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A Time and Cost-Effective Approach without Duplication:

The Sustainability Initiative of South Africa (SIZA) and Rainforest Alliance Provide a Sustainable Solution Towards Compliance

As one of the world's leading certification systems with particular reference to ethical trade and environmental stewardship, the SIZA Social and Environmental standards were benchmarked against the Rainforest Alliance standard. The purpose of the benchmark was to identify the similarities and differences between the SIZA standards and the Rainforest Alliance 2020 Standard. The results of the benchmark have shown many areas of synergy, which confirms that SIZA provides a solid base for organisations wishing to become certified with Rainforest Alliance too.

Based on the benchmark results, SIZA and Rainforest Alliance have aligned on a combined audit process to provide South African producers with a time and cost-effective approach to meeting market requirements that require certification against both standards.

Combined Audit Approach

The combined audit approach allows the SIZA Environmental audit to take place in combination with the Rainforest Alliance audit. These audits must be conducted by a third-party audit firm and audit team that is accepted by both organisations. Currently, Control Union is the only audit firm in South Africa that is accepted by both organisations. Rainforest Alliance is looking at ways to expand the number of audit firms accepted by both organisations to facilitate the facilitation of audits. The SIZA Environmental audit must be conducted using a joint checklist which covers both the SIZA Environmental standard requirements and the Rainforest Alliance 2020 Standard requirements. Organisations that have conducted a SIZA Social audit may present the audit report and related documentation to the auditors to demonstrate compliance with related requirements in the Rainforest Alliance 2020 Standard.

How will this work:

- Both the SIZA Environmental and Rainforest audits will be done by the same auditors at the same time to drive a cost-effective approach and to eliminate duplication.
- Suppliers need to register with both organisations and must manage the audit process as required by both organisations, i.e. corrective actions need to be uploaded on the applicable platforms.
- Although a single audit approach is followed, two separate audit reports and certificates/audit completion letters will be issued under the different certification standard owners and scopes.
- In cases where producers already conducted a SIZA Social (ethical) audit, their audit outcomes and data can be utilised during the combined SIZA Environmental/Rainforest Alliance audit approach, which will also eliminate duplication.

- The audit must be done by an audit firm accepted and approved by both organisations.

The South African producers, SIZA, and Rainforest Alliance will benefit greatly from this joint approach as it will make certification for South African producers against both standards much easier.

About Rainforest Alliance

The Rainforest Alliance is an international non-profit organisation working at the intersection of business, agriculture, and forests to make responsible business the new normal. It is building an alliance to protect forests, improve the livelihood of farmers and forest communities, promote their human rights, and help them to mitigate and adapt to the climate crisis. Rainforest Alliance certification follows a third-party audit approach where farms, communities, and businesses are audited against rigorous sustainability standards based on the triple bottom line: environmental, economic, and social well-being.

How to register with the Rainforest Alliance:

Organisations who wish to sell or buy Rainforest Alliance Certified (RAC) products must register and get certified with the Rainforest Alliance. You can find out more about the Rainforest Alliance 2020 Certification Program [here](#).

To register for the Rainforest Alliance certification program please click [here](#). If you directly produce crops you wish to certify as Rainforest Alliance you must register as a farm organisation even if you conduct other activities such as packing and processing. To help with your registration process, we recommend you read the [Quick Start Guide](#) and watch the demo [here](#).

Participating companies that want to use the Rainforest Alliance seal, are also required to adhere to the [trademark policy](#) and [graphic guidelines](#). Participating companies must follow approved communication and [messaging](#). Find out more about consumer communication [here](#).

Contact:

For more information and support to get certified with the Rainforest Alliance please contact:

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About SIZA

SIZA, the Sustainability Initiative of South Africa, is enabling South African agricultural sector to become a global leader in sustainable farming, ethical trade, and environmental stewardship. Its aim is to encourage continuous improvement in practices over time, exceeding of the minimum legislative requirements of South Africa. SIZA engage directly with stakeholders throughout the value chain in order to manage risks and identify needs and issues. Furthermore, it improves supply chain sustainability, ensuring compliance and reducing risks, while at the same time offering support and training with regards to best practices and continuous improvement. Verification occurs via third-party audits. For more information on SIZA, please visit our website: www.siza.co.za

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