FLOR ECUADOR CERTIFICATION®

General regulation for flowers production, exportation and commercialization flowers.

Certification for sustainable and responsible floriculture.

Version 4.0
Approved on March 8th 2022
Publishing date: March 1st 2022
1st Edition.

Flor Ecuador Certified is a certification standard for sustainable production, exportation, and commercialization systems of flowers and foliage in Ecuador.

Version 4.0.
Approved on: March 8th, 2022
Valid since April 6th, 2022

Publishing date: March 1st, 2022.

1st Edition.

‘’Flor Ecuador Certified® is a certification for sustainable production and commercialization systems of flowers and foliage in Ecuador”

CONTENT

1. INTRODUCTION 6
2. OBJECTIVE 7
3. SCOPE 7
4. TERMINOLGY AND DEFINITIONS 7
5. REGULATION FRAMEWORK 11
6. INTERESTED PARTIES 1
6.1. About the management of the Certification 1
6.2. About floriculture companies and/or clients. 1
6.3. About Certifying Bodies 3
6.3.1. Duties of the Certifying Bodies 3
6.3.2. External auditor profile 4
6.3.2.1. Training and evaluation of new auditors 6
6.3.3. Communication system and continuous improvement system within the scheme. 7
6.3.3.1. Update of the regulatory documentation 7
6.3.4. Representatives to the Technical Committee 7
7. REGULATORY DOCUMENTATION 8
8. GENERAL SPECIFICATIONS 9
8.1. Checklist 9
8.2. Categories of requirements 9
8.3. Qualification system 11
8.3.1. Not applicable points 12
8.3.2. Non-conformance 12
8.3.3. Observations 12
8.3.4. Recidivism 12
8.4. Multiple-sites audits 12
8.5. Audit duration 13
8.6. Unannounced Follow-Up audit 13
8.7. Sanctions 15
8.7.1. Certification suspension 15

8.7.2. Certification withdrawal 16
9. CERTIFICATION PROCESS 18
9.1. Implementation 19
9.1.1. Certified companies registry 19
9.2. Selection the Certifying Body 19
9.2.1. Offers 19
9.3. Certification request 20
9.4. Audit 20
9.4.1. Audit Plan 21
9.4.2. Audit mode 21
9.5. Audit report delivery 22
9.6. Making of the Action Plan 22
9.7. Review and approval of the Action Plan 22
9.8. Certification decision 23
9.9. Issuing of the certification 23
9.10. Certificate extension. 24
9.11. Certificate transfers 24
10. GRAPHIC BRAND 24
10.1. Certification Logo and Brand 25
10.2. Logo / Negative image application 26
10.3. Logo / Full color application 26
10.4. Logo / Placement 28
10.5. Logo / Color 28
10.6. Logotipo / Tipography 29
11. RECOGNITION OF FLOR ECUADOR CERTIFIED WITH OTHER SCHEMES AND OPTATIVE ANNEXES 29
11.1. GAP Homologation 29
11.2. Biosafety module. 30
11.3. FlorVerde Sustainable Flowers Recognition 30
11.3.1. Double certification for producers 31
12. APPROVAL OF CERTIFYING BODIES 32
12.1. Provisional approval 32
12.2. Final approval 33
12.3. Authorization of Accreditation Bodies other than the local AB 34

13. ANNEXES.....35
13.1. Opening and Closing Format.....35
13.2. Audit report format.....35
13.3. Action Plan format.....35
13.4. Contract for licensing the use of the Certification Flor Ecuador® brand Contrato de Licencia de uso de marca de la Certificación Flor Ecuador®.....35
13.5. Agreement between Certification Body and Expoflores format.....35
13.6. Application to Flor Ecuador Certified® format. 35
13.7. Flor Ecuador Certified® Certificate format.....35
13.8. Flor Ecuador Certified® Biosafety module.....35
13.9. Enabling documents for double certification with schemes Flor Ecuador® y FlorVerde.....35
13.9.1. Comparation Matrix between FlorVerde and Flor Ecuador® standards. 35
13.9.2. Flor Ecuador® Checklist with homolgated cateogries ofr application to FlorVerde.....35

1. INTRODUCTION

Floriculture is an economic activity born 35 years ago in Ecuador, this sector has been a fundamental base for the nation's economy providing more than 110 000 direct and indirect jobs for the development of the country. The floriculture sector currently represents 10% o the agriculture PIB.

With the goal of promoting sustainable growth that benefits to several part involved in the chain of value, Expoflores creates Flor Ecuador Certified® in 2005, as a Environmental and Social Certification Standard for companies dedicated to production, exportation, commercialization and distribution of flowers in Ecuador. For 17 years this scheme has adjusted its regulations and requirements according to the real situation of this important economic activity, to national and international legislation, the needs of the different markets mainly with the objective of promoting the continuous improvement of the companies, helping with clear, rigorous and specialized processes, as a key player committed to sustainability.

Our main goal is to achieve sustainability as an economic sector; that is why in this Version 4.0 we align with the efforts made in Ecuador to be part of the Ecological Transition and to fight climate change through a Sustainability Handbook that will allow us to strengthen the verification, control and monitoring of sustainability indicators such as Carbon Footprint. With this new version of documents the objectives of Flor Ecuador Certified® are:

a. To guarantee the respect and compliance with rights, benefits, health and safety of workers.
b. To minimize the environmental impact caused by the floriculture activities in Ecuador.
c. To promote the efficient management of the resources used in the floriculture processes.
d. To regulate teenager's work and guarantee the absence of child labour.
e. To promote practices within the Circular Economy, Good Agricultural Practices, environmental and labour regulations.

2. OBJECTIVE

The objective of this regulation is to stablish the general alignments and requirements applied to the certification standard Flor Ecuador® in its current version.

3. SCOPE

Flor Ecuador® Certification is suitable for implementation in companies around the world dedicated to flower production, exportation and commercialization within the Ecuadorian territory and within the frame of Ecuadorian social and environmental requirements and Good Agricultural Practices..

4. TERMINOLOGY AND DEFINITIONS

a. **Corrective Action:** Action taken in order to eliminate the causes of any already detected Non-Conformance.
b. **Teenage worker:** Every teenager older than the legal age for child (15 years old) and below 18 years old.
c. **Preventive action:** Action taken to eliminate the causes of any potential Non-Conformance.
d. **Accreditation:** The process for which enterprises from third parties are evaluated and endorsed to conduct activities related to the Certification within this Standard.
e. **Environment:** Surroundings in which an organization operates, includes the air, soil, natural resources, flora and fauna, human beings and their interactions.
f. **Environmental aspects:** Element of the activities, products or services of an organization which can interact with the environment.
g. **Social aspects:** Element of the activities, products of services of an organization which can interact with the social and human environment.

h. **Audit**: Systematic, independent and documented process to obtain and evaluate evidence in an objective way, in order to determinate the scope in which the stablished criteria are complied with.

i. **Internal audit**: Audit that is conducted by the organization itself or in its name for internal purposes or to allow critical analysis by its directives. These may constitute the basis for an auto-declaration of conformity by the organization.

j. **Certification**: Process of emission of a confirmation made by a Certifying Body showing that an operator and/or a specific batch of products comply with these criteria.

k. **Certificate:** Is a written confirmation submitted by a Certifying Body according to an operator or a specific batch of products comply with these criteria.

l. **Commercialization company**: Company that buys and sell certain products.

m. **Solid waste**: Any object, material, substance or solid element that is abandoned, thrown out or rejected after it has been consumed or used in agricultural, industrial, domestic, commercial, institutional and health activities.

n. **Owner of a scheme**: Owner and manager of the Certification Scheme Flor Ecuador®.

o. **Company**: Economic and social organization made of human, material and technical elements, whose objective is to obtain profits through participation in a goods and services market.

p. **Document control**: Procedure to manage documents. Its based on a Documentation inventory that allows documents codification, control of use, control of modifications, filing policies and designates which department of functionary is responsible according to the organization's internal processes.

