GCL International Assessment Pvt. Ltd
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1. Introduction

These Scheme Rules have been written in accordance with the requirements applicable under accredited Certification Schemes and NPOP (National Program for Organic Production). **GCL INTERNATIONAL ASSESSMENT PVT LTD**, hereafter known as "**GCL**" also comply with all conditions. These Scheme Rules form a part of the contract with each operator as stated on the quotation.

2. Scope

GCL provides independent third party inspection and certification services for operators who have implemented the following standards:

- National standards for Organic production
- National program for organic production

3. Definitions

This document adopts all definitions as defined by:
- National Program Organic Production , APEDA, India
- Conformity assessment - Requirements for bodies certifying products processes and services (ISO17065:2012) and uses the following additional definitions:

Appeal	An appeal is a disagreement with a certification decision of GCL International Ltd. by a Operator.
Certification	Certification shall refer to the procedure by which the GCL by way of a Scope Certificate assures that the production or processing system of the operator has been methodically assessed and conforms to the specified requirements as envisaged in the National Programme for Organic Production
Certification Body	GCL is the body responsible for inspection and certification of the operators as per NPOP standards
Certification Program	A system (or program) that has its own procedure and management for carrying out certification of conformity.
Certification contract	Also known as scheme rules is a written agreement between GCL and the Operator concerning all rights and duties concerning a GCL certification program. The Operator contract does not indicate that the Operator is certified
Claim	Request for financial settlement

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Complaint	Formal expression of dissatisfaction by any person or organization to GCL International Assessment Pvt Ltd.
Decision Maker	Person who, under supervision of the standard Manager, is responsible for marketing of the program, instructions to the (Senior) Inspector certification decision, reporting to the Operator, issuance of Certificates, customer relations and post certification activities
Inspector	A person assigned by GCL for assessment /evaluation of the operator at the site of activity
Inspection	Inspection shall include the site visit to verify that the performance of an operation is in accordance with the production, processing and chain of custody as per NPOP standards
Non-conformity	Non-conformity is a condition when a product, process, procedure, system, or structure deviates from requirements of the standard.
Organic Production Methods	Production Method as described, National Program for Organic Production (NPOP) and/or applicable GCL Scheme Rules
Operator	A farmer, processor, trader, handler or exporter who is under organic certification
Operator Number	Unique number that GCL provides the Operator to identify himself as a GCL Operator. The Operator number does not indicate that the Operator is certified
Origin	For the purpose of issuing a GMO free declaration: Cultivation, production or breeding method to create or change the original organism (e.g. organic production method, gene technology as described on article 2 of Directive 90/220/EEC by the council of 23 April 1990 concerning the introduction of genetically modified organisms in the environment on purpose
OCPP	Organic Crop Production plan
OPHP	Organic Production and Handling Plan
Processing unit	Company or company unit where actions are carried out defined under “preparation” in the distinct normative documents.
Product description	Declaration in which a producer / processor specifies all ingredients in the product concerned.
Production unit	Company or company unit where actions are carried out defined under “production” NPOP. Also mentioned agricultural units or farmers units (for organic production) or forestry management units (for forestry
Scope Certificate	A certificate issued by the accredited Certification Body to its operator annually for their specific activity in terms of production, processing and trading

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Source	Location where the product comes from
Standard	Document established by GCL or any other body that provides rules and requirements for activities or their results
Transaction Certificate	A certificate issued by GCL to its operator for every sale of his product to the buyer

4.Accreditation

1) **GCL** obliges itself to be accredited or recognized by: - Agricultural and processed food product export development authority, Dept ofcommerce, Ministry of Commerce & Industry Govt of India, for requirements on organic production; NPOP
2) **GCL** shall give a copy of the Accreditation Certificates on request to the Operator.
3) **GCL** has the right to grant the accreditation bodies insight into all records containing Operator information.

5. Confidentiality

1. **GCL** agrees not to disclose any information relating to the operator's business or affairs except information, which is in their possession before the date of acceptance of the **GCL** quotation/contract.
2. Where information is required to be disclosed to a third party either by law or as required under maintenance of certification by an Accreditation Body, the applicant shall be informed of the information as required by law.
3. **GCL** has right to exchange operators' information with other Certification Bodies, accreditation bodies to verify the authenticity of the information.
4. For the purposes of registration verification, information contained on all issued certificates can be verified using the registration number shown on the certificate from the certification check on the **GCL** web site which is located from the following URL www.gcl-intl.co.in
5. If the applicant provides copies of the certification documents to others, the documents shall be reproduced in their entirety or as specified in the certification scheme.

6. Impartiality

GCL or any **GCL** representative shall **NOT**:

1. Provide management system consultancy which includes: preparation or production of manuals or procedures, or give specific advice, instructions or solutions towards the development, structure and implementation of a product management system.

2. Allocate Inspector (s) for a operator in where provided internal audit, or other related management system consultancy on the management system, within two years following the end of the consultancy.
3. Certify an Operator when a relationship with a management systems consultancy poses an unacceptable threat to impartiality. Provide an internal audit service to any certified Operators.
4. Outsource any audits to a management consultancy company involved in management systems as described with the scope of these rules.
5. Have within any marketing materials any linkage to management system consultancy.
6. For any threats to impartiality that are discovered or reported, then the impartiality committee shall be informed, and responses shall be made and communicated.

7. Intellectual Property

The ownership of all issued audit reports, scope certificates and transaction certificates remains the property of **GCL**.

