



# FRIEND OF THE SEA

Sustainable Seafood

## FRIEND OF THE SEA CERTIFICATION CRITERIA CHECKLIST FOR SEAWEED PRODUCTS

### SEAWEED HARVESTING AND FARMING

(Latest update: 19/03/2014)

Friend of the Sea is a non-governmental organisation founded in 2007 whose mission is the conservation of the marine habitat and its resources by means of certification and promotion of certified products from sustainable fisheries and aquaculture.

Friend of the Sea has created a certification program for products from both fishing and sustainable aquaculture. Audits are carried out by independent certification bodies and ensures that the product conforms to the sustainability requirements.

The use of the logo is authorized only following a positive outcome of an audit carried out by the certification body:

Friend of the Sea sustainable seaweed certification covers the following criteria:

1. Management system
2. Legal compliance
3. Biomass and Environmental Impact Assessment
4. Water monitoring
5. Air emissions monitoring
6. Waste management
7. Chemicals and hazardous substances
8. Energy management
9. Social accountability
10. Traceability



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Each of these criteria include essential or important requirements, or recommendations.

**Essential Requirements:** Conformity to essential requirements is mandatory for certification. Any shortfall with regard to these requirements is considered as a Major Non-Conformity. Corrective actions must be implemented and compliance to the requirements must be proved within three months from receipt of the Audit Report. Solely for requirements 2.1 and 2.2, in consideration of the complexity of the information to be covered, the term allowed for assessing the nonconformity is extended to 6 months.

**Important Requirements:** Conformity to Important Requirements is mandatory for certification. Any shortfall with regard to these requirements is considered as a Minor Non-Conformity. Corrective Actions (declaration of intent and plan of action) must be proposed to the Certification Body within three weeks from the date the Audit Report is received. The Organization must include in its proposed Corrective Action a deadline for compliance. The maximum term for the complete implementation of each Corrective Action is one year.

**Recommendations:** recommendations are not mandatory for certification. Nevertheless compliance will be verified and non conformity will be reported by the auditor. The enterprise must consequently provide corrective action/s and it must inform the Certification Body, before the following surveillance or renewal audit, about decisions taken and corrective actions carried out,

In case a requirement is not applicable to the audited Organisation this will be defined as not applicable (N/A).



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*This document may only be compiled by the Certification body and by the Auditor responsible for the inspection. The form must be compiled in the Auditor's mother tongue or in English if fluent.*

<b>a) NAME OF THE ORGANISATION BEING AUDITED:</b>
<b>b) IS THE ORGANISATION PART OF A GROUP?</b>
<b>c) ADDRESS OF THE ORGANIZATION BEING AUDITED:</b>
<b>d) SEAWEED COMMON NAME:</b> <i>(e.g.: Dulse)</i>
<b>e) SEAWEED SCIENTIFIC NAME:</b> <i>(e.g.: Palmaria palmata)</i>
<b>f) SITES INCLUDED IN THE AUDIT SCOPE:</b> <i>(list names of sites and location)</i>
<b>g) SITES VISITED BY THE AUDITOR:</b> <i>(sites audited on site)</i>
<b>h) DESCRIPTION OF SEAWEED EXTRACTION:</b> <i>(e.g.: harvested from naturally grown (wild) seaweed; cultivated (farmed); vegetative cultivation or cultivation involving a reproductive cycle; pond; sea-based. Where available include a map)</i>



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**i) DESCRIPTION OF FARMING OR HARVESTING TECHNIQUES:**

*(Summary of the techniques used farming or harvesting)*

**j) OPERATIONS OF THE ORGANISATION BEING AUDITED:**

- farming
- harvesting
- pre-processing
- final processing
- importing
- exporting
- distribution
- other (description) :

**k) DESCRIPTION OF THE FINAL PRODUCT:**

*(e.g.: fresh, dried, carrageen, human consumption, fertilizer, animal feed, fish feed, biomass, cosmetics, etc.)*

**l) FINISHED PRODUCT BRANDS:**

*(List of brands, if any under which the product is sold. Where available include brand images)*

**m) DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION OF ANY WAREHOUSE EXTERNAL TO THE AUDIT SITE** *(for the purposes of products' traceability)*

