



General Regulations

Part 1: General Requirements

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. Normative Documents	3
3. Aim & Objectives.....	3
4. Scope of Implementation	3
5. Registration & Membership	4
6. Assessments & Audits.....	5
7. Trademark Use	5
8. Terms & Definitions	5



1. Introduction

The regulations for the EUCotton assessment and certification scheme were developed on behalf of the European Cotton Alliance (ECA). This part defines the general rules for all registered organizations seeking assessment and certification. The term «must» is used throughout the documents to indicate knock-out level of compliance, while the terms «has to» and «should» are used throughout the documents to indicate major and minor level of compliance respectively.

2. Normative Documents

The following normative documents are relevant to all registered EUCotton members:

- (1). General Regulation (GR) Part 1: General Requirements
- (2). General Regulation (GR) Part 2: Management System Rules
- (3). General Regulation (GR) Part 3: Assessment & Certification Rules
- (4). Checklists applicable to processing, trading and retailing units
- (5). Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

3. Aim & Objectives

The aim of the EUCotton scheme is the implementation of a comprehensive management system in the cotton supply chain of EU member states via a web platform, in order to facilitate the conformance of registered organizations with current market demands regarding production practices and chain of custody procedures. The objectives of the scheme are: (a) the assessment and certification of product quality, transparency and traceability, as well as (b) the assessment and certification of practices related to sustainable production, ethical trade and social responsibility.

4. Scope of Implementation

The management system is implemented by registered organizations and associated processing, trading and retailing units that operate within the EU and in accordance with the applicable legislation. Organizations are legal entities within the post farm-gate cotton supply chain involved in: (a) separating lint and seed (ginners), (b) spinning lint fibers into yarn (spinners), (c) knitting yarn into knitted fabric (knitters), (d) weaving yarn into woven fabric (weavers), (e) coloring yarn or woven and knitted fabric (dyers), (f) designing, cutting, sewing and finishing products (manufacturers), (g) purchasing and selling products across the supply chain (traders) and (h) purchasing and selling finished products to general public (retailers). Units are associated with registered organizations according to scope (Table 1. Organizations and Units).

Table 1. Organizations and Units	
Scope of Registered Organization	Associated Units
Processing: Ginner	Ginning Units (GU)
Processing: Spinner	Spinning Units (SU)
Processing: Knitter	Knitting Units (KU)
Processing: Weaver	Weaving Units (WU)
Processing: Dyer	Dyeing Units (DU)
Processing: Manufacturer	Manufacturing Units (MU)
Purchasing /Selling: Trader	Trading Units (TU)
Purchasing /Selling: Retailer	Retailing Units (RU)

5. Registration & Membership

Organizations within the post farm-gate cotton supply chain and consulting or certification bodies must register on the online EUCotton Platform (EUCP) in order to become members. The sign-up process allows users to proceed with self-enrollment request according to the steps below:

- (1). The unregistered user creates an account (email and password) and the email address is verified.
- (2). The user receives a confirmation email and has to fill in and submit the membership form.
- (3). The user registers as a supply chain organization, consulting body or certification body.
- (4). VAT numbers and URLs of organizations and consulting or certification bodies are verified.
- (5). The administrator accepts or declines the request.
- (6). Upon acceptance the user's profile is created based on the assigned roles.
- (7). The user receives an email on the status and can sign-in if accepted.
- (8). Additional users with assigned roles can be created for registered organizations.
- (9). Assessors can be created and attached to registered consulting bodies.
- (10). Auditors can be created and attached to registered certification bodies.

6. Assessments & Audits

The assessment/audit checklist is specific for each unit of registered organizations and control points are categorized into knock-out (KO), major (MJ) and minor (MN). Management system (MS) rules require compliance with: (a) 100% of the applicable knock-out points, (b) 75% of the applicable major points and (c) 55% of the applicable minor points. External remote assessments via the platform are conducted annually by certified assessors of registered consulting bodies, while on-site audits are conducted by certified auditors of registered certification bodies at least once within a three (3) year cycle. Assessments are conducted to validate the comprehensive and effective implementation of the management system, while audits are conducted to verify conformance with management system rules. Non-compliance (NCP) is defined as failure to comply with a major or minor control point according to the compliance criterion. Non-conformance (NCF) is defined as failure to comply with: (a) one or more knock-out control points, (b) more than 25% of applicable major control points, or (c) more than 45% of applicable minor control points. In order to proceed with transactions via the platform, the units of registered organizations must be externally assessed.

7. Trademark Use

Only assessed registered organizations may use the EUCOTTON® trademark on their products. In order to use the trademark, organizations must validate that: (a) the EUCotton content percentage in products made purely from cotton is 100% and (b) the EUCotton content percentage in products made from cotton and other materials is at least 50%. Purchase of EUCotton products does not automatically qualify the purchaser to use the EUCOTTON® trademark.

8. Terms & Definitions

Stakeholder: Party interested in the outcomes of an organization.

Subcontractor: Legal entity that provides processing or manufacturing services to an organization.

Sustainability: Implementation of economically sound and environmentally friendly practices.

Transparency: Demonstration of high-level information to stakeholders and regulators.

Traceability: Identification, tracking and tracing of product elements along the supply chain.