8. Responsibility and Liability

1. The Operator is responsible for all production and processing units and products and activities that are mentioned in the Operator contract to comply with the applicable standards
2. The Operator shall, with regard to the inspection and certification activities of GCL, be responsible for persons who work in or for his business.

9. Indemnification

In respect of any claim, loss, damage or expense however arising, **GCL's** liability to the applicant shall in no circumstances exceed the amount of **GCL's** fees paid by the applicant. Under no circumstance shall **GCL** be liable for any consequential loss.

10. Terms of Payment

100% Payment in advance shall be made in accordance with the individual invoice and the quotation/contract document

11. General Conditions

GCL basic conditions for gaining and maintaining registration with are that operator agrees to and comply with the following rules:

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1. All information deemed necessary by **GCL** to complete the registration process shall be made available to the operator.
2. If **GCL** is not satisfied that all requirements for registration have been met it shall inform the operator in writing stating which requirements.
3. When the operator can demonstrate that effective corrective action has been taken within a specified time limit, then **GCL** will arrange only to repeat necessary parts of inspection that cannot be verified by the submission of documented evidence.
4. If the operator fails to take effective corrective action within the time limit, then **GCL** may repeat the Inspection in full at additional cost.
5. Identification of conformity shall only apply to site(s) inspected and within the scope certification as shown on the **GCL** issued scope certificate
6. All fees must be paid as shown on the individual quotation. No certificate shall be issued for initial or re-audit until fees have been paid in full.
7. Certification may be suspended if annual fees are not paid in full within the time frame set out within the individual quotation.
8. Failure to return all Scope certificate shall result in legal action being taken against the operator for unauthorised use of certification and accreditation / certification marks and on misleading and inaccurate claims of certification.
9. The operator must allow **GCL** to conduct annual/re-audit visits at the times stated within the Inspection plan.
10. **GCL** offices which hold accreditation directly with an accreditation body is responsible for, and retain authority for, decisions relating to accredited certification, including the granting, maintaining, renewing, extending, reducing, suspending and withdrawing of certification.
11. Provide to **GCL** and APEDA the right of access to all units of the inspected facilities, including to units where non-organic products are processed, stored or administered, if applicable, and to all relevant documentation and records, including financial records.
12. The operator confirms that they are not currently engaged, nor will they engage, with another Certification Body to certify them against the same Organic standard(s) at the same time.
13. The operator confirms that in addition to inspection notes, **GCL** inspection team can collect photographs and hard and soft copies of documents also samples for residue testing may also be taken by the inspector during the required on-site inspection, either as back-up to the Inspection process or in case of suspicion of contamination or non-compliance
14. The operator makes all necessary arrangements for
    - 14.1 Conduct of onsite inspections with complete access to the production or handling operation, including non-certified production and handling areas, structures, and offices and personnel.

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14.2 Investigation of complaints.
14.3 The participation of observers, translator/interpreter, and technical experts if applicable.
14.4 For resolution of complaints against the certified operation or produce

15. The operator confirms to comply with the certification requirements, including implementing appropriate changes when they are communicated by the GCL.
16. The operator itself must conduct regular lab testing of samples of their products based on internal risk analysis.
17. Operator agrees to comply with the requirements for certification and to supply any information needed for evaluation of products to be certified

12. Application for Assessment

1. **GCL** emails the briefing about the standard, Operator Handbook. Also the current version of these documents can be dowload from the GCL website www.gcl-intl.co.in at related standard page.
2. Operator shall submit the completed **GCL** application form together with operator legal and other documents such as inputs used, business licenses, policy/procedures, supplier certificates, Organic Production/Processing/Handling Plan.
3. On receipt of a completed Application for Quotation form, **GCL** will conduct a pre-contract review of the system and a quotation shall be prepared and sent to the prospective operator, together with these Scheme Rules.

13. Contract Acceptance

Prior to any arrangement being made for an inspection

The quotation is required to be signed by the operator. Signature on the quotation/contract indicates formal acceptance of these rules as stated within the quotation/contract.

The operator shall submit completed Organic crop Production plan / Organic production handling plan and all relevant annexures

14. Initial Inspection

Inspection is carried out to verify information and compliance with certification requirements applicable to the operator. It shall follow a set protocol to facilitate impartial and objective inspection. GCL shall assigned independent, qualified, and competent inspectors for inspections, the operator has no role in suggesting or choosing a particular inspector. The operator can object to the appointment of a particular inspector if they can establish that there is a conflict of interest or impartiality issue concerning the assigned inspector.

The on-site inspection protocol shall at the very minimum undertake the following, as applicable to the operator:

1. Assessment of the processing system by means of visits to facilities and storage units (which may also include visits to non-organic areas if there is reason for doing)
2. Review of records and accounts to verify flow of goods (input/output reconciliation and the tracing back).
3. Identification of areas of risk to product integrity.
4. Verification that changes to the standards and to related requirements have been effectively implemented; and
5. Verification that corrective actions have been taken, with special focus on corrective actions for non-conformities which have been closed since the previous audit.
6. If the objectivity of the inspection is compromised, the Inspector has the right to abort the inspection. Reasons can be for example the interference of accompanying persons or refusal to grant access as requested by the Inspector. All costs arising from this case is charged to the Operator.
7. Verification of the operator's risk assessment of contamination and residue testing policy potentially including sample drawing for residue testing either as random sampling or in case of suspicion of contamination or non-compliance.