**n) TOTAL NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES:**

*Optional*

**o) ENVIRONMENTAL CERTIFICATIONS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:**

**p) ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**



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- Friend of the Sea project has been introduced**  
*(If not, auditor should provide short description)*
  
- The Audited company has been informed that in case of approval confirmation, it can use the Friend of the Sea logo on its certified products**
  
- The Company has handed over a copy of the company organisational chart identifying the role of the staff involved in the audit**
  
- Audit timing has been agreed upon.**
  
- Data of Preliminary Information Form have been confirmed: (In case of different info please detail)**

<b>CERTIFICATION BODY:</b>	<b>AUDIT TEAM:</b>	<b>AUDIT START AND END DATE:</b>
<b>SIGNATURE OF AUDITOR:</b>	<b>NAME OF PERSON FROM THE ORGANISATION, ACCOMPANYING THE AUDITOR:</b>	<b>AUDIT CODE:</b>



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## NOTES FOR THE AUDITOR

- 1) *The Auditor must complete all fields of the checklist.*
- 2) *Instructions for completing the checklist are indicated in blue*
- 3) *The Auditor must justify in case requirement is Not Applicable*
- 4) *The Auditor must answer Yes (Y) when the Organization is compliant with the requirement and No (N) when it is not compliant*
- 5) *The Auditor must provide comments and explanations for positive or negative responses. Yes, No or Not Applicable are not sufficient*
- 6) *Any significant documental evidence must be attached to the final audit report in a separate and numbered appendix*
- 7) *Photographs should be added to the checklist and/or as an annex*

## GLOSSARY

Organisation: the smallest production unit. Eg: harvesting, farming company or family operation.

EIA: Environmental Impact Assessment

ILO: International Labour Organisation

SA8000: central document of our work at SAI (Social Accountability International). It is one of the world's first auditable social certification standards for decent workplaces, across all industrial sectors.

## 1 - MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

No.	Requirement	Level	Y/N	Comments
	<b>These requirements apply to all harvesting operations and to those farming operations producing more than 20 tonnes per year.</b>			
1.1	A sustainable seaweed organisation management system must include the following:			
1.1.1	a manager of the environmental and social management system, with formally defined authority and responsibilities;	Important		
1.1.2	a set of written procedures to ensure compliance with the requirements of this checklist;	Important		
1.1.3	a written record of non conformities and/or stakeholders' objections;	Important		
1.1.4	a written record of corrective actions implemented as a consequence of 1.1.3;	Important		
1.1.5	a yearly internal review report.	Important		
1.1.6	<b>Farming or fishing operations of less than 20 tonnes each per year, but more than 20 tonnes on a regional or national level, must be coordinated to ensure compliance with the requirements</b>	Important		



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of this checklist.

The Auditor must examine the procedures used by the Organisation and report the identification number or code for the given procedure and database

## 2 - LEGAL COMPLIANCE

No.	Requirement	Level	Y/N	Comments
2.1	Harvesting and farming activities supplying the organisation must be carried out in compliance with national and international legislation.	Essential		
2.1.1	Farmers and harvesting suppliers of the organisation must have a valid administrative authorization or license, when requested by law.	Essential		
2.1.2	Harvesting suppliers of the organisation must comply with quotas or maximum permissible harvesting limits, when requested by law.	Essential		
2.1.3	Harvesting suppliers of the organisation must be compliant with minimum harvesting size limits, when requested by law.	Essential		
2.1.4	Harvesting suppliers of the organisation must be compliant with rotational systems and stock recovery periods, when requested by law.	Essential		
2.1.5	If seaweed is harvested from a shared or common harvest area, documentary evidence shall be available that the total harvest complies with national regulations, when in place.	Essential		
2.2	The organisation must actively recommend national and international stakeholders to implement regulations to reduce potential environmental impact and risks of seaweed harvesting and farming, according to the best scientific data available.	Recommendation		

The Auditor must provide evidence of compliance to these requirements.

