


Certification Process: Step by Step

- 1.) First of all, please read through all **Informational Material** displayed on the CERES website and/or submitted by Email, and check, in which parts of your company you need to implement **Remedies** in order to fulfil standard requirements. If anything is unclear, you can always turn to us or the respective standard holder.
- 2.) Fill in the **Application Form** and send it to us, together with a **Description of the Flow of Goods**, as well as the respective **Certificates** of your suppliers. Please make sure that all your data, as well as the data of involved **Subcontractors** is fully listed in Section 2.2 of the application form (address, number of employees, processing steps).
- 3.) After having checked your application, you will receive an **Offer** from us. Also we will inform you about a rough time-frame which includes the audit at your site and, if applicable, the site/s of your subcontractors.
- 4.) If our offer suits you, we will send you our **Certification Contract** as well as the **Invoice** for the pre-payment mentioned in the offer.
- 5.) As soon as we received the signed certification contract and the payment of the invoice has been booked to our account, one of our inspectors will get in touch with you. He/she will send you our **Management Plan**, on which the audit will be based. Please explain your activities and data as explicitly as possible in this plan. Additionally, our inspector will send you an **Audit Plan**, in which the full course of the audit including needed documents will be explained. He/she will also guide you through the further preparation of the audit.
- 6.) During the on-site **Audit** the inspector will check upon your company based on the information you stated in the management plan as well as on the available documents. Aside from a **Check of Documents**, a **Tour through the Company** as well as **Worker Interviews** will take place during the audit.
Usually, several corrective actions need to be implemented before becoming certified. These **Corrective Actions** will be discussed with the inspector at the end of the audit and a timeline for remediation will be agreed on.
- 7.) For the further evaluation and certification process, another colleague of our Textile Department will be your contact person. This evaluation officer will get in touch with you after the audit and will support you during the further process. He/she will recheck the assessment made by the inspector and check whether the submitted corrective actions are complete and correct.

Please note: the validity of the certificate is based on the timeline for corrective actions. Thus, in case corrective actions have to be handed in till Dec. 15th, also your certificate will be valid till Dec. 15th of the subsequent year.

- 8.) After all necessary corrective actions have been implemented and the final invoice (including the final payment for the audit and the certification) has been settled, we will issue your **Certificate** (validity 12 months) and **register** your company at the respective standard holder.

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If corrective actions have not been handed in during the stipulated deadline or the invoice has not been settled fully and on time, the company will receive a Rejection Letter, and the Certification Contract will be terminated.

Please note:
You may not label or market any articles/products with one of the standards' logos until your certification has been completed!