.2 General Conditions point d. Non-conformities) during the on-site part of the Audit, the license must be suspended, as stated in the Guidelines to Conduct Remote Audits.

3.3 MULTITRACE

a) For Partial Remote Audits, the remote part of the audit will be presented in MultiTrace as normal, with 100% of the volume declared (including volumes on GMR). The system will automatically subtract the Force Majeure Volume already extended.

b) Once the on-site part of the audit is conducted, Certification Body needs to send the respective information to Rainforest Alliance, this includes the updated checklist and the audit plan of this audit. This documentation must be sent to cbcert@ra.org including the following information in the title of the e-mail: COUNTRY – Member ID – Onsite Audit Documentation. Same timelines stated in the Protocol apply;

c) If the Certification Body finds a severe Non-Conformity (refer to UTZ Certification Protocol 2.3.2 General Conditions point d. Non-conformities) in the on-site part of the Audit, the license must be suspended, as stated in the Guidelines to Conduct Remote Audits.