## 3 - BIOMASS AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

No	Requirement	Level	Y/N	Comments
3.1	In case of seaweed <b>harvesting</b> activity, an assessment of the status of the seaweed and its biomass by appropriate research	Essential		



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No	Requirement	Level	Y/N	Comments
	institutes or other recognised institutions unconnected to any harvesting and/or processing industries must be undertaken and it must conclude that the seaweed is not overexploited nor endangered.			
<i>The auditor must make reference to the biomass studies (title, date, author)</i>				
3.2*	<b>This requirement applies to all harvesting operations and to those farming operations producing more than 20 tonnes per year.</b> An EIA or equivalent assessment of the harvesting or farming activity has been carried out with a positive outcome by the presiding authority or by other recognized independent institute or laboratory.	Essential		
<i>The auditor must check whether an independent environmental impact assessment or equivalent was carried out. The auditor must specify the title, date, author and significant conclusions of the inspected EIA or equivalent document. *In case the Organisation is not compliant for 3.1, it must alternatively be compliant to 3.2 and sub requirements.</i>				
*3.3	In case of non compliance with 3.2, <b>farming activities producing more than 20 tonnes per year</b> must <b>alternatively</b> be compliant with the following requirements:			
3.3.1	sea-based systems must not imply removal of rocks, corals or other obstructions leading to damage to the coastal ecosystem;	Essential		
3.3.2	sea-based systems must not imply removal of competitive grasses or predators leading to damage to the coastal ecosystem;	Essential		
3.3.3	large scale sea-based farms must not influence coastal water movement in a detrimental way. Protection from erosion or other positive impacts would not constitute a non-compliance with this requirement;	Essential		
3.3.4	any multiuser conflict must have been solved positive and allow other users access to the sea and to the shore.	Essential		
3.3.5	a careful assessment of potential impacts must precede the introduction of any non-native species.	Essential		
3.3.6	removal of mangroves for farming purposes is prohibited. In case removal has occurred, a reforestation program must fully	Important		





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	compensate the mangroves degradation occurred and caused by the seaweed farming activity.			
3.3.7	carrying capacity must have been independently evaluated, considering in particular the potential impact of nutrients removal.	Important		
<i>The auditor must acquire documented information and evidence (text, photos, official documents to be annexed to the audit report) of the environmental conditions of the ecosystem prior to the installation and assess whether the site has led to a negative impact on the ecosystem.</i>				
3.4	In case of <b>farming</b> operations of <b>less than 20 tonnes each per year, but more than 20 tonnes on a regional or national level</b> , a regional or national level independent assessment must prove compliance with requirements 3.3 and sub. The study cannot be older than 5 years.	Important		
<i>The auditor must make reference to the regional or national level assessment. The auditor must run sample onsite checks at small scale producers and produce / report evidence of compliance.</i>				

## 4 - WATER MONITORING

No	Requirement	Level	Y/N	Comments
4.1	In <b>farming facilities on land</b> (pond farming) <b>where external nutrient sources are used and producing more than 20 tonnes per year</b> , the nutrient levels in the effluent water shall be verifiably the same, or lower, than the inflowing water.  Compliance with this requirement will be proved via independent laboratory analysis carried out at least annually, showing a non-significant variation of the following parameters:			
4.1.1	communities of benthic macro invertebrates;	Essential		
4.1.2	nitrogen and phosphorus content;	Essential		
4.1.3	oxygen concentration;	Essential		
4.1.4	increase of sedimentation and the granulometric variation;	Essential		
4.1.5	deposits of organic matter.	Essential		
<i>The Auditor must examine the procedure relating to the frequency and method of monitoring and shall record the number of the procedure and the relative manual. The Auditor must examine previous annual analyses of water and sediments.</i>				
4.2	In case of <b>farming</b> operations of <b>less than 20 tonnes each per year, but more than 20 tonnes</b>	Essential		



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	on a regional or national level, a regional or national level independent assessment must prove compliance with requirements 4.1 and sub. The study cannot be older than 5 years.			
<i>The auditor must make reference to the regional or national level assessment. The auditor must run sample onsite checks at small scale producers and produce / report evidence of compliance.</i>				
4.3	Seaweed processing facilities and the organisation itself must provide evidence of water effluents compliance with existing regulation.	Essential		
<i>The auditor must report evidence of legal compliance with water quality and emissions regulations</i>				