   Every document required by Flor Ecuador® must be part of the Documentation inventory, the company may add any other kind of document that it considers important for its management. In the case of records, the format of the record must be part of the Documentation inventory, and it will be decided if the data should be tabulated to generate a database.

q. **Environmental impact**: Any change in the environment, either beneficial or prejudicial, as a total or partial result of the environmental aspects of an organization.
r. **Checklist:** Regulatory document that contains all the requirements to be verified during an audit.
s. **IPM:** Integrated Pest Management
t. **Multiple-sites:** Application to an audit for a company that has several plantations or production sites.
u. **Child:** Every person whose age is under 15 years according to the definition of international instruments used in this text.
v. **Non-conformance:** Any deviation from the standard, practices work regulations, expected performance in the standard, among others, that may directly or indirectly cause death, illness, lesion, property damage, environmental impact, impact on the work environment or a combination of these.
w. **Organization:** Any company, corporation, agricultural production unit, firm, enterprise or institution, may be part of these or a combination, may be a society, public or private, that has its own functions and its own administration.
x. **Certifying Body (CB):** One or several independent third-party organizations, to which the Owner of the scheme has delegated the activities of inspection and certification.
y. **Interested party:** Person or group of people that has interest or is being affected by the social and environmental performance of an organization.
z. **Hazard**: Circumstance in which there is a possibility, threat, or occasion for a calamity or inconvenience to happen.
aa. **Action plan**: Plan where corrective and preventive actions are going to be described based on the findings detected in a certification audit.
bb. **Supplier**: Business enterprise that supplies a company with goods and/or services needed to and used in, the production of the goods and services of the company.
cc. **Recidivism**: Non-conformance that is found in 2 consecutive audits.
dd. **Mandatory requirement**: Requirement from the Checklist that must be complied with and in the case of non-compliance affects directly the certification decision.

ee. **Compulsory requirement:** Requirement from the Checklist that must be complied with according to the qualification system of Flor Ecuador®. It may affect the certification decision.

ff. **Risk:** Combination of the probability and the consequence of a specific dangerous event occurring.

gg. **Security:** Condition of being safe from a risk.

hh. **Production site:** Is a production place, meaning an area (plot of land, field, farm, etc.) that may be owned by the production enterprise or rented by it, or managed by a legal entity, where production resources (workforce, soil, water, supplies, etc.) are used. A production site may have several areas that are not adjacent (allotment, units, blocks, etc.)

ii. **Information system:** System that allows the access and use of the information of any document or record tabulated into a database. The management of the database allows to generate reports for decision making.

The company has to decide which documents are going to be tabulated and which kinds of report must be generated. It is a recommendation to write a procedure for the management of this system. The goal is to avoid the loss of any relevant information that maybe generated during the flowchart and that in many occasions is not analyzed due to the lack of a robust database.

jj. **Forced labour:** Every work or service that is demanded to any person under the threat of any kind of punishment and for which said person hasn't volunteered.

kk. **Child labour**: Ay work carried out by children younger that the minimal age for a job admission (15 years old).

ll. **Confinement:** To keep leachate out of any risk of infiltration or percolation to the soil and/or water sources.

mm. **Water waste:** Residual water that is the result of productive processes and which final discharge is going to be in a water course or sewage system after it is treated.

5. REGULATION FRAMEWORK

The regulatory documents detailed below are instruments of national and international legislation and of any other jurisdiction that will have to be complied with and applied to flower farms certificated under the Certification scheme Flor Ecuador®.

a. ISO 45001:2018, Occupational health and safety management systems.
b. Labour law, last modification on April 20th 2015, currently valid..
c. International Code of Conduct on Pesticide Management, worldwide accepted reference for pesticide management. (FAO).
d. Convention 001, about hous of work in the industry, ILO.
e. Convention 014, about weekly rest in the industry ILO..
f. Convention 017, about workers compensation for accidents, ILO.
g. Convention 018, about occupational diseases, ILO.
h. Convention 025, about sickness insurance (agriculture), ILO
i. Conventions 029 and 105, about forced labour and slavery, ILO.
j. Convention 030, about hours of work in commerce and offices, ILO.
k. Conventions 087 y 098, about freedom of asociation, ILO.
l. Convention 095, about protection of wages, ILO.
m. Conventions 100 y 111, about equal remuneration for male and female workers for equal work, ILO.
n. Convention 102 about social security, ILO.
o. Convention 106, about weekly rest, ILO.
p. Convention 122, about employment policy, ILO.
q. Convention 131, about minimum wage fixing, ILO.
r. Convention 135, about workers representatives, ILO.

s. Convention 138 about mínimum age for admission to employment, OIT.
t. Convention 154, about collective bargaining, ILO.
u. Convention 155, Safety and Health in the workplace, ILO.
v. Convention 158, about termination of employment , ILO.
w. Convention 159, vocational rehabilitation and employment of disabled persons, ILO.
x. Convention 161, occupational health services, ILO
y. Convention 171, about night work, ILO.
z. Convention 182, about worst forms of child labour, ILO.
aa. Recommendation 085, about protection of wages, ILO.
bb. Recommendation 116, about reduction of hours of work, ILO.
cc. Recommendation 135, about minimum wage fixing, ILO.
dd. Recommendation 164, occupational safety and health, ILO.
ee. Recommendation 190, about worst forms of child labour, ILO.
ff. Basel Convention, global environmental treaty that strictly regulates the movement of hazardous waste between nations and assigns obligations to all the parties to assure its environmentally rational management and its final disposal, UNEP (UN Environment Programme).
gg. Stockholm Convention, aims to and reduce and eliminate the production, use and disposal of Persistent Organic Pollutants (POP), UNEP (UN Environment Programme).
hh. Rotterdam Convention, it controls the international commerce of certain hazardous chemical products, UNEP (UN Environment Programme)
ii. Executive Decree 2393, Regulation of Safety and Health of workers and improvement of the work environment.
jj. Universal Declaration of Human Rights. UN

Convention on the rights of the child.

kk. ISO 14001:2004, Environmental management systems – Requirements and orientation for its use.

ll. Norma ISO/IEC 17065:2012. Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services.

mm. Montreal Protocol, regulates the production and use of substances that deplete the ozone layer, UN.

nn. Regulation for the operation of health services for companies, Ministry of Labour and Social Wellbeing.

oo. Environmental Management Law of Ecuador.

pp. Regulation for the use and application of pesticides in plantations dedicated to flower cultivation.

qq. Resolution MDT-2015-0141. Instructive for the registry of regulations and occupational safety and health committees.

rr. Resolutión CD-513. Regulation about general assessment of work risks.

ss. Ecuadorian Voluntary Technical Regulation. Pesticides: Storage and transportation, Requirements. INEN 1927.

tt. Environmental Organic Code of Ecuador.