15. Administration for Organic production – NPOP

1. The operator and their units should have valid government registration, license to run the operation. like certificate of incorporation, factory license, MSME license, partnership deed, proprietorship documents etc. along with other applicable legal records.
2. The legal representative of the operator shall sign all the records concerned to certification body, if legal representative is not available, then the authorized person can sign (the authorization should be defined)
3. The entity under approval shall submit to GCL the process flow of products and product description sheet containing all the ingredients, percentage in the end product, active/inert specification, source of input etc. prior to audit for reviewing.
4. The Ingredients/raw materials shall be approved prior to the inspection through a desk review of the Product description sheets.
5. The operator under certification/approval shall inform the CB for any changes that affects the scope of approval.
6. The operator shall have an organogram which defines the responsibilities of key person working in the unit/entity/factory/department.

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7. The Operator shall have on all labels, invoices, packing-lists and transported documents a traceable identification code which enables to identify production date/year and lot number to trace down the product at least to the last producer and preferably to the individual farmer or farmer group in case of organic products.
8. For the certification of organic product in conformity with the NPOP- the accreditation certificate shall be on NPOP by NAB-APEDA
    - Address of unit, where the product was produced, processed
    - Indication whether the unit is a farm unit or a processing unit
    - Date of first inspection per unit
    - Starting date of conversion period per unit
    - Total period of conversion applied per unit
    - Date of last inspection per unit
    - Size organic/conventional land per unit
    - In case of grower group, indication whether it is a co-operative or a contract growers
    - Number of farmers externally inspected in the previous calendar year
    - Number of small-scale farmers at the date of last inspection and
    - Number of small-scale farmers externally inspected at the date of last inspection is required.
9. The operator shall ensure that parties involved in the chain of production of a certified product (such as processors, transport, warehouse, storage units etc) has written agreements, with clear responsibilities.

16. Product Description form and OCPP/OPHP

1. In case of application for adding to the Scope Certificate new products produced/ new units, the Operator shall apply in writing prior to produce, process and/or selling the product with reference to the certification. Application shall be done by filling out the Application Form. In case of application for adding a product, the Operator shall send a completed product description form. Production/processing plan (system plans) shall be adopted by the Operator, if applicable.
2. GCL shall add units to Scope Certificates only after a positive site evaluation of the production/processing.
3. GCL shall evaluate the Application Forms and/or production/processing plan (system plans) within 05 working days after receipt.
4. GCL shall add products to Scope Certificates only after a positive evaluation of the product description. In the event of initial certification/approval, the first inspection has to be carried out before the products can be mentioned on the Certificate.

5. Please note, that GCL Operators are obliged to inform GCL in case the products and/or units under the GCL scope are also certified by another certification organisation against the same standard (or applied for certification to another certification organisation).
6. Furthermore, please note, that where an operator and his subcontractors are inspected by different control bodies the operator and his subcontractors have to agree, that the different control bodies can exchange information on the operations under their control.

17. Production/Processing

1. The operator shall have a site map showing the location of the unit/factory/area of cultivation and a Floor plan which shows the internal areas of the unit. The maps shall be made based on the nature of production/process.
2. The operator shall maintain the integrity of organic approved/certified material, it shall not be contaminated with unallowed substances.
3. In case of Input approval scheme, Imported ingredients to be used in the final product can be approved based on the nature and shall follow all the 6 criteria's of NPOP.
4. The operator shall maintain the list of the vendors with complete address, phone number and material, the list of these vendors shall be subjected to review whenever the supplier is changed. The approved list of suppliers shall be provided on request of the inspector.
5. A suitable cleaning process whose effectiveness has been checked shall be carried out; operators shall keep a record of such cleaning processes.
6. Pests should be avoided by good manufacturing practices. This includes general cleanliness and hygiene.
7. There shall never be direct or indirect contact between organic products and prohibited substances. (e.g. pesticides). In case of doubt, it shall be ensured that no residues are present in the organic product.
8. The Operator shall conclude farmer agreements with all individual farmers within the project. The farmer agreement shall contain at least the information as mentioned in Annex 2, Chapter 5 of NPOP. The farmer agreement shall be written in the local language or in any case in a language understandable by the farmer.
9. On request of the Inspector, the Operator shall prove the gene technology free origin of all products and raw materials for which gene technology is prohibited according to the applicable regulations by means of a genetic modification free declaration. The declaration shall contain at least the information as mentioned in GCL-OD-09. The declaration of the Non GMO shall be obtained

from the producer of that material or seed or organism or strain line agricultural universities, culture collection centre or any industry from where the product is purchased/manufactured.

10. For each lot of products, for which a Transaction Certificate is issued, the Operator shall have a representative and sealed sample kept present for half a year.
11. The Operator shall conclude field officer agreements with all individual field officers within the project. The field officer agreement shall be written in the local language or in any case in a language understandable by the field officer
12. For Enzyme approvals, the agricultural products shall be from the organic source.
13. The Enzyme production units shall have the valid organic approved vendor certificates, if the product of agriculture in nature is not available as organic, conventional untreated product can be used.
14. If the unit is using untreated products, the lab analysis of such lot should prove no chemical/pesticide residue.
15. Ingredients other than agriculture in nature in the enzyme production shall be approved based on the normal input approval procedure.

