

To all Accredited Certification Bodies

To the Associations of Conformity Assessment Bodies

Their locations

SUBJECT **Certification and Inspection Department**
Technical Circular DC N° 29/2022 - Accreditation of Certification Bodies operating against the COSMOS certification scheme

Scheme characteristics and added value

The COSMOS Standard was created by an international non-profit association, AISBL, registered in Belgium and founded in 2010 by five European and international organisations strongly involved in the organic and natural cosmetics sector: BDIH in Germany, Cosmebio and Ecocert in France, ICEA in Italy and Soil Association in the UK.

The aim with which it was conceived was to encourage the creation of sustainable cosmetic products that respect the environment, animals and human health, while also promoting the reduction of waste and pollution (e.g. using recyclable packaging and minimising the amount of material used).

Therefore, in order to meet the requirements of the Standard, certified Organisations must orient their policy towards sustainable choices and processes based on an environmental management plan, verified by the Certification Body, which takes into account the entire production process, including packaging, and based on the following principles:

- promote the responsible use of natural resources (e.g. water);
- encourage the use of processing and production that respects the environment, biodiversity and animal welfare;
- promote the use of raw materials from organic farming;
- avoid the use of GMOs and substances dangerous to humans and the environment ('green chemistry' concept).

The COSMOS Standard certifies both finished cosmetic products and individual ingredients (or raw materials), which, in accordance with the sustainability principles stated in the Standard, must belong to the following five types:

- Water;
- Minerals and ingredients of mineral origin;
- Physically Processed Agro Ingredients (PPAI);
- Chemically Processed Agro Ingredients (CPAI);
- Other Ingredients (NNI Non Natural Ingredients).

Organisations certified against the COSMOS Standard may use references to the certification on products that conform to the Standard and in communications between companies until the end consumer; the permitted logos are granted for use by the owner of the Standard, and specified in the document "Labelling Guide".

The following wording is applicable:

- To finished cosmetic products
 - COSMOS ORGANIC: for cosmetics made from 'natural ingredients' that comply with the Standard and consist of agro-ingredients of organic origin for at least 95% of their composition;
 - COSMOS NATURAL: for cosmetics made from 'natural ingredients' compliant with the Standard and possibly composed of agro-ingredients of organic origin in quantities of less than 95% of their composition. This type of products may not have any ingredients of organic origin in their composition.
- To the ingredients
 - COSMOS CERTIFIED: for physically and chemically processed agro-ingredients of organic origin, there is no minimum percentage of organic content required, as long as there is at least one organic ingredient in the raw material in question, according to the requirements allowed by the COSMOS standard.
 - COSMOS APPROVED: for ingredients without organic content but nevertheless approved for use in cosmetic products certified according to the COSMOS standard.

Lists of all ingredients that can be used for COSMOS Standard can be found in the following databases maintained by the scheme owner:

- <http://cosmos-standard-rm.org/data/indexrmorg.php> for Cosmos Certified ingredients,
- <http://www.cosmos-standard-rm.org/> for Cosmos Approved ingredients, accessible only with Cosmos authorisation.

In order to maximise transparency towards the user, the labelling of certified products must indicate the percentage of organic ingredients they contain and refer to the logo of the body that issued the certification, which is also responsible for approving their compliance with the requirements of the Standard.

The COSMOS Voluntary Standard, has been positively evaluated by the French Accreditation Body COFRAC, as a home AB, and has been included in the list of certification schemes evaluated against the EA-1/22 document in order to be accredited by all the ABs that have signed the EA MLA agreements. The version in force today is No. 3.1 but the scheme owner is already working on a later version that will be published in the course of 2022.

Recognition of the Standard at European level and its international use allows harmonised rules to be applied worldwide.

Certification Process

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| Accreditation standard | UNI CEI EN ISO/IEC 17065:2012 |
| Certification standard | <p>Main document:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cosmetics Organic and Natural Standard - Version 3.1 - 1 June 2020 <p>Further normative documents;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Technical Guide Version 3.2 - 1 January 2021: provides guidance for interpreting the technical points and criteria of the COSMOS standard;• Labelling Guide Version 3.1 - 1 June 2020: provides guidance on the minimum requirements for labelling products according to the COSMOS standard;• Control Manual - Accreditation and certification requirements - Version 3.2 - 1 January 2021: defines the requirements for accreditation and certification. |
| Scope of the System | <p>Companies can be certified against the following certification scheme, for at least one of the following fields of application:</p> <p>Standards for the production of natural and organic cosmetics, against the following product categories:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Natural or organic cosmetic products and cosmetic ingredients with organic content;2. Ingredients without biological content approved for use in products and ingredients in scope 1. |
| Competence Criteria for Certification Body Personnel | The competence and qualification criteria for the Certification Body's personnel (including auditors and the decision-making personnel) are defined in Section 8.2 of the Control Manual for Certification and Accreditation Requirements. |
| Types of entities that may apply for certification and possible exclusions | <p>All Organisations involved in feed production processes; all Organisations offering transport, storage and distribution services for both feed and food.</p> <p>Multi-site certification is not permitted for category D, while it is permitted for categories F and G.</p> |
| Verification Timing, Periodicity of Verifications | <p>Audits by the Certification Body must be conducted on each certified organisation at least once a year.</p> <p>Verification times are to be defined by the Certification Body, based on company complexity and risk factors.</p> |

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| Certification Body Procedures | <p>The Certification Body, in carrying out its activities with reference to this Standard, must have the following procedures to describe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the certification process; - the risk analysis criteria useful for defining the timing, frequency and duration of audits; - the process for labels approval, including the use of the certification logo; - the management of remote audits. |
| IAF Documents | All IAF documents relating to management systems apply. |

For further requirements on the management of the certification process, please refer to what is detailed in the COSMOS standard documents.

Accreditation Process

The audits required to issue certification against the COSMOS Standard must be conducted by Certification Bodies already accredited according to UNI CEI EN ISO/IEC 17065:2012.

In the event that the body already holds accreditations issued by other Accreditation Bodies, a case-by-case assessment shall be carried out, according to the applicable EA / IAF MLAs.

A prerequisite for a body to be accredited is that it meets the requirements of ACCREDIA Regulation RG-01 for the accreditation of Certification and Inspection Bodies and ACCREDIA Regulation RG-01-03 for the accreditation of Product/Service Certification Bodies, and provides approval from the owner to operate for its Standard.

Once the fulfilment of the minimum requirements has been ascertained, the accreditation process will begin by conducting the verification activities as provided for in the above-mentioned Regulations and in accordance with the applicable standards/documents. In particular:

- Document review: duration is 1 man/day;
- Headquarters assessment: lasting at least 1 man/day.
- Witness assessment for each category requested: duration appropriate to the size of the Organisation. ACCREDIA reserves the right to assess the suitability of Organisations and Audit Groups proposed for accreditation and subsequent surveillance activities on a case-by-case basis.

Maintaining Accreditation

For the maintenance of accreditation, during the entire cycle, except in special situations (e.g. management of complaints and reports, changes in the certification scheme, changes in the organisation's structure, etc.), the following checks will be carried out:

- 1 Headquarters assessment per year;
- At least 1 witness assessment for each category in the accreditation cycle. Additional accompanying audits may be requested on the basis of risk factors identified annually by ACCREDIA.

For any clarification on this matter, please send an e-mail to the Technical Officer

The opportunity is welcome to extend cordial greetings.

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