6.1. About the management of the Certification

Expoflores is the manager and owner of the Certification scheme Flor Ecuador®. The manager will define a technical commitee (Integrity Commitee) that Will act as principal of the Certification scheme Flor Ecuador® with an Administrative-Technical Coordinator. Within its duties are the following:

- To delineate general policies about the operation and functioning of the Certification Flor Ecuador®.
- To provide all the necessary information for the performance of all the activities of the Certification Flor Ecuador®.
- To inform and spread information about its benefits to the companies working in flower's production, exportation and commercialization.
- To administer, maintain, watch, advise and sustain the program Flor Ecuador Certified® in the certificate companies.
- To answer enquiries related with the regulations from companies working in flower's production, exportation and commercialization and from certifying bodies and other parties that require information.
- To trace the achievement of goals and objectives stablished in the certification program.
- To receive complaints made by certified companies regarding the competence of Certifying bodies.
- To monitor and supervise the work of Certifying Bodies.
- Other duties that are inherent to the Certification.
- To issue fines or penalty fees and sanctions related to this regulation.

6.2. About floriculture companies and/or clients.

Floriculture companies and/or their clients that have chosen to obtain the Certification Flor Ecuador® through a Certifying Body. Within their duties are the following:

- To select a Certifying Body to get the certification.
- To declare all their flowers and foliage cultivation sites that work under the same legal person denomination or that export under the same brand, at the same time the number of all the post-harvest sites that the

company may have. The certified sites can't be separated neither any production process under the registered brands can be excluded.

- To register and declare all the certified production that goes into the market.
- For commercialization companies and traders that want access to the Certification Flor Ecuador®, they will have to guarantee that 90% of their supply comes from Flor Ecuador® certified sites or GAP certified sites.
- If the certified company change its legal person denomination denomination and its production (land extension in Ha) doesn't change, all the documentation will be updated with the new legal person denomination name and will be verified to the next year after the yearly audit. The Certifying Body might issue a new certificate to the company if requested with the same expiration date that it had before the change in legal person denomination. Additionally, the manager of the certification will assign a new certification number for the new legal person denomination of the company.
- If the certified company changes its legal person denomination and reduces or increases its production, all the documentation will be updated with the new legal person denomination name and compliance will be verified through an audit of compliance with the No negotiable/Mandatory requirements performed by the same Certifying Body with which is currently certified. The Certifying Body will issue a new certificate for the company. For this purpose, the manager of the certification will assign a new certification number for the new legal person denomination of the company.
- If a company belongs to a business group that is registered under the same legal person denomination and /or export/sell their flowers and/or foliage under one brand, all the companies of the group should be certified. They will have to choose a Certifying Body to be certified with Flor Ecuador® and will have to prove total compliance. If not, they won't be able to use the logo on the brand that encompass non-certified plantations.
- Companies must grant access to the requested places and information, and must allow pictures to be taken (this is obligatory) for the making of the report. Take in consideration that this information is absolutely confidential and won't be spread or revealed.

- To comply with the requirements stablished in this regulation.
- To comply with the implementation of an action plan according to the observations and Non-conformances found by the authorized Certifying Bodies.
- To assign an internal auditor who will be responsible of carrying out the certification from within the company and to be a counterpart in the audits for the certification Flor Ecuador®. The internal auditor will also be present during the whole external audit.
- Internal audit(s) of the company must receive the "Internal auditor formation" training and its updates, this training will be dictated by the training entity authorized by the owner of the certification scheme, when available.
- The Flor Ecuador® certified companies might use the logo and name of the Standard if and only if the Brand Use Contract (Annex 13.4: Contract for licensing the use of the Certification Flor Ecuador® brand) between the company and the Certification manager has been signed. See Chapter 10.
- Certified companies might ask the cancel of the certification under this regulation if and only if the clauses in the contract signed with the Certifying body and in the Brand Use Contract (Annex 13.4) are complied with. The company must abandon the logo and certification brand immediately.

6.3. About Certifying Bodies

6.3.1. Duties of the Certifying Bodies.

The Certifying Bodies "CB's" are certification enterprises with national and international recognition and have the following duties:

- To be accredited by the National Accreditation Body or any international Accreditation Body under the lineaments of the ISO/IEC 17065 Standard in its newest version.
- To sign the Agreement with the owner of the scheme (Expoflores) to be accredited by Flor Ecuador ® (Annex 13.5).
- To comply with all the provisions in the Agreement signed between the Certifying Body and Expoflores.

- To send its technical-economic proposals to the certification manager in order to be published from the scheme administration in an equal way to companies that ask for this information.
- To provide the certification service according to the alignments stablished in this regulations and in the certification Agreement with Expflores and in each contract with its clients.
- To schedule the yearly certification audits with its clients, and with enough anticipation of at least three months before the expiration of the certificate.
- The CB must keep updated all the documents required for its approval and must inform all the staff changes relevant to the management of the Certification scheme Flor Ecuador® and all the changes that may affect its duties as independent Certifying Body to the Administrative-Technical coordinator of Flor Ecuador®.
- The CB is responsible of inform its clients about the updates of the regulations' documents of Flor Ecuador®, the date from which they are valid, the transition time for the new versions and any other update published by Flor Ecuador®
- Flor Ecuador Certified® will have the right to participate as an observer, with due notice and covering its own costs, in inspections and audits performed by the Certifying Body.
- Information about the authorized CB's, their contact information and accreditations will be available in the website of Flor Ecuador® and Expoflores.
- The CB will actively collaborate with the Technical Committee of Flor Ecuador® for complaint management related with the CB.
- At least one person inside the Certification Committee that makes the certification decision within the CB must have training as Lead Auditor according to ISO 19011 (minimum 37 hours of training) and must have a recognized certification besides content and duration of the training. That person also has to comply with the external auditor profile as is described below.

6.3.2. External auditor profile

External auditors of the Certifying Bodies must comply with:

- To have a 3rd level degree in Agronomy, Agribusiness, Agricultural and Livestock Science, Socio-economic and Environmental Development or akin fields.
- To have at least three years of general experience.
- To have at least two years of work experience in floriculture in any of its processes: production, post-harvest, management systems/certifications, advisory
- To have received at least 40 hours of general training in management systems / certifications: GAP -Good Agricultural Practices, Flor Ecuador®, occupational safety and health, quality management systems, environmental management systems, among others.
- To have received at least 8 hours of Safety and Health training.
- To have received at least 12 hours of Quality Management training.
- To have received at least 8 hours of Environmental Management training.
- To have received at least 8 hours of HACCP training.
- The external audit must write an Audit Plan in agreement with the company that has asked for the service (See 9.4.1)
- For Flor Ecuador® audits the CB can only employ or hire the services of auditors that comply with the training requirements demanded by the Certification Scheme Flor Ecuador® and auditors that have a currently valid authorization from the Administrative-Technical Coordination of Flor Ecuador®.
- CB's auditors have to receive the necessary training of the Certification Flor Ecuador®.
- Flor Ecuador Certified® reserves for itself the right to ask for evidence of the qualification of the CB's authorized auditors. In the case that the CB is unable to present such evidence or the auditors don't comply with the qualification requirements, Flor Ecuador® will demand the CB to suspend the services as auditors in the frame of the Flor Ecuador® Certification and will inform the Accreditation Body if necessary.
- Each auditor belonging to a CB will take a theoretical and practical evaluation about the Flor Ecuador® regulations at least once every two years to verify its training.

- The CB must verify, document and supervise the requirements stablished for auditor qualification, including the initial studies requirements and the continuous training.
- The CB must implement a system for the continuous training and evaluation of its inspectors and auditors, according to the requirements defined for the Flor Ecuador® certification.

6.3.2.1. Training and evaluation of new auditors

- For the training and evaluation of new auditors it is compulsory to carry out two training audits with an already qualified auditor (senior auditor); in the first training audit the new auditor will participate as junior auditor while in the second audit the senior auditor will grade the performance of the new auditor. The CB will register this grade as evidence for the Flor Ecuador® Committee and must have an outstanding rgrade.
- During the evaluations of the new auditor the following criteria must be considered in order to grade the performance:
  1. Technical knowledge about the Standard
  2. Proficiency in the identification of critical control points in a productive system.
  3. Updated knowledge about the application of fertilizers, biological pests control products and IPM in flowers and foliage cultivation.
  4. Identification of product traceability and mass balance.
  5. Knowledge about the legal regulations applicable to the sector.
  6. Proficiency in communication, use of appropriate language and conduct to carry out the audit.