18. Storage & Transport

1. Areas in which products are stored shall be managed in such a way that the stored batches or lots can be identified. Approved/certified products must be protected at all times from co-mingling with unapproved/Non organic products and from contact with materials and substances not permitted for use.
2. Where only part of the unit is approved/certified and other products are unapproved/non certified, the certified/approved products should be stored and handled separately to maintain their identity.
3. All necessary measures shall be taken to ensure identification of the products and to prevent any mixing or confusion with Non certified/unapproved products; before certified/ approved products are stored.
4. The information of the product (name, lot number, consignee, consignor, vehicle details) may also be entered in an accompanying document. The accompanying document shall give details of the supplier and the transport operator.
5. Both consignor and consignee keep a record of these transport operations and make the records available to the inspector on demand.
6. Only approved raw materials (complying to chapter 3- Appendix-1-Annex1, 2and 3, Appendix 2-Annex 6 and Appendix 5- Annex 1(A), 1(B) shall be stored, mixing of approved and unapproved raw materials are not allowed.
7. There shall be no contamination or substitution of products while transportation. The transportation of the certified/approved product shall be done in clean and safe manner

8. Certified/Approved and Non certified/unapproved product processing shall not be combined, there shall be separation in all means throughout the process. No contamination of prohibited, unallowed substances allowed during processing.

19. Traceability

1. At all processing stages, the operator shall introduce a traceability system that allows the allowed components of the product to be traced back to its raw material supplier(s).
2. The operator shall be able to demonstrate how the traceability system works and how it is possible to trace a final product from the shelf to its original certified product or approved input/ allowed raw material supplier and vice versa.
3. Producer shall maintain records, which clearly demonstrate input and output quantities along with stock balance at any given point of manufacturer/trader/producer . That producer shall also be able to show explicitly the lot numbers/ batch numbers associated with those values as applicable.
4. The Operator shall keep records of the following information on approved incoming goods: - Copies of packing lists and/or other transport documents; - Invoices; - Certificate of analysis as applicable. - In case organic certified products of valid Certificates stating that the products have been produced according to the applicable organic regulation;
5. The Operator shall keep records of the following information on outgoing certified/approved products: - Copies from packing lists and/or other transport documents; - Copies of the Invoices, transaction certificates.
6. The invoices and transport documents must contain a reference to the organic production method, clearly related to the certified products and the name and identification code of the inspection body.

20.Record keeping

1. Operator shall maintain all documents to prove that they are fulfilling the requirements of the certification program, including, that
2. The operator shall maintain all records concerned with the process; the ingredients used with quantity shall be defined properly in the process record (production report/Batch manufacturing report) for the audit verification period (12 Months)
3. The operator shall maintain all the records concerned with the product like product license from the applicable authorities, process flow chart for the product, CCP plan, pollution control board records, Farm dairies, Transaction certificates, analysis report, Production/Processing record, Traceability record etc.
4. The operator shall have policies and procedures for dealing with complaints against its operation and products. It shall keep a record of all complaints and remedial actions relating to the product or process. When a complaint is resolved a documented resolution shall be made and forwarded to the complainant and the party concerned.

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21. Quality Analysis

1. The processing unit shall take and analyse samples for checking the quality of the product/detecting possible contamination by products not authorized for approved production.
2. The procedure of quality analysis shall be defined in the Process manual or SOP. If the internal quality analysis facility is not available, such companies shall do external lab analysis based on the applicable parameters.
3. The Inspector shall take sample of at least one product and carry out analysis based on the standard parameters in case of Input Approval and based on risk in all other cases. The inspector shall follow the sampling procedures as defined in their working instructions
4. Testing to be carried out in ISO 17025 accredited and preferably APEDA approved laboratories.

22. For Traders/Marketing (For Input Approval scheme only)

1. A certificate can have more than 1 brand name as part of marketing purposes, such names shall be entered in the certificate with a "/"
2. If a Marketing company wants to market any approved product and needs statement of compliance in its name, the marketing company shall be subject to audit with concern from the manufacturing company.
3. The manufacturing company and the marketing company shall be audited, an agreement of marketing shall be framed, all the technical sheets shall be filled by the manufacturing company. The manufacturing company shall be responsible for the standard integrity.
4. If the manufacturing company is already approved by GCL then the marketing company alone shall be audited to check the compliance based on the approval certificate issued.
5. If the manufacturing company is already approved by other CB under APEDA, a full audit on behalf of GCL shall be carried out both at manufacturing location and the marketing location. Also, the information about the audit shall be send to the concerned CB.
6. Any imported product can be approved based on the technical data sheet submitted and its proven that the manufacturing unit in the said country follows the Organic standard requirement. Such products after the sample analysis can be approved. The importing company shall be audited.

7. Every importer shall inform the Director of Agriculture of the State in which he intends to discharge the imported fertilizer, under intimation to the Central Government, before the import is made or within a period of 15 days after an indent for import is placed, the following details, namely (i) name of fertilizer (ii) name of country of import (iii) name of manufacturer (iv) quantity to be imported (v) date of arrival of the consignment (vi) name of the discharge port (vii) other information

23. Subcontracting (For Input Approval scheme only)

1. If the entity decides to subcontract work related to the processing/handling to a third party, it shall establish a documented system for overseeing the role and functions of the subcontracted party which shall address issues of confidentiality and conflict of interest.
2. The approval holder/entity shall take full responsibility for subcontracted work, ensure that the subcontracted party complies with the requirements laid down in this document standard and the inspection regulation also ensure that the subcontracted party remains impartial in its functioning.
3. A list of the subcontractors with a description of their activities shall be made available during the application and in the processing plan.
4. Written agreement by the subcontractors that their holding will be subject to the inspection procedure laid down in this standard shall be made available.

24. Classification of non-conformities

Non-conformities are classified as Minors, Majors and opportunity for improvement:

1. A Minor is a non-conformity, related to working procedures of the concerned unit. The maximum deadline to rectify a minor non conformity is 2 months. If the Operator does not correct and does not show to the satisfaction of GCL, that the Minor NC is rectified before the deadline, GCL shall upgrade the NC as major with a maximum deadline of 1 month.

