

General information regarding elements of the certification process is described below. A degree of flexibility and options in the certification process are available so please feel free to contact us to discuss how we can better serve your organization.

SAI Global Full Service Team

Upon selection of SAI Global as your Registrar and submission of the signed Application for Certification, SAI Global will assign your dedicated service team.

Your service team will be selected to suit your specific industry and will consist of an Account Manager, a Regional Account Representative, a Lead Auditor and other team members as needed to support your certification. The roles of each member of your service team are as follows: your Account Manager will manage the business relationship, including contract negotiation and changes to your certification requirements; your Regional Account Representative will manage the back office processes including scheduling and customer service related to certificates and invoicing; your Lead Auditor will manage the delivery relationship. As your primary contact with SAI Global, the Lead Auditor assigned provides you with ongoing industry developments and interpretations and ensures coordination of all audit-related activities for your company. If additional audit team members are required, they are selected from our experienced auditor base. Your audits will be consistent in approach, technically sound and relevant to your business needs.

Introductory Visit – (Optional) (formally referred to as a Preliminary Assessment)

An introductory visit is an on-site assessment conducted prior to the Stage 1 Certification Audit. The introductory visit allows for the identification of any major implementation issues and feedback regarding your implementation readiness. We recommend that your preliminary assessment be scheduled at least 30 days prior to the Stage 1 Audit.

Certification Audit

The goal of the certification audit is to assess the effective implementation of your management system to the requirements of the standard and your management system documentation. The audit is conducted in two Stages.

The Stage 1 audit is generally conducted on site and consists of a documentation review and establishes the audit scope and audit plan.

The Stage 2 audit is conducted on site and consists of a review to ensure that the management system has been fully implemented and is in conformance to the requirements of the standard and normative documents.

All audit activities are mutually planned with your assigned Auditor prior to the audit. An audit plan is provided detailing the scope and objectives of both the Stage 1 and Stage 2 audit, the audit team members, the processes to be audited and the timelines. While onsite your audit team will work to verify that the management system meets the requirements of the standard and your system documentation by assessing objective evidence. At the conclusion of the onsite audit, you will be immediately informed of the results. A formal audit report will be issued after the audit. The report includes information relative to positive aspects of the system, opportunities for improvement and system non-conformances.

Please note that if you request the option of having the Stage 1 and Stage 2 Audits conducted back to back a potential risk is present in that unacceptable Stage 1 audit results may require the cancellation of the Stage 2 audit with the application of cancellation fees as outlined in the terms and conditions.

Stage 1 and Stage 2 audits are mandatory for SFI 2015-2019 Forest Management Standard and SFI 2015-2019 Fiber Sourcing Standard.

SFI 2015-2019 Chain of custody standard and the Section 3 Appendix 1 of Rules for use of SFI certified sourcing label only require Stage 2 audit.

Certificate Issuance

Upon successful completion of the certification process (including resolution of non-conformances if applicable), your Team Leader compiles a Certification Package for review by our Certification Team. Upon completion of the review, the Certification Team prepares and forwards your Certificate of Registration. Your certificate will include details such as: legal company name, site address, and standard, scope of certification, the initial certification date and the expiry date.

The official certificate is forwarded, along with a link to our marketing website. The Marketing tools will provide you with useful ideas on how to capitalize on your ISO certification, provide you with the official 'SAI Global registered mark' artwork and the guidelines of use. Your successful certification will also be published in our online Directory of Registered Companies, at <http://www.saiglobal.com>

Surveillance Audits

Surveillance audits are periodic audits of your management system. The purpose of surveillance audits is to ensure the management system is being maintained during the effective period of certification. To provide you with as much flexibility as possible, SAI Global offers two surveillance frequency options: Annual and Semi-annual.

- Semi-Annual audits are conducted every six months. This option offers more frequent interaction with your audit team, to ensure your management system is working efficiently and to facilitate the rate of continuous improvement.
- Annual audits are conducted every twelve months, as a minimum.

Re-certification audit

Re-certification Audits are scheduled before the 5-year mark, usually 3 months before the certificate expiry date. All SFI certificates are issued for 5 years.

The purpose is to ensure:

- The effectiveness of the management system in its entirety in the light of internal and external changes and its continued relevance and applicability to the scope of the Certification
- Client demonstrated commitment to maintain the effectiveness and improvement of the management system in order to enhance overall performance.
- Whether the operation of the certified management system contributes to the achievement of the organization's policy and objectives

Conditions of Certification specific to SFI Chain of custody and SFI Certified sourcing label – Based on ISO 17065:2012 requirements Clause 4.1.2.2

Client obligations:

- a) the client always fulfils the certification requirements, including implementing appropriate changes when they are communicated by the certification body;
- b) if the certification applies to ongoing production, the certified product continues to fulfil the product requirements;
- c) the client makes all necessary arrangements for
 - 1) the conduct of the evaluation and surveillance (if required), including provision for examining documentation and records, and access to the relevant equipment, location(s), area(s), personnel, and client's subcontractors;
 - 2) investigation of complaints;
 - 3) the participation of observers, if applicable;
- d) the client makes claims regarding certification consistent with the scope of certification;
- e) the client does not use its product certification in such a manner as to bring SAI Global into disrepute and does not make any statement regarding its product certification that SAI Global may consider misleading or unauthorized;
- f) upon suspension, withdrawal, or termination of certification, the client discontinues its use of all advertising matter that contains any reference thereto and takes action as required by SAI Global;

g) if the client provides copies of the certification documents to others, the documents shall be reproduced in their entirety or as specified by SAI Global;

h) in making reference to its product certification in communication media such as documents, brochures or advertising, the client complies with the SFI requirements

i) the client complies with any requirements that may be prescribed by SFI relating to the use of marks of conformity, and on information related to the product;

NOTE See also ISO/IEC 17030, ISO/IEC Guide 23 and ISO Guide 27.

j) the client keeps a record of all complaints made known to it relating to compliance with certification requirements and makes these records available to SAI Global when requested, and

1) takes appropriate action with respect to such complaints and any deficiencies found in products that affect compliance with the requirements for certification;

2) documents the actions taken;

k) the client informs SAI Global, without delay, of changes that may affect its ability to conform with the certification requirements.

NOTE Examples of changes can include the following:

- the legal, commercial, organizational status or ownership,
- organization and management (e.g. key managerial, decision-making or technical staff),
- modifications to the product or the production method,
- contact address and production sites,
- major changes to the management system.