- The CB will send every end of the year a list of audits performed for Flor Ecuador® by each qualified auditor. In order to keep the qualification every auditor must have performed at least 10 certification audits in a 12 months' lapse.

6.3.3. Communication system and continuous improvement system within the scheme.

6.3.3.1. Update of the regulatory documentation

The regulatory documentation of Flor Ecuador® will be completely revised and updated every 5 years. The Administrative-Technical coordinator will publish and divulge the updates of the regulatory documents and the transition periods for these to the Certifying Bodies, Accreditation entities and to the participant companies with the following considerations:

1. The regulatory documentation will be identified with the number of version, date of approval and publishing date.
2. The specific updates of the regulatory documentation that not constitute a new version, are identified with the edition number and publishing date.
3. An update on any regulatory document may occur independently, it will affect the number and date of all the regulatory documents.

6.3.4. Representatives to the Technical Committee

Each CB authorized by Flor Ecuador® must delegate a contact person with the clearance for decision making that will be the Representative of the CB to the Administrative-Technical Coordination of Flor Ecuador®. This representative must:

1. Be qualified as an external auditor for Flor Ecuador® (see 6.3.2)
2. Attend to all the activities carried out by the Administrative-Technical Coordination of Flor Ecuador®.
3. Be hired as permanent staff and be part of the decision-making process in the CB.
4. Be responsible of sending the Administrative-Technical Coordination the confirmation of any communication upon request.
5. Be responsible of manage and maintain communication with the users within the Certification Scheme Flor Ecuador®.
6. Answer enquiries from Flor Ecuador® about operation matters according to the information requested. If the Representative is unavailable, an authorized substitute must take their role during that time.
7. Distribute and divulge every communication received from the Administrative-technical Coordination of Flor Ecuador® to the relevant CB staff

7. REGULATORY DOCUMENTATION

The regulatory documentation of the Certification Flor Ecuador® is:

a. General Regulation of the Certification Flor Ecuador®.
b. Checklist of the Certification Flor Ecuador® for production, exportation and commercialization companies.

The following documents are also regulatory and are part of the certification process:

c. Contract for licensing the use of the Certification Flor Ecuador® brand.
d. Opening and closing format.
e. Audit report format.
f. Action plan format.
g. Agreement between Certifying Body and Expoflores format.
h. Application to Flor Ecuador Certified® format.
i. Certificate Flor Ecuador Certified®
j. Biosafety module.

There are also communications that will be part of the certification system but won't be binding to the process. These communications have regulatory purposes:

k. Official communications to CB's.
l. Official communications to certified companies.

The last versions of every regulatory document of Flor Ecuador® are available to download with no cost in the website of Flor Ecuador® or Exploflores.

The original documents of the certification scheme are in Spanish. The documents of Flor Ecuador Certified® may be translated to other languages and published in the website of Flor Ecuador® or Expoflores. If there is any conflict between the translations, the original Spanish version prevails over the others.

8.1. Checklist

The checklist is a tool for the companies working in the production, exportation and commercialization of flowers designed to verify the compliance with Flor Ecuador®

Flor Ecuador® has only one checklist for production and commercialization companies. There are suggested parameters for micro producers and traders in the details of the Checklist.

8.2. Categories of requirements

The Checklist of the Flor Ecuador® Certification has a total of 195 requirements that are divided in the following compliance categories:

- Non-negotiable/Mandatory: 10 requirements, the non-compliance with these means the withdrawal of the certification or the suspension of the certification process as the case may be. These requirements will always have to be applied during the audit.
- Recommended: 1 requirement, this doesn't apply to the calculations of the percentage of compliance of the company.
- Obligatory: 184 requirements, their application depend on the type of company and/or its processes, but the non-compliance does affect the final percentage.

Certification audits will be performed exclusively by the Certifying Bodies that are accredited by the local Accreditation Body or by international approved Accreditation Bodies (See more in Chapter 12: Approval of Certifying Bodies)

The Checklist is structured according the following:

MODULE
PRODUCTION MANAGEMENT

SUBMODULES	Cat.
Procedures and plans	3
Vegetative Material	7
Integrated Pest and diseases management	5

MODULE
SAFE USE OF FERTILIZERS AND OTHER PRODUCTS

SUBMODULES	Cat.
Fertilizer storage	4
Application of fertilizers and other products	3

MODULE
SAFE USE OF AGROCHEMICALS

SUBMODELS	Cat.
Agrochemicals storage	15
Safe use of agrochemicals - Products	7
Safe use of agrochemicals - Dosage and transportation	4
Safe use of agrochemicals - Pesticides application	17

MODULE
HARVEST AND POST-HARVEST

Submodules	Cat.
Post-harvest procedures	3
Post-harvest treatments	2
Quality	3

MODULE
ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

SUBMODULES	Cat.
Rational use of water and prevention of contamination	12
Soil management and conservation	4
Substrates	3
Waste management	17
Biodiversity conservation	4

MODULE
LABOUR RIGHTS AND WORKPLACE WELLBEING MANAGEMENT

SUBMODULES	Cat.
Administration and benefits	20
Permanent services and facilities	7
Child labour prevention and eradication	2
Inclusion of people with disabilities	2

MODULE
HEALTH, SAFETY AND HYGIENE IN THE WORKPLACE MANAGEMENT

SUBMODULES	Cat.
Health services	10
Safety and Health in the workplace	18

MODULE
RECORDS AND MEASUREMENT

SUBMODULES	Cat.
Social information	1
Environmental information	6

MODULE
FLOR ECUADOR CERTIFICATION SCHEME AND LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

SUBMODULES	Cat.
National and local regulations	8
Flor Ecuador Certification Scheme	5
Certified product and traceability	3

TOTAL REQUIREMENTS 195

In order to obtain the certification, companies must comply with 100% of the no negotiable/mandatory requirements. Flor Ecuador® has determined the following 10 requirements of its Checklist as part of the category Non-negotiable/Mandatory (M)

COD V4.0	REQUIREMENT	CAT
GB601	The company forbids forced labor in any of its forms, all work must be performed freely and voluntarily.	M
GB607	All of the employees of the farm are affiliated to the Ecuadorian Institute of Social Security (IESS).	M
GB608	The company pays on time all its obligations with IESS (Ecuadorian Institute of Social Security).	M
GB609	All the forms regarding payment of thirteenth, fourteenth and profits are duly registered in the competent Ministry.	M
GB610	The company has an Internal Work Rulebook socialized with all the workers.	M
GB618	The company doesn´t engage in abusive or discriminatory practices of any kind towards workers.	M
GB628	The company doesn´t have any employment, commercial nor any kind of relationship with personnel younger than 15 years old.	M
GB629	If there are teenage workers between 15 and 18 years old, the company must comply with all the legal and technical provisions.	M
GS712	The company must have a Safety and Hygiene Rulebook approved by the competent Ministry and updated within the last two years.	M
FE902	The company has an Environmental license, registry or file (as appropriate) issued by the Enviromental Authority of responsible Application (AAAr) or it must be in process of issuing within the last two years.	M

When a requirement needs the approval by a government institution it is admissible that the requirement may be in the process of being obtained, only if there is evidence that the process has been indeed stared and that the company has been following it in the last three months.

