FairWild Certification Application Procedures

The FairWild Foundation would like to welcome you as a potential new FairWild-certified collection operation. Application procedures are outlined below. For informal enquiries and advice, please contact the FairWild Foundation Secretariat (http://www.fairwild.org/contact).

The FairWild Standard Version 2.0 applies to wild plant collection operations wishing to demonstrate their commitment to sustainable collection, social responsibility and Fair Trade principles.

The FairWild Standard is designed to be applicable to the wide array of geographic, ecological, cultural, economic, and trade conditions in which wild collection of plant resources occurs. In order to cover the widest possible range of production scenarios but to maintain the integrity of the standard, the FairWild Foundation has decided to classify targeted plants according to a range of criteria as explained below.

Steps for application

1. Register with a FairWild accredited control body (herein after called CB)

   Interested applicants shall contact a FairWild accredited CB first of all to hold an initial discussion on the feasibility, timeline and anticipated cost of scheduling an audit. It is recommended to contact the CB at least 4 months before the start of the collection season. If necessary, the CB will consult the FairWild Foundation at this stage to discuss any unusual features of the collection operation and/or target species.

2. Request for risk analysis of the target species

   Following this initial discussion with the CB, the applicant should forward the FairWild application form to the FairWild Foundation to request risk analysis of the target species, a process which is carried out in collaboration with the IUCN/SSC Medicinal Plant Specialist Group. As the susceptibility to over-collection is species-specific a distinction is made between species considered to be at high, medium or low risk of unsustainable collection. This request should be received by the FairWild Foundation at least 3 months before the proposed audit date. In the case of species where limited published information is available, or in times where a high volume of applications is received, a longer period may be necessary.

   The applicant will need to pay the FairWild Foundation application fee of currently 180 EUR/species to cover the cost of the review and risk analysis, plus a 25 EUR administration charge. Any literature available on the species (scientific publications, etc.) that is not easily accessible should be submitted together with the application. Risk analysis results are sent to the applicant and nominated CB.

3. Audit preparation and execution

   On receipt of the risk analysis results, the CB will provide the applicant with an offer for audit and certification plus related documents for preparation of the audit. The cost of the FairWild audit may depend on the number and extent of species to be certified, their classification into low-, medium- or high-risk species, and the number of days needed for travel, audit and certification. Once the applicant has accepted the offer, a contract for audit and certification is signed with the respective CB and the audit is conducted by a FairWild approved auditor within the agreed time frame.

4. Certification

   The auditor sends the report to the CB for evaluation. The results of evaluation are received plus a list of any corrective measures which need to be implemented. Possible results of evaluation are:

   a) The collection operation fully complies with all requirements => the FairWild Certificate and audit report are sent to the company which owns the certificate (the “mandator”, the company that has paid for audit).
   b) The collection operation complies with most requirements but there are some points that must be improved within a given timeline => the FairWild Certificate is sent to the company which owns the certificate, together with indication of corrective measures.
   c) The collection operation does not yet comply with the minimum requirements => the company receives a list of corrective measures but no certificate. The company has the chance to still receive the FairWild Certificate by implementing the suggested corrective measures.
   d) Evaluation results show that certification of the targeted plants is not at all possible => the company receives the results of evaluation, but certification is not possible. In such a case, the FairWild Foundation may propose measures, including field activities, which the collection operation may undertake or promote to improve the potential for FairWild certification.

5. Renewal of certification

   The FairWild certificate is usually valid for 15 months from the time of issuance of the certificate. However, audits are required annually, based on harvest times (i.e. before expiry of the current certificate). By beginning of the year after first certification, the certified company or its mandator automatically receives an offer for renewal of certification by the CB. Then steps 3 to 4 above are repeated.

6. Additional target species

   Should additional plants be targeted for FairWild certification, the company should inform the CB well in advance of the audit. The list of plants plus related information must be submitted to the FairWild Foundation along with payment for review and risk analysis (as in step 2 above). Again, this should be done at least 3 months in advance of the proposed audit date, to allow time for the work to be completed, and audit plans to be adjusted based on the outcome of risk classification. Plants usually cannot be added to the FairWild certificate during the course of the year; only at the time of the audit.

Risk classification of target plants

The level of management and monitoring effort needed to ensure sustainable collection greatly depends on biological characteristics of the target species, such as its life form, the part collected, and its abundance.

- For widely available plant species and populations with a high likelihood of sustainable wild harvest ("low-risk plants") it will be relatively easy for collection operations to meet the requirements of the FairWild Standard.
- For plant species and populations with a low likelihood of sustainable harvest ("high-risk plants") the minimum requirements for information quality, monitoring, and overall management rigour will be greater in order for collection operators to meet the requirements of the FairWild Standard.

Following a simple categorisation based on a set of selected biological factors, three risk categories are applied to species targeted for FairWild certification. The methodology used to make these risk classifications has been developed by the IUCN-SSC Medicinal Plant Specialist Group (MPSG), in consultation with the Technical Committee of the FairWild Foundation.

Low risk	• high likelihood that collection is sustainable, • relatively low complexity of monitoring and management required
Medium risk	• medium likelihood that harvest is sustainable • careful attention to monitoring and management required
High risk	• low likelihood of sustainable wild harvest, high risk that collection is not sustainable • more rigorous/precise monitoring and management → higher minimum requirements for certification than for low- and medium-risk plants.

The risk analysis carried out at the application stage is a desk-based review of information available on the selected biological characteristics that contribute to risk of unsustainable wild collection. The main purpose of the risk analysis is to provide guidance to the CB and collection operation on the degree of management and monitoring rigor needed to meet the requirements of the FairWild Standard (i.e., whether an additional set of performance indicators for high-risk species should be applied). The risk classification is specific to the species, plant part and geographic area concerned (i.e. root harvesting may be classified differently than collection of leaves or fruit).

If the CB or collection operator feel that the result of the classification does not represent the situation in the field, or if a high number of characteristics were rated as "unknown" in the risk analysis (owing to lack of published information), the risk classification may be reviewed by the FairWild Foundation if additional relevant information becomes available (e.g. through well-documented results of resource assessment / management planning, additional scientific publications). A fee may be charged to compensate the reviewer. Only in exceptional circumstances should a review of a current risk classification be requested before the first audit has been carried out, or more frequently than once every two years.

For more information on risk analysis, refer to the explanatory notes available from the FairWild Foundation website or contact the FairWild Foundation Secretariat.