2. A Major is a non-conformity, related to topics that endanger the status of the certified products coming from the concerned unit. The maximum deadline to rectify a major is 1 month. If the operator does not correct and does not show to the satisfaction of GCL, that the major is rectified before the deadline, the Certificate is suspended for a given period determined by GCL on a case-by-case basis. In case the NC is not corrected during the suspension period, Certificate shall be withdrawn.

3. Opportunity for improvement (OFI) : Opportunity for improvement (OFI) is a statement made by the auditor in a condition where he does not find objective evidence of failing (non-conformity) and in other words it is a potential non conformity (failing could happen in future if it is left unattended), the action plan for OFI is required from the Operator in 2 months from the date of notification by the auditor Re-assessment can be done during an additional inspection or by administrative review (assessing documents, photos etc.). During suspension, the product concerned cannot be sold with reference to the organic production method and GCL can not issue any import/transaction Certificate for the given products/units.

4. In case the certification is withdrawn, the project needs to be re-inspected. All aspects of the standard need to be assessed during a new physical inspection.

25. Samples

1. The Inspector has the right to take samples for analysis.
2. When samples are taken, the Inspector shall provide the Operator with a duplicate of the sample that is taken, one counter sample shall be kept in office.
3. GCL shall carry out the analyses on samples by laboratories that are accredited according to EN 45001 / ISO/IEC 17025 for the applicable matrix and inform the Operator as soon as the results are available.
4. If the results of the analyses prove that the applicable regulations are not complied with, the results may cause changes in the certification
5. In case the result of any sample analyses for the organic programs NPOP shows residues of disallowed materials in any amount above the detection level of the laboratory, the following procedure applies:
6. GCL immediately starts an investigation. Dependent on the nature of the residue that has been found; the whole chain of custody from the producer till the point where the residue has been found may be subject of the investigation. The GCL Operator receives a standard Investigation Form from GCL, in which the representative of the Operator is requested to describe the possible reasons of the disallowed material detection. The information supplied by the Operator in this document is an essential part of the investigation. Furthermore, the GCL Operator is requested to inform his buyers about the found residue.
7. GCL has the right to suspend the concerned product/unit and to stop issuing import and transaction certificates during the period of investigation and/or to carry out unannounced visits at the project. The result of the investigation may cause changes in the certification status of the product and/or units.

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26. Certification/Letter of Approval

1. On completion of the on-site evaluation the lead auditor reports back to **GCL**. The Decision Maker of **GCL** shall review the report and supporting information, including the recommendations made by the lead auditor and decide whether to grant certification**/Letter of Approval**.
2. For any non-conformities raised, the applicant shall conduct root cause analysis and send details of corrections, corrective action and preventive action to **GCL**. This information shall be reviewed by a qualified lead auditor and the applicant shall be informed of the result via email.
3. Upon acceptance of the corrective actions the Decision Maker shall review the full report and make a decision. If the Decision Maker not accept the report and if the operator files an appeal, the impartiality committee shall be informed for the purpose of holding an internal appeal.
4. For any non-conformity or other situation that may lead to suspension the Inspector shall report to **GCL** and the suspension process shall take effect as defined within these rules.
5. The certification/Letter of Approval applies to ongoing production/process, the certified/approved product continues to fulfil the product requirements
6. The operator makes claims regarding certification/approval consistent with the scope of certification /Letter of Approval.
7. During the inspection, performed after the application for a new or changed Certificate, the requirements for the process of preparation or marketing can be evaluated in a comparable process. Comparable process can also be defined as preparation or marketing of the same or comparable conventional product.
8. If a Certificate was granted based on review of the comparable process, the Operator is obliged to inform GCL before first processing. GCL may decide to carry out an additional evaluation.
9. If it is found that the applicant is knowingly and/or repeatedly operating with nonconformities or purposely violates the requirements of the standard, the GCL must suspend the operator's certification/approval status and inform APEDA.

27. Scope Certificate

1. The Scope Certificate is only valid if signed by a person who has been authorized for it by the Managing Director of GCL
2. GCL shall renew the Scope Certificate within the timeframe indicated in the applicable standards as long as the circumstances are not in conflict with the applicable regulations, the Operator contract is continued, and financial liabilities are fulfilled.

3. The Operator shall keep the valid Certificate issued in his records.
4. GCL has the right to request Operators to return any Certificates (e.g., Scope Certificates, Import or Transaction Certificates), as these are legally owned by GCL .
5. GCL shall keep a copy of the Scope Certificate for authenticity in its records.
6. The Scope Certificate shall contain an indication of:
    - the name and address of the Operator;
    - the Operator number;
    - the certified products and related units;
    - the applicable certification programme;
    - the standards, regulation or other normative documents to which each product, production unit, or processing unit is certified.
    - the effective date of certification and / or place and date of issue of the Certificate;
    - a hologram;
    - any programme specific indications applicable.
7. The Operator is obliged to inform GCL as soon as possible if any changes occur which interfere or might interfere with the requirements as mentioned in the concerned scheme rules or which indicate a change in the scope of the Certificate. If these changes are not reported to GCL, the Scope Certificate loses its validity.
8. From the moment of termination of the Operator contract, the Scope Certificate issued becomes invalid.
9. In the event of the Certificate being lost by the Operator, the rights to be derived from the Certificate shall cease to exist. In those cases, GCL shall only issue a new copy of the Certificate if the Operator concerned provides GCL with a written declaration in which the Operator obliges himself to return the original Certificate when it is found.
10. In the event of invalidity of a Certificate, GCL has the right to notify buyers concerned, inspection bodies concerned, competent authorities and other third parties concerned.
11. GCL has the right to confirm validity of Certificates that are issued by GCL on request of third parties, without prior permission of the Operator.