8.3. Qualification system

Flor Ecuador® qualification system is based on the calculation of the percentage of the fulfilled requirements (not counting the Recommended requirements) from the total of requirements applied to the company. The minimum percentage for getting the certification (it's not subject to roundup) is 80% and the 100% compliance of the Non-negotiable/Mandatory requirements.

The different kinds of findings re described below:

8.3.1. Not applicable points

These are requirements in the Checklist that are not taken into consideration for the calculation of compliance percentage due to the size of the company, number of workers or non-existence of that process.

8.3.2. Non-conformance

Any deviation from the regulation, practices, procedures, work regulations, expected performance of the management systems, among others; that may be a direct or indirect cause of death, illness, property damage, environmental impact, detrimental to the work environment or a combination between some of these. Is a total noncompliance of the requirement stablished in the Checklist.

8.3.3. Observations

Points that doesn't qualify as Non-conformances and are a partial non-compliance of the requirement. These doesn't affect the final score of the company, there is no limit for the report of these observations, and they'll depend on the auditor's criterion.

8.3.4. Recidivism

Non-Conformances that repeat their presence in two or more consecutive audits. Companies that reduce the compliance percentage compared to the last audit may have a maximum of 5 recidivisms. If there is a sixth (6) recidivism the certification is automatically suspended.
If the company decides to change to another Certifying Body, the record of the recidivisms shall be reports by the company and sent attached to the last audit report.

8.4. Multiple-sites audits

This applies to the companies that have two or more plantations/farms. For the calculation of the sample of the plantations that are going to be audit the following equation must be used:

$$X = \text{total number of farms}/2 + 1$$

The following conditions have to be taken into consideration:

1) In every case, it is mandatory to present the Internal Audit Report of all the farms that won't be audited.
2) If one of the farms of the group performs only the production process (only cultivation) this farm will not be included in the total number for farms for the calculation.
3) If the company keeps a compliance percentage equal or above 90% for two consecutive years, the number of farms to be audited according to the result of the equation will be reduced in one (1) farm. Each year the calculation must be made with the total number of farms. If the company changes to another Certifying Body, for this condition to apply the Company must ask for a Certificate of the compliance percentage of the last two audits to the Certification Scheme owner.
4) The external audit must use one Checklist for each audited farm, assessing the 195 requirements.

8.5. Audit duration

An audit to a company that has all the processes (cultivation, post-harvest and administrative activities) may have a duration between 8 to 12 effective hours. To decide the days of the audit in multiple-sites audits, the CB have to consider the following, in addition to the sampling of farms with the equation:

a. Total processes
b. Distance

8.6. Unannounced Follow-Up audit

Unannounced follow-up audits are control audits that will be performed in a sample number of Flor Ecuador® certified farms according to what is stated in this chapter. Unannounced Follow-Up audits won't last more than 4 hours and could be performed on-site or remotely depending on the circumstances; this audit will evaluate the 100% of mandatory requirements and some obligatory requirements that the auditor deems necessary and that won't surpass the stablished maximum duration. The conditions in which such audits will be performed are listed below:

1. The Certifying Body will perform unnanounced follow-up audits to the 10% of the Flor Ecuador® companies certified by it. The criteria for the sampling selection of companies are:
   a. Compliance history: Farms that have diminished their compliance percentage.
   b. Kind of crops: From the 10% of farms to be audited at least half of them must cultivate roses, and the other half must be companies that cultivate other summer flowers.
   c. Scope: Within the 10% sampling consider some percentage of production companies and another percentage of commercialization companies.
   d. Risk analysis: The Certifying Body will perform a risk analysis of the certified companies and it might consider the high risk companies according to the results of the analysis.
   e. Geography: Prioritize short distances.

   Certifying Bodies that have less than 10 certified farms will perform at least 1 (one) unannounced follow-up audit to one company; if the CB has less than 2 certified companies, it will perform the unannounced audit every two years.

   Note: These considerations are referential. The companies may fulfill with one or several conditions

2. The Certifying Body must notify the Company about the follow-up audit with at least 48 hours notice. If the company is unable to do the audit due to demonstrable circumstances it will have a second chance that will also be communicated with a 48 hours notice. If this second follow-up audit can't be performed neither the certified company will receive a penalty (See point 8.6)
3. Unannounced follow-up audits may be performed starting on the second month after the last re-certification audit or the certification of the company, and before two months prior to the renewal of the certification.
4. If there is evidence of a Non-conformance with an obligatory requirement, the auditor must proceed to notify the Non-conformance. Mandatory requirements must be 100% complied with, if the Company doesn't fulfill these mandatory parameters the audit must be suspended and shall be

rescheduled for the next week, this unless there is a Non-conformance with a mandatory requirement that is a serious hazard against the health or wellbeing of the workers or the environment; in this case the certification has to be withdrawn and this has to be immediately communicated to the owner of the certification scheme.

5. The auditor will always go through the closing of the Non-conformances found in the unannounced follow-up audit in the recertification audit. If they're not closed the auditor shall register them as recidivisms.
6. For unannounced follow-up audits, the auditor must use the Flor Ecuador® Certification System and will adjust the requirements according to the applicability.

8.7. Sanctions

Are considered as sanctions: the suspensión and/or withdrawal of the certification. These sanctions will be applied to companies by the CB with due justification according to the stablished criteria. In the case of companies that are accessing Flor Ecuador® for the first time a withdrawal won't apply; the Non-conformance with the points detailed in 8.6.1 and 8.6.2 will imply the direct suspension of the certifying process.

8.7.1. Certification suspension

Certification suspension is a temporary state that is generated by the following reasons:

1. Noncompliance with the Action plan:
   Suspension will be applied when the Company doesn't present its Action Plan in the stablished lapse of 30 days. The CB must notify the company and the manager of the certification scheme.
   Suspension will be lifted once the company sends the Action Plan and its approved by the CB.
   The Action Plan must be sent in a lapse of no more than 30 days since the date of sending of the Audit Report. This time lapse may be extended to 30 more days if the CB gives its authorization. If the Action Plan isn't summited in the next 60 days after receiving the Audit Report, the company must restart its certification process since the beginning.
2. In Multiple-sites audits, if the average of the score of the farms isn't above 80%

3. Not receiving the follow-up audit at the second chance.
4. Because of accusations.

   Until a verification of the accusation is conducted. The Certifying Body responsible for the last audit will be notified and auditors from the Administrative-Technical Coordination will be send immediately. Those auditors shall proportionate the Certifying Body with a report of the in situ visit. The report has to be made in the correct format and will include a recommendation for lifting the suspension or for the indefinite withdrawal of the certificate. Adequate support documentation (such as documented evidence of the response to the Non-conformance, etc) shall be attached to the report. The company must answer to the notification of suspension in no more than 10 business days and must also include the respective Action Plan. If the Action Plan designed by the farm or company doesn't effectively eliminate the Noc-conformance(s) reported in the accusation, the Certifying Body will withdraw the certification.
5. Not presenting a notification to the breeders or developers of registered varieties/cultivars when there is an increase in number of plants of those registered varieties/cultivars according to licensed use contracts.

   The certification audit may continue but the Certifying Body shall notify the owner of the Certification scheme the suspension of the Flor Ecuador® certification. The company then will have 30 days since the certification audit to send, attached to the Action Plan, the formal notification of using of plants with varieties/cultivars that aren't registered in the contracts with the breeder or developer. During the suspension the producer is forbidden of the use of the Certification logo in any digital material, certificate or any document related with the certification.

In any of these scenarios the sanctioned Company or producer has the right to give a solution to the reasons for the penalty or to appeal the sanction to the Certifying Body through a written justification.

