

QCI Procedure for Approval of Certification Bodies for VOLUNTARY CERTIFICATION SCHEME FOR MEDICINAL PLANT PRODUCE

0. SCOPE

This document describes the procedure to be followed by the Quality Council of India (QCI), as joint scheme owners with NMPB, in processing applications from Certification Bodies seeking approval for undertaking certification under the **Voluntary Certification Scheme for Medicinal Plant Produce (VCSMPP)** on behalf of the Scheme owners.

1. ELIGIBILITY FOR APPROVAL

The Certification Bodies desirous of operating under VCSMPP shall meet anyone of the following criterion:

- (i) NABCB accredited for ISO Guide 65 with the Scope covering VCSMPP.
- (ii) NABCB accredited for ISO Guide 65 but not for VCSMPP and had applied to NABCB for extension of scope to cover VCSMPP.
- (iii) Applied to NABCB for ISO Guide 65 accreditation including VCSMPP.

2. APPLICATION

2.1 Any CB interested in the approval of the QCI for the purpose of medicinal plant produce certification may apply to QCI along with information in the format enclosed vide **Annex A**. The applicant shall also enclose the required documents as specified in the application form.

2.2 The filled application form for approval shall be duly signed by the CEO/authorized representative/s of the CB seeking approval.

2.3 On receipt of the application form, it shall be scrutinized by the secretariat at QCI and those found complete in all respect shall be processed further.

3. ASSESSMENT

3.1 In case the CB is accredited by NABCB for the scope covering VCSMPP (see (i) above), it shall be approved by review of application and there shall be no assessment, unless specifically required for any reason.

3.2 In case the CB is not accredited by NABCB for VCSMPP, it shall be subject to an assessment by QCI.

3.2.1 A one man day document review shall be conducted by QCI for the documentation

relating to VCSMPP.

3.2.2 Based on the information supplied in the application and document review report, an assessment team consisting of a team leader and member(s)/technical expert(s), as needed, will be nominated by QCI for the purpose of assessment at the certification body's head office and other locations, if required. Under normal circumstances, the assessment at head office will be for a total of one man day for CBs accredited for ISO Guide 65 (please see (ii) above) but not covering VCSMPP and two mandays for CBs not accredited to ISO Guide 65 (please see (iii) above). The technical expert's man-day/s would be charged extra, as applicable. This however is subject to change based on information in the application and document review, if applicable.

3.3 The names of the members of the assessment team along with their CVs will be communicated to the applicant body giving them adequate time to raise any objection against the appointment of any of the team members, which will be dealt with by QCI on merits. All assessors/experts nominated by QCI have signed undertakings regarding confidentiality and conflict of interest.

3.4 The dates of the office assessment shall be decided as per mutual convenience of the assessment team and the applicant body. The certification body shall be informed of the assessment plan by the team leader. In case information collected during the office assessment requires inclusion of any key locations in the assessment programme, the applicant shall be informed and the assessment programme shall be modified to cover such locations. The sub-contractors shall also be included in the assessment programme depending on the nature of activities carried out by them and the extent of control demonstrated by the applicant certification body.

3.5 In case recommended by the assessment team or otherwise felt necessary, QCI may decide to witness assessments for either or both of following sub scopes:

- Good Agricultural Practices for Medicinal Plants
- Good Collection Practices for Medicinal Plants

3.6 The certification body may request for approval of any one sub scope.

3.7 The team shall submit its assessment report(s) to QCI, who would review it and take a decision on approval. The approval or otherwise shall be duly communicated to the applicant.

4. VALIDITY OF APPROVAL

4.1 The approval shall be valid for a period of one year during which the certification body shall be required to obtain formal accreditation from NABCB.

4.2 In case it is decided to extend the period of validity, the Certification body shall be liable for an assessment covering office and witnessing prior to such an extension.

5. SURVEILLANCE

QCI at its discretion may conduct a short notice assessment and/or witness actual audit during the period of approval.

6. SUSPENSION/WITHDRAWAL

6.1 The approval of QCI may be suspended/withdrawn during the period of validity if the certification body is found not complying with the criteria of approval with due notice of 15 days.

6.2 The certification body may appeal against the decision to suspend/withdraw approval to the Secretary General, QCI who would get the appeal examined independently and take a decision. His decision shall be final and binding.

7. FEE

The following fee shall apply:

- Application fee: Rs. 5000/-
- Assessment fee: Rs. 20000/- per man-day for document review, if applicable, as well as onsite assessment with travel and stay of the assessment team at actuals.