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28 Labelling approval

1. Operator shall be informed on how to use NPOP standards logo and to get Transaction Certificate (once they are certified) by the Lead auditor at closing meeting.
2. Operator shall send all the artwork and application for label approval to the GCL for approval prior to use.
3. Operator gets the related standard's Labelling application form (In case of Inputs) and Form 1(defined in NPOP standard) from GCL
4. Operators submit the artworks together with completed related Labelling application form and Form 1(defined in NPOP standard)
5. GCL shall review the Labelling application form and Artworks for the compliance with related guideline(s) and fill the label assessment checklist and give approval through the Form 2 (defined in NPOP standard) for organic certification and through label approval license for Input approval.
6. When the operator receives Form 2 as license, the operator shall submit duly filled Form 3 (defined in NPOP standard) to APEDA.

29. Use & Mis-Use of Certificates, reports, Logos & Certification

1. Once a Certificate has been issued, then the operator has the right to publish the fact and to apply the logo on their stationery and promotional material without label grade.
2. The Organic Certification Mark can only be used as specified in chapter 6 of the NPOP standard.
3. The Certificate-holder can only publish those certification or approval-logos that are concerning the valid issued Certificate.
4. That no misleading or unauthorized statements are implied or made regarding certification/approval nor imply that the certification/approval applies to activities that are outside the scope of certification/approval.
5. That no certification document is used in a manner that would mislead applicants or registered companies or the public in general.
6. Upon suspension, withdrawal or cancellation the operator shall cease with immediate effect to use of the marks on advertising, such as brochures, letterheads, business cards, web sites, etc, and return the certificate to **GCL**.
7. Should a scope of registration be reduced, amend all advertising materials where details of the scope have been published. For all reductions or increases in scope the original certificate to be returned to **GCL**, prior to any updated certificate being issued.
8. That nothing is implied, or an impression is given that certification/approval activities are outside of the scope of certification/approval.
9. Not to use certification in any way as to bring into disrepute the credibility of **GCL** or of Accredited Certification that could affect public trust and confidence.

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10. In referring to its Organic certification/approval in communication media such as documents, brochures or advertising, the applicant complies with the requirements of the GCL or as specified by NPOP.
11. It is allowed to reproduce the logo in any other size
12. The certification/approval logo may never be bigger than the size of the company logo on the same document.
13. The logo needs to be reproduced completely (in one piece) always.
14. The organic certification mark/Jaivik Bharat logo shall be used in colour format only.
15. It is not permitted to apply the logo to laboratory tests, calibration or inspection reports, as such reports are deemed to be products in this context.
16. Operator shall use certification mark only to indicate that products are certified as being in conformity with NPOP standards
17. Operator shall ensure that no certificate or report nor any part thereof is used in a misleading manner
18. In case of domestic sales of certified product, the operator shall follow the requirements of section 22 of the FSS Act 2006, which requires to affix Jaivik Bharat Logo.

30. Transaction Certificate

1. A GCL Operator that holds a scope certificate for the certification program National Program for Organic Production can apply for Transaction Certificate
2. Transaction Certificates will be issued by qualified people from GCL.
3. The Operator shall request for Transaction Certificates by filling out the TC Application Form in TraceNet and GCL format, send the filled in application form with all documents including, but not limited to, source TC, copy of invoice, packing list, shipping bill, transport document, analysis report, approved label, attached to the GCL office.
4. GCL shall assess the application and, if the decision is positive, issue the Transaction Certificate within the time stipulated by theaccreditation body or as set in TraceNet
5. The Certificates contain a hologram. The formats are preset in TraceNet by APEDA

31. Complaints

a) General Requirements

All operators are required to maintain a log of all customer complaints raised against them. This log must be available for review during all Initial and/or annual audit. This log shall also be available to **GCL** Staff, APEDA upon request. Also, the operator

1. Takes appropriate action with respect to such complaints and any deficiencies found in products that affect compliance with the requirements for certification/ letter of approval, and documents the actions taken.
2. The complaints procedure must ensure that complaints are adequately recorded, studied and followed up, including a record of actions taken with respect to complaints and any deficiencies found in products or services.

b) Complaints from Applicants Regarding Auditor

If an operator has a complaint about the conduct of any **GCL** Inspector then this should be sent in writing to the **GCL** Managing Director. If the complaint involves the MD or Decision Maker then the complaint is to be addressed to the Chairman of the Impartiality Committee of **GCL**. If complainant not satisfied with the result then it can be addressed to APEDA.

c) Complaints from Users of operator Products & Services

1. For complaints received from users of operator products and/or services shall be lodged and then acknowledged to the complainant. Follow-up shall then be taken with the registered company in question.
   Note: If fraud or other misrepresentation is found to exist, the **GCL** will take appropriate action as specified at this Point 1: also Point:22 (including extra audit) in this document.
2. The operator shall take appropriate action with respect to such complaints and any deficiencies found in products that affect compliance with the requirements for certification/Letter of Approval.
   Note: accept that the accreditation body may become engaged in the case that a complaint or appeal escalates GCL's authority, and agrees to cooperate with investigations.