8.7.2. Certification withdrawal

The withdrawal of the certification may occur for the following reasons:

1. Noncompliance with the Non-negotiable/mandatory requirements: the withdrawal of the certification will be done immediately when any of the non-negotiable/mandatory points is not fulfilled.

2. When the company doesn't achieve the minimum percentage of compliance.
3. When the contract between the certified company and the Certifying Body is terminated.
4. In Multiple-site audits, if there is a Non-conformance with a Mandatory requirement in any of the sites.
5. Noncompliance with the sending of formal notification to the breeder or developer within the 30 days' time described in point 8.6.1 number 5.

The withdrawal of the certification means the immediate cancelation of the certificate. A producer or company with a cancelled certificate won't be able to certificate again for two months after the withdrawal.

9. CERTIFICATION PROCESS

This chapter defines the steps of the Flor Ecuador® Certification process. The general flowchart of the certification process is described below.

9.1. Implementation

Is the internal process carried out within each company prior to the certification with a CB. In implementation, the Company has to make sure that the regulatory documents are reviewed and understood: both Regulation and Checklist, besides to perform an initial diagnosis of compliance through internal audits.

Once the implementation has been carried out, the company will plan and define the necessary activities for the compliance with the requirements. After that the implementation activities are performed, the compliance is revised and the necessary corrections are applied.

9.1.1. Certified companies' registry

Every company in process of Flor Ecuador® certification will be registered to the Certification Administration automatically from the moment of the certification request

Flor Ecuador's® Administrative-Technical Coordination will sign a three-digit code to the companies that have started the process. The code will also include the specific letter PR (For production companies, micro producers), OB (for breeders or developers), CO (Commercialization enterprises). This code is unique to each company and will kept indefinitely unless the company change its legal person denomination. This code is the only one that may be used inside the Expflores legal logo.

9.2. Selecting the Certifying Body

The Company has total freedom to choose the Certifying Body that better suits its needs.

One farm may be able to certify with only one Certifying Body. When there is multiple sites, all the locations must be certified under the same legal person denomination and with only one Certifying Body.

9.2.1. Offers

Once the Company has performed its internal improvement processes including those part of the Implementation, it may request to the Certification administration the updated economic offerings of each one of the CB's or it may contact the Certifying Bodies by itself.

9.3. Certification request

The company must request the certification to the CB authorized by Expoflores and accredited by the local Accreditation Body or by an international approved Accreditation Body. The CB will send an application format (Annex 13.6) to the requesting company in order to prepare a formal technical-economic offer, y after to sign a certification service contract.

In the application format shall be listed all production sites, post-harvest facilities and administrative areas that are relevant and will be included I the scope of the certification. The format will also include the complete information regarding the company or producer and the product.

The format will be completed in each certification or recertification process and the Certifying Body might ask for additional information if it seems necessary.

9.4. Audit

When companies Access to Flor Ecuador® for the first time, they start with a certification audit, the audits performed each year after the initial certification audit are known as recertification audits. When a company hasn't recertify in the proper time described in this Regulation, then it loses it certification record and must access with a new certification audit.

Recertification audits are performed every year to the companies that are already certified. Each audit must include every relevant product, process, production site, post-harvest facility and administrative unit. The authorized and accredited CB's will perform the audits to the companies that have requested the service based on the Regulatory Documentation of the Certification. The CB's are the only entities authorized to issue the Certification according of what is stated in this Regulation.

For every audit there are some important requirements to be detailed in the opening and closing meetings. In the opening meeting the audit process and updates in the regulations shall be explained. In the closing meeting the findings in the process and development of the audit have to be reviewed. (Annex 13.1 – Opening and closing meetings format)

The annual recertification audit will be performed between the 30 days (business and non-business days) prior to the expiration of the certificate and 30 days after the expiration date (with the due authorization of the Certifying

Body) to keep the certification record. The CB has the duty to coordinate the annual recertification audit with its clients at least 90 days prior to the expiration of the certificate.

9.4.1. Audit Plan.

For the process of audit a Company, the external audit will design an Audit Plan, composed of two evaluation phases, in which the different areas to be audit will be describes with time and responsibilities, and that shall be sent to the company days before the audit. The evaluation phases are:

- Documentation: In this phase, the external auditor will review at the same time all the documentation requested in the Checklist and the support documentation for the requirements that are going to be evaluated on the field.
- Field: The external auditor will walk the Company evaluating the requirements.

9.4.2. Audit mode.

Flor Ecuador® certification and recertification audits may be in two modes according to the audit plan and the decision of the company.

1. Remote audit: This mode applies only for the verification of documentation requirements, not for verification of field requirements. In this case the remote audit will be 100% documentation related and the field verification must take place in no more than a month after. ´

2. In situ (person to person) audits: In this mode the verification of both documentation and field requirements is performed in the production site.

Note: The company may request an audit mode directly to the CB. The expiration date of the certificate must be takin in consideration to avoid non-authorized time extensions.

9.5. Audit report delivery

The CB must issue a report to the companies for their knowledge about the findings detected in the audit with details of the Non-conformances, observations and including pictures. The report must be delivered to the company via email in a period no longer that 7 days (calendar days) since the day of the audit (Annex 13.2 – Audit report format).

The report is confidential and will be available only to the interested parties.

When the audit is in multiple-sites the CB will deliver one report per each audited farm. Those reports must describe the Non-conformances and/or observations detailing the site (farm) in which those Non-conformances were spotted- At the end of the report there is going to be a summary of the average score obtained by the company for the certification decision. This only if all the farms of the company comply with all mandatory requirements.

9.6. Making of the Action Plan

The Company is responsible of writing the Action Plan of the audited farm or farms (multiple-sites) which have to include: preventive and corrective actions based on the findings of the audit for both: Non-conformances and Observations. The Action Plan must be delivered in the proper format and sent to the CB in a time lapse no longer that 30 days (calendar days) after receiving the audit report. (Annex 13.3 – Action Plan format). If this deadline is not complied with, penalties will apply (8.6).

In the following certification audit the closing of all Non-conformances will be verified, thus the company has one year to perform all necessary actions. If the company doesn't close the Non-conformances and these are re-issued at the next year, this are categorized as recidivisms.

9.7. Review and approval of the Action Plan

The review of the Action Plan is carried out by the CB's auditor who will notify the company his or her observations and/or approval.

In the scenario that some findings can't be justified through the Action Plan, the CB might ask for a new field inspection that may generate additional charges.

9.8. Certification decision

The Technical Committee of each CB is the entity responsible of making a company's Certification decision; it is also the responsible of suspend and/or withdraw the certification if it considers that Flor Ecuador Certified® is not been complied with.

9.9. Issuing of the certification

Once the Certification Committee of the CB has taken the decision of grant the certification, a Certificate will be issued with an expiration of one year, with the format stablished in the Annex 13.7 of this Regulation; the Certificate ill include the following information:

- Date of the start of the certification process with the Certifying Body
- Date of certification is the date in which the certification decision was made.
- Expiration date of the certification.
- Certification number, generated by the certification manager.
- Scope of the certification, this is the company's processes that were audited.
- Certified land extension (Ha)

The CB will deliver one printed certificate in English and one in Spanish to the certified company and will send a digital copy to the certification manager with the details of the farms that have been certified, in a time lapse no longer that 7 days (calendar days) after the making of the certification decision.

In the scenario that the company doesn't start the yearly certification process within the stablished time limits regarding the expiration of the certificate, the company will lose its certification record. This cases will be duly notified to the certification manager y the Certifying Body at the end of the 30 day's period after the expiration of the certificate.

