

Objections Procedure

Individuals, companies and organizations can send objections regarding companies to be audited, which may lead to certification failure. Friend of the Sea can accept only objections supported by evidence and received with at least 15 working days in advance of the planned audit. Once confirmed the acceptance, the auditor in charge must take the objection into account when visiting the company, including when making the certification decision.

In the case of sites already certified as Friend of the Sea, stakeholders can register complaints through the Complaints Form. As this type of complaint involves the accredited certification bodies (their assessments and certification decisions), the complaint shall initially be addressed to the certification bodies following their respective complaints procedures. Full guidance is available in the [Complaints and Appeals Procedure](#).

The updated lists of planned audits and certified companies are published on the official website, in the “[Audits planning](#)” and “[Find Friend of the Sea Products](#)” areas, respectively.

Still, anyone wishing to be updated on planned audits or have further information on the accredited certification bodies can request information at info@friendofthesea.org.

Those interested in registering objections regarding companies to be audited, must take into account the following:

1. To be accepted and classified as an objection, a submission shall be:
 - Submitted through the [Objections Form](#) (OF), which is available on the website;
 - Sent via email to info@friendofthesea.org at least 15 working days in advance of the planned audit;
 - Filled out in English;
 - Filled out in all its parts;
 - Accompanied by evidence.



2. If the objection submission does not contain sufficient evidence, Friend of the Sea has the right to return it to the submitting party and request further information.
3. Within 5 working days of receiving the objection, Friend of the Sea shall acknowledge receipt and inform the objecting party whether there is sufficient evidence to process the objection or not. Incomplete objections may be resubmitted within the appropriated timeframe.
4. Within 3 working days of acknowledging receipt from the objecting party, Friend of the Sea shall forward the received objection to the Certification Body in charge of the audit and to the company to be audited.
5. The Certification Body shall forward the received objection to the auditor in charge, who shall take it into account when visiting the company, including when making the certification decision.
6. In the final Audit Report, in the section “Further comments”, the auditor shall mention the received objection, in an anonymous way, and explain how the objection was taken into account during the certification decision.
7. At the end of the certification process, Friend of the Sea shall notify the objecting party in writing.