32. Appeals

1. If the operator is not in agreement with Inspectors recommendation after an Initial and/or annual Inspection then they are at liberty to lodge an appeal with the CEO of **GCL**. The A operator shall support his/her reasons by objective evidence.
2. All appeals will be heard by a Appeal-Committee/ Impartiality Committee of the **GCL**. The Appeal-Committee may hear evidence from the operator's representative and the Inspector. The decision of the Appeal-Committee is final and binding on both the operator

and **GCL**. No counter claim will be allowed by either party. No costs, for whatever reason, will be allowed for either party as a result of an appeal.

33. Termination, reduction, suspension or withdrawal of Certification/ Letter of Approval

When a nonconformity with certification requirements is substantiated, either as a result of annual inspection or otherwise such as announced audit, **GCL** shall consider and decide upon the appropriate action.

a) Suspension

1. As a result of continued misuse of a certificate or logo.
2. Failure to implement corrective action within the specified time scale as a result of concern identified at Inspection.
3. Any other breach of the **GCL** quotation and/or Scheme Rules.
4. When a critical or major non-conformity is raised during any visit, after the Initial inspection.
5. Under suspension it is not permitted to use any logos on any advertising materials until the suspension has been lifted.
6. The Decision Maker of **GCL** shall write to the registered operator outlining the suspension conditions and how the suspension can be lifted.

b) Scope Reduction

Reduction in the scope of certification to remove nonconforming product variants. Should a reduction in scope be recommended by a **GCL** inspection at a re-evaluation visit this has to be noted in the report and the Decision Maker informed.

c) Withdrawal of Certificate / Letter of Approval

Such withdrawals could be as a result of:

1. Failure to respond to requests/time scales made by **GCL** after suspension of Certification.
2. Failure of an operator to settle an account with **GCL** within 1 month of formal notification of a failure to settle an account.
3. Voluntary withdrawal, in such a case **GCL** require this in writing.
4. The certificate of registration/ letter of approval shall be returned to **GCL** when **GCL** has informed the operator that withdrawal has been complete. No copies of certificates/ letter of approval **shall** be used or logos displayed after withdrawal has taken place.

34. Notification of changes made by the operator

1. Should there be any significant changes cited in the application and with the operator such as change of address, ownership, organization and management such as management representative, scope or product related changes, major changes to the system and processes and the environmental, ethical and social impact of the certified organization caused by incidents or events (if applicable to the certification scope) then **GCL** should be informed by operator within five working days of occurrence.
2. **GCL** shall determine whether the announced changes require further investigations. If such is the case, the operator shall not be allowed to release certified/approved products produced under the changed conditions until **GCL** has notified the operator accordingly.
3. In response to an application for amendment to the scope of a certificate/ letter of approval already granted, **GCL** shall decide what evaluation procedure, if any, is appropriate, in order to determine whether or not the amendment should be made, and shall act accordingly.
4. Operator shall inform **GCL** immediately of any planned changes that could affect product conformity to the relevant standard(s) such as change of production units, subcontractors, recipes or new suppliers) and not market products under the respective label before receiving **GCL**' approval.
5. To notify **GCL** immediately of any application of prohibited substances or any differing residue analysis in any part of the operation.

35. Re-Evaluation/Audit

1. The GCL shall regularly re-inspect operators annually (Prior to the end of the previous certification period a re-evaluation/audit application should be made) to verify whether they continue to comply with NPOP Standards,. Mechanisms shall be in place to effectively monitor whether corrective actions have been implemented.
2. The GCL shall report and document its annual activities and shall keep operators informed about their certification/ Letter of Approval status.
3. GCL shall control the use and display of licenses, certificates, Letter of Approval and logos.
4. Communicate to the Operator to plan the re-inspect/surveillance and find out if there are any changes such as change of production units, subcontractors, recipes or new suppliers, raw materials, production methods, etc. Operator needs to complete audit checklist, list of suppliers, list of subcontractors. GCL will send inspection report to Operator by mail and after fill up Operator will send back the audit report to GCL for review. Normally, the re-evaluation after initial certification is to be within 12 months of the last day of the initial audit. However, providing that sufficient evidence has been collected as above, to provide confidence that the certified management system is effective consideration may be given to postpone the first surveillance for a period not normally exceeding 2 months (14 months from date of initial certification). Otherwise, the certificate has to be suspended or the

scope reduced.

36. Witnessed Visits

As part of the on-going surveillance of **GCL**, the applicant agrees to allow representatives from accreditation bodies and scheme owners such as APEDA and NAB the right to witness **GCL** conducting their audit duties. The fact that an Accreditation Body representative attends an audit will not affect the audit. Also, from time to time **GCL** may have to have trainee auditors or internal audits on an audit team.

37. Short Notice Inspections

For operator that have been suspended or where **GCL** has received complaints then a short notice audit maybe required for follow-up and verification/validation of the implementation of corrective and preventive measures. In such cases the applicant agrees to co-operate with **GCL** audit team members and allow the required access.

38. Extra Audit

1. An extraordinary event affecting a certified organization or **GCL** may temporarily prevent the **GCL** from carrying out planned audit on-site. When such a situation occurs, **GCL**, operating under the Scheme need to establish (in consultation with certified organizations) a reasonable planned course of action.
2. If it is not possible to carry out the inspection at a relevant time because of delayed payment, GCL has the right to postpone or cancel the inspection and certification.
3. If it is not possible to carry out the inspection due to safety issues (e.g. in the event of unforeseen natural disasters or political instability), GCL has the right to postpone or cancel the inspection and certification. The decision is among others based on internationally (e.g. official statements of ministry of commerce, Govt. of India/ APEDA) and locally available information. If the inspection is cancelled, GCL shall inform the Operator as soon as possible.
4. GCL shall decide on a case-by-case basis whether the certification can take place on the basis of other information or the certification has to be cancelled.
5. GCL can decided to perform an Additional/Extra including unannounced Inspection if any following issues raised during any inspection. Potential high-risk situations and related measures include:
6. Parallel processing of certified and non-certified products: in order to prevent comingling or confusion of certified products with other products that do not meet the standards,