In the case of companies that are starting their Flor Ecuador® certification process for the first time, any product that was harvested, processed or registered before the issuing if the certificate can't be considered a certified product.

9.10. Certificate extension.

A company may be granted a 30 days extension of its certification due to justified circumstances. To do this the company must ask its Certifying Body the extension. With only one extension per year, the company won't lose its certification record if and only if completes the process within the extended time. The CB must notify immediately to the Certification manager about the certificate extensions that are approved for register purposes.

Companies that ask for a certificate extension won't be able to change to another Certifying Body during the extended time. Flor Ecuador® Management reserves for itself the right to issue extraordinary certificate extensions of more than 30 days in proven cases of force majeure.

9.11. Certificate transfers

Only those companies that are duly registered for Flor Ecuador® certification and that aren't penalized may change to another CB.

The production or commercialization company must solve any pending penalty before changing to another CB, and must authorize the sending of the last audit report to identify the Non-conformances.

The new CB must keep the original registry number of the transferred company. Duplication of registry numbers is not allowed.

10. GRAPHIC BRAND

The goal of this chapter is to stablish the adequate alignments for the use of the Brand and logo of the certification in digital and printed material, without any association to any other brand or seal, with the use of the certification number that is granted by the certification manager.

To be able to use the brand and logo the certified companies shall sign the Contract for licensing the use of the Certification Flor Ecuador® brand with the

Communication Department of the certification manager (Annex 13.4 Contract for licensing the use of the Certification Flor Ecuador® brand)
The Certification Manager is the sole owner of the Flor Ecuador® Certification Seal, which is registered in the Ecuadorian Institute of Intellectual Property (IEPI), thus it is protected by the laws of the Republic of Ecuador.

The purpose of the Brand and logo is to clearly identify and promote the products of the companies that are certified with this Regulation.

10.1. Certification Logo and Brand

Since the year 2005 Flor Ecuador Certified® is an Integrated certification scheme with social and environmental scope to Ecuadorian companies dedicated to the production and commercialization of flowers.

This certification is represented by a graphic brand developed within the general architecture of the Flor Ecuador brand.

The code that a Company must use in the logo is the code issued by the Certification owner (Expoflores) and not the code issued by the Certifying Body.

When printed on the packaging material for exportation products from a certified Company the logo must be applied in only one color: Pantone Black 100%.

Its minimum size in printed applications is 7 cm diameter. The maximum size is 10 cm diameter.

The graphic Brand that appears in this page is editable to allow the change of the assigned certification number.

The only typographic family allowed is Museo Sans Rounded which is included in this regulation.

It is important to clarify that the software Adobe Illustrator version CS or superior versions is needed for the edition and application of the graphic brand.

10.2. Logo / Negative image application

Flor Ecuador Certified has an application in negative format to be used when there is a piece of communication with a clear background where the original design lack contrast. An example:

10.3. Logo / Full color application

Flor Ecuador Certified has an application in full color that is used exclusively in pieces of communication such as magazines ads, printed press, billboards and merchandising pieces. It must always be applied in the approved corporative colors from the CMYK pallet.

This application isn't recommended for cardboard boxes in which the products may be packaged.

Incorrect use and penalties.

It is not allowed to use the logo over color backgrounds or to apply a shed when the isotype has the degraded color; the use over a color background is only allowed when the isotype is in white color.

In the case of this Non-conformance happening Expoflores reserves for itself the right to give a conclusive amount of time for the correct use of the logo in packaging and advertisement material according with the stock of material that the company has.

It is not allowed to use the certification logo prior to September 2017. If the incorrect application on advertisement or packaging material the production company will be in noncompliance with the certification and Expoflores will start a process for the suspension of the certification.

10.4. Logo / Placement

The Flor Ecuador Certified Brand must be placed using a module based on proportions taken from the perimeter of the circle. The center of equal circles must be placed to the perimeter generating an imaginary square area inside which no other graphic or text must be placed.
For more details, see the following graphic:

10.5. Logo / Color

Pantone Black	Pantone 513
R:30 G:30 B:30	R:141 G:42 B:144
C:0 M:0 Y:0 K:100	C:53 M:99 Y:0 K:0
HTML 1E1E1E	HTML 8D2A90

10.6. Logotipo / Tipography

Museo Sans Rounded 700

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

Abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

1234567890

Museo Sans Rounded 500

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

Abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

1234567890

11. 11. RECOGNITION OF FLOR ECUADOR CERTIFIED WITH OTHER SCHEMES AND OPTATIVE ANNEXES

11.1. GAP Homologation

Expoflores through a macro agreement with Agrocalidad homologated the Flor Ecuador Certified® certification with the GAP (Good Agricultural Practices) scheme based on the resolution No. 038 of the Official Registry No. 465 of Wednesday April 10th 2019.

Under this homologation all the companies that are Flor Ecuador® certified are at the same time GAP certified. For this to be applied the following has to happen:

1. The Flor Ecuador® certified company must update its certificate with due anticipation, meaning that Flor Ecuador® certified companies shall renew their certificates before the date of expiration of their last certificate.
2. Once the company has its Flor Ecuador® certificate up to date it shall register it for GAP homologation in the Guidance System of Agrocalidad. There it must attached the current report and certificate.

If a company asks for a certificate extension neither Flor Ecuador® scheme or its management are liable for the annulation of the GAP certification.

11.2. Biosafety module.

Due to the worldwide circumstance of the COVID-19 pandemic this version of Flor Ecuador® regulation includes an obligatory module to the Cheklist under the Annex 13.8: “Biosafety Module” that encompasses 20 obligatory requirements through which the biosafety conditions of the floriculture companies in their activities will be audited. Flor Ecuador® Management might issue an official communication withdrawing the obligatory status for this module and in such scenario it will be a choice for the company to include the module in its certification.

The Certifying Body may include the verification of this module within the same Flor Ecuador® certificate of may issue an individual and separate specific certificate with the same characteristics of the regular Flor Ecuador® certificate.

If a company want to certificate only this module without the whole Flor Ecuador Certified® scheme it may do so. In such cases the Non-negotiable/Mandatory requirements have to be audited too in order to issue this special certification.

The compliance percentage for the certification of the Biosafety module is 90% of the module requirements if it’s going to be handled independently, or 80% if its audited within the whole Flor Ecuador® checklist, plus the 100% of the Non-negotiable/Mandatory requirements.

The audit modes for auditing the biosafety module may be under the same two modes that Flor Ecuador® allows and that are described in point 9.4.2

11.3. FlorVerde Sustainable Flowers Recognition

International certification FlorVerde Sustainable Flowers is a certification scheme with over 25 years of experience, that recognizes and accredits the sustainable production of flowers and ornamental plants that comply with quality requirements and processes, environmental responsibility and social commitment based on the regulation ISO/IEC 17065. This certification allows the producers to strengthen their internal processes with the implementation of sustainable practices and reassure the consumer that they are acquiring a product with the highest quality in its productive process.

FlorVerde and Flor Ecuador® Standards pursue the same objectives in the sector of flowers production and exportation, that is why and after a careful work of technical review between both schemes, through an agreement celebrated between ASOCOLFLORES and EXPOFLORES, FlorVerde Sustainable Flowers (FSF) grants Flor Ecuador® recognition as an Standard equivalent to FlorVerde Standard for the sustainable production of flowers and ornamental plants (REEN – Equivalent recognition between Standards). This implies that FSF recognizes that the FEC Standard concords with the FlorVerde Standard plus an additional module of complementary requirements from FlorVerde Standard that is not covered by Flor Ecuador®.