### 5 - AIR EMISSIONS MONITORING

No	Requirement	Level	Y/N	Comments
5.1	Seaweed processing facilities and the organisation itself must provide evidence of its air emissions compliance with existing regulation.	Essential		
<i>The auditor must report evidence of legal compliance with air quality and emissions regulations</i>				

### 6 - WASTE MANAGEMENT

No	Requirement	Level	Y/N	Comments
6.1	Ropes and other equipment used for growing and processing seaweed shall be re-used or recycled where possible.	Important		
<i>The Auditor should provide documental and photographic evidence of compliance.</i>				
6.2	Seaweed processing facilities and the organisation itself must provide evidence of waste management compliance with existing regulation.	Essential		
<i>The auditor must report evidence of legal compliance with waste management regulations</i>				

### 7 - CHEMICALS AND HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

No	Requirement	Level	Y/N	Comments
7.1	The use of toxic and persistent chemical compounds (e.g. TBTs, Malachite Green, DDT) is not permitted. The use of hazardous substances must be carried out in compliance with safety regulations.	Essential		



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7.2	Use of chemicals, such as Formaldehyde and slaked lime is permitted only when an independent assessment has proved their impact on the environmental to be sustainable.	Essential		
7.3	Bio-fouling organisms shall be removed only by physical means or by hand and where appropriate returned to the sea at a distance from the farm. Cleaning of equipment and facilities shall be carried out by physical or mechanical measures.	Essential		

*The Auditor must examine the procedures for the use of chemicals and hazardous substances and indicate the number of the procedure. In addition the Auditor must also verify their conformity during the inspection.*

## 8 - ENERGY MANAGEMENT

No	Requirement	Level	Y/N	Comments
8.1	The organisation must maintain a record of energy consumption updated at least annually.	Important		
8.2	The organisation should calculate its non renewable energy consumption per unit of product and undertake to reduce it annually.	Recommendation		
8.3	The organisation and its suppliers shall, by preference, use renewable energy sources.	Recommendation		

*The Auditor must obtain copies of the records.*

## 9 - SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

No	Requirement	Level	Y/N	Comments
9.1	The Organisation must respect human rights by conforming to the following requirements.			
9.1.1	ILO Co10 Minimum Age in Agriculture: "Article 1 Children under the age of fourteen years may not be employed or work in any public or private agricultural undertaking, or in any branch thereof, save outside the hours fixed for school attendance. If they are employed outside the hours of school attendance, the employment shall not be such as to prejudice their attendance	Essential		



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	at school."			
9.1.2	Children employment in compliance with 9.1.1., cannot imply work which is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children.	Essential		
9.1.3	The Organisation must remunerate workers with salaries conforming at least to the legal minimum	Essential		
9.1.4	The Organisation must assure workers' access to medical care	Essential		
9.1.5	The Organisation must apply safety measures in accordance with legal requirements	Essential		
9.2	The organisation should be SA8000 certified	Recommendation		
<i>The Auditor must check conformity to requirements via documental evidence (examples of labour contracts) and on site observations</i>				
9.3	In case of <b>farming</b> operations of <b>less than 20 tonnes each per year, but more than 20 tonnes on a regional or national level</b> , a regional or national level independent assessment must prove compliance with requirements 9.1 and sub. The study cannot be older than 5 years. <b>In case of family owned activities, requirements 9.1.3, 9.1.4 and 9.1.5 do not apply.</b>	Essential		

## 10 - TRACEABILITY

No	Requirement	Level	Y/N	Comments
10.1	The enterprise must have a system that allows verification that certified products originate from approved installations and that there is no possibility of interchange or mixing with products from non-approved installations.	Essential		

**Additional comments:**



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## CONCLUSIONS:

It is important that the Auditor also completes the following fields

- The Organisation's products **CONFORM** to Friend of the Sea requirements.
- The Organisation's products **DO NOT CONFORM** to Friend of the Sea requirements.  
The Auditor has found the following nonconformities:

### MAJOR NONCONFORMITY (to conform within 3 months)

Specify

### MINOR NONCONFORMITY (proposal within 3 weeks and conformity within 1 year)

Specify

### RECOMMENDATIONS (notification before the subsequent inspection)

Specify