7. Where an operator is certified by other Certification Bodies for a standard that shares the same scope, the **GCL** should seek information exchange with the other Certification Bodies involved to prevent misuse of certificates.
8. High demand and low supply for certain products.
9. If any critical or Many Minor or Major non-conformities found during the regular audit

39. Unannounced Inspection program

1. operator accepts that **GCL** may conduct semi-announced inspections, unannounced inspections and/or confirmation visits, for the purpose of monitoring the organization's conformity and to charge the costs in addition to the fees as stated in the Operator contract
2. Organization accept that the accreditation body also has the right to conduct audits of the Operator, including semi-announced audits, unannounced audits, and confirmation visits, for the purpose of monitoring **GCL** conformity with NPOP requirements.
3. Explain and confirmed that an unannounced inspection is part of the certification. Participation in the unannounced inspection is mandatory.

Note: Unannounced inspection may not be a full inspection and GCL inspectors checks the following (but are not limited to);

- verification of NCN which raised at previous visit
- Traceability of product (when a certification done without any production in place and just based on operator's management system then during the unannounced audit GCL auditors check and verify whether the certified material(s) production done as stated in the operator' management system or not)
- Total quantity balance of the raw material and TCs
- Issues related to any complaint or residues received.
- The risky areas will be more emphasized. The risky areas are identified during the announced visit.
- Identification and segregation will be checked if production running during audit.

40. Serious Events, Unannounced, Extra inspections and Closing-Out of NCN

1. New information or changes with regards to the certification procedure and requirements in the NPOP will be communicated to third parties through **GCL** website and emailing operators directly.

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2. In the event that GCL becomes aware of legal proceedings with respect to product or legality and there is evidence or suspicion of nonconformity within the certified operator n **GCL** can carry out an extra inspections to assess the issues.
3. In serious cases, when certification shall be denied or withdrawn, need to be notified to APEDA immediately.

41. Retrospective consideration of the conversion period

1. With conversion of site where it has been proven to the satisfaction of GCL, that no products have been used in the past which are not permitted, the conversion period can be retrospectively considered by GCL.
2. Proof of no use of disallowed materials can be enough, land history documentation (proof of producing according to the requirements in last 2-3 years (depending on the length of conversion period)) issued by an independent third party
3. Emphasis shall be placed on the authenticity of the declarations and that as many details and specifications as possible together with exact dates, signature and stamp shall be available.
4. Only if a operator is inspected from the start of the growing season will it be possible to sell products with organic status in the first year of inspection. This means that physical inspection of the whole growing season of the product is needed before selling a product as organic
5. Furthermore, GCL demands that, before it takes a decision about the retrospective consideration of the conversion period, samples are being analysed for residues of disallowed products at the expense of Operator.

42. Change of Certification body -Migration, Closure of business or withdrawal of Approval/Accreditation

1. GCL accept certificates and letters of approval issued in accordance with the NPOP standards by other Certification Body approved by APEDA, in order to conclude final certification.
2. Operators should not apply to GCL to bypass observations / NCs raised by the old CB. Under normal circumstances, migration to a new CB is not permitted if there are open non-conformities.
3. Upon termination GCL transfer documentation on all operations certified by GCL under the NPOP Standards to another Approved Certification Body.
4. In the event of a GCL closing operations or withdraval of approval/Accreditation, Operator will be nurtured through the process of moving to another CB.

43. Policy on taking over operators from other certification bodies

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1. On the GCL Application Form the operator needs to indicate that his project was already inspected earlier and/or certified by another certification body.
2. If such information is indicated on the Application Form, the authorized representative contacts the previous certification body in writing:

Informing, that GCL will evaluate the farmers/units/operator.

- Asking for the last issued Certificates, reports, non-conformities, farmers list and any other relevant information.
- When receiving the information, GCL will evaluate them with special attention on any open non-conformity.

3. All open conditions or non-conformities given by the previous certification body shall be evaluated and closed before GCL can make a positive certification decision. Regardless of the information received, GCL will always carry out its own full physical audit against the applicable standard.
4. The information received from the preceding certification body will never replace GCL's own full evaluation of the project.
5. The decision maker will decide on the status of the project based on the findings of the GCL Inspector and according to the GCL procedures.
6. For NPOP the transfer of project is done via tracenet where the NOC number is generated which helps in the data transfer.

44. Amendments to Scheme Rules

1. **GCL** reserves the right to amend these Scheme Rules without prior notification. Should the Scheme Rules be updated the latest version shall be put on the web site and all applicants informed about the changes.
2. Operator should record the Scheme Rules as an "external document" within their management system for document control.

45. Privacy Notice

We take the privacy and the protection of personal information seriously. Our Privacy Notice sets our details about we gather, use and share personal information and about individual privacy rights. How we use personal infromation depends upon the context in which it is made available to us. Our Privacy Notice is available from our website: http://gcl-intl.co.in/privacy-policy-cookies/

46. Arbitration and Disputes

Any dispute, controversy, proceedings or claim between the parties relating to this Agreement shall be settled amicably. If no agreement is reached, the matter will then be referred to an arbitrator nominated by both parties.

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47. Applicable Law and Jurisdiction

This Agreement and any dispute, controversy, proceedings or claim between the parties relating to this Agreement shall be governed by, and construed in accordance with the Indian National Laws.