11.3.1. Double certification for producers

Those companies interested in the REEN (Equivalent recognition between Standards) process may access to double certification: Flor Ecuador Certified® and FlorVerde under the following circumstances:

1. The companie requesting Access to the certification under FlorVerde Standard accepts that its certification will be subjected to the alignments stablished in the Gernal Regulation for the FlorVerde Sustainable Flowers certification, Version 7.1.2 July 2021 (The document is available in the FlorVerde Sustainable Flowers website).
2. The company shall comply with Flor Ecuador® certification using the Checklist homologated with the FlorVerde Standard (Annex 13.9.1) which means that Flor Ecuador® evaluation requirements will change of category to conform with requirements by FlorVerde (Annex 13.9.2)
3. The company must apply a complementary module of requirements from FlorVerde Standard that haven't been covered by Flor Ecuador® and that will be determined between FlorVerde and Flor Ecuador®.

12. APPROVAL OF CERTIFYING BODIES

The Certifying Bodies that wish to offer their services of certification and to be part of the Bodies approved by Expoflores for the scheme Flor Ecuador® shall send a request when the Certification Owner opens for applications, through a letter addressed to the Executive President of Expoflores including the following information:

a) Name of the person in charge of coordinating relations with the Administrative-Technical Coordination of Flor Ecuador®.
b) Quality Assurance Manual
c) Audit Process
d) Inspection process
e) Evidence of payment for the application's evaluation. The amount is going to be decided by the Technical Committee of the certification.

Information about the application will be officially notified in Flor Ecuador® and Expoflores website. Once the application is received, a Flor Ecuador's® representative will review the requested documentation and may ask the CB for any specification or explanation that deems necessary.

Flor Ecuador's® Technical Committee will evaluate the application. The Committee reserves for itself the right of approve the applicant CB's. If the decision of the Flor Ecuador's® Technical Committee is favorable, the CB will be granted a provisional approval; to be able to operate in the frame of this kind of approval the CB must comply with the following conditions:

12.1. Provisional approval

In order to receive a provisional approval, once the CB has been selected and before it may perform audits, it must fulfill the following requirements:

1. To sign the Flor Ecuador® brand and certification license contract. The contract will include, among other issues, information about the rights and duties of the contracting parties.

2. To deliver to the Administrative-Technical Coordination of Flor Ecuador® the list of assigned auditors and their qualifications, which must be aligned with the requirements of this Regulation.
3. To guarantee that all of its auditors have received training in the Flor Ecuador® Certification's General Regulation and Checklist and that they have pass the respective tests.
4. To get the accreditation on the ISO/IEC 17065 Standard in its newest version with the Flor Ecuador® scope to an Accreditation Body (AB) that is member of IAF, EA or IAAC. The CB must send to Flor Ecuador® Administrative-Technical Coordination a copy of the confirmation made by the AB about the reception of the request.

During the accreditation process the following must be taken into consideration:

a) The Flor Ecuador® Technical Committee grants the CB that has been provisionally approved the possibility to issue a limited number of unaccredited certifications during the request of accreditation stage, when:

1. The CB has already an accreditation in the ISO/IEC 17065 Standard.
2. The CB is currently in the process of getting the accreditation in the ISO/IEC 17065 Standard with Flor Ecuador® scope.

b) The máximum number of companies that may receive the unaccredited certifications in the options of individual or group certification is 15. These certifications may include the Flor Ecuador® logo but not the AB logo.
d) The CB's shall get their accreditation in a time lapse of ten (10) months since the date of the provisional approval. This period of time might be extended by additional two (2) months if there is justified reasons that are acceptable for Flor Ecuador® Technical Committee.
c) If during a maximum lapse of a year the CB hasn't get the accreditation, the provisional approval shall be withdrawn, the CB won't be listed as provisionally approved in neither Expoflores nor Flor Ecuador® websites and won't be able to issue any kind of Flor Ecuador® certificate.

12.2. Final approval

a) In order to get the final approval the CB must be accredited in the ISO/IEC 17065 Standard with the Flor Ecuador® scope.

b) Once accredited including the Flor Ecuador® scope, the CB must send a copy of the accreditation to Flor Ecuador® Technical Committee.
c) With the written approval of Flor Ecuador® Technical Committee, the CB is habilitated to use the Flor Ecuador® logo and the AB loog in its certificates.
d) The duration of this final approval will be stablished in the Brand and certification license contract signed between the CB and Flor Ecuador®.
e) The CB must continuously inform the Flor Ecuador® Technical Committee about all its assigned auditors and inspectors and their qualifications, according to the requirements demanded in this Regulation.

12.3. Authorization of Accreditation Bodies other than the local AB

The Accreditation Body to which the CB is applying must have signed the Multilateral Recognition Arrangement, (MLA) and must be a member of the International Accreditation Forum, (IAF) or the Inter-American Accreditation Council (IAAC) or the European co-operation for Accreditation (EA).

The accreditation document issued by the AB for the CB must include the scope of the accreditation, quoting the Flor Ecuador® Regulatory documentation in its newest version.

The Accreditation Body must stablish a Memorandum of Understanding with the Flor Ecuador® Certification Scheme. The request for this MOU must be elevated by the CB.

13. ANNEXES

13.1. Opening and Closing Format

13.2. Audit report format

13.3. Action Plan format

13.4. Contract for licensing the use of the Certification Flor Ecuador® Brand.

13.5. Agreement between Certification Body and Expoflores format

13.6. Application to Flor Ecuador Certified® format.

13.7. Flor Ecuador Certified® Certificate format

13.8. Flor Ecuador Certified® Biosafety module

13.9. Enabling documents for double certification with schemes Flor Ecuador® y FlorVerde.

13.9.1. Comparation Matrix between FlorVerde and Flor Ecuador® standards.

13.9.2. Flor Ecuador® Checklist with homologated categories for application to FlorVerde.

UPDATES RECORDS OF FLORECUADOR CERTIFIED® STANDARD

Revision number	Updated document	Replaced document	Approval date	Change description
4	General Regulation of Flor Ecuador® Certification V2.1 Flor Ecuador® Certification Checklist for flowers production, exportation and commercialization companies V2.1	General Regulation of Flor Ecuador® Certification V2.2 Flor Ecuador® Certification Checklist for flowers production, exportation and commercialization companies V2.2	October 15th 2014	The following points of the regulation have been modified: 4 DEFINITIONS AND TERMINOLOGY 5 REFERENCE NORMS 7 GENERAL SPECIFICATIONS 9 CERTIFICATION PROCESS In the checklist: Updating of chapter names,14 new requirements and 14 requirements eliminated. In Regulation Annexes; 2 annexes eliminated.
5	General Regulation of Flor Ecuador® Certification V2.2 Flor Ecuador® Certification Checklist for flowers production, exportation and commercialization companies V2.2	General Regulation of Flor Ecuador® Certification V3.0 Flor Ecuador® Certification Checklist for flowers production, exportation and commercialization companies V3.0	June 17th 2016	Changes in the Regulation and Checklist: - Updating in the number and types of requirement. - Updating in requirements for certification bodies. - Inclusion of a procedure for the communication system and continuous

				improvement of the Flor Ecuador® scheme. - Definition of a technical Committee and representatives of certification bodies - Clarifying of the process for registration to Expoflores. - Duration of audits. - Process for transference of certificates in case of change of certification bodies. - Procedure for certifying bodies authorization.
6	General Regulation of Flor Ecuador® Certification V3.0 Flor Ecuador® Certification Checklist for flowers production, exportation and commercialization companies V3.0 Annexes to Regulation V3.0	General Regulation of Flor Ecuador® Certification V4.0 Flor Ecuador® Certification Checklist for flowers production, exportation and commercialization companies V4.0 Annexes to Regulation V4.0		