



## REGISTRATION & CERTIFICATION PROCEDURE

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### CERTIFHY EU RFNBO VOLUNTARY SCHEME

Version number 1.6

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## Contents

1.	STATUS OF THIS DOCUMENT .....	4
2.	PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT .....	6
3.	SCOPE AND NORMATIVE REFERENCES .....	7
4.	GENERAL PROCEDURE .....	8
5.	REGISTRATION .....	10
5.1	Registration requirements .....	10
5.2	Documented Profile .....	11
5.3	Confidentiality and data protection .....	12
5.4	Exclusion of Economic Operators .....	13
6.	CERTIFICATION PROCESS.....	14
6.1	Preparing the Audit.....	14
6.2	During the Audit Process.....	15
6.3	After the Audit .....	16

# 1. Status of this document

This document, 'Registration & certification procedure', is part of the CertifHy EU RFNBO Voluntary Scheme.

All CertifHy EU RFNBO Voluntary Scheme documents in their latest applicable version are valid and must be considered for the scope of application.

In the event of conflict between the text of this document and the CertifHy EU RFNBO Voluntary Scheme "Scheme Document", the "Scheme Document" shall always take precedence.

## 1.1 Change History

Version	Date	Description
1.0	28.02.2023	Version 1.0
1.1	10.07.2023	Version 1.1: Adjustments following the publication of an updated version of the Assessment Protocol for Voluntary Schemes for RFNBOs)
1.2	15.01.2024	Version 1.2: Adjustments taking up the Q&A Document of the European Commission of 26.07.2023)
1.3	02.05.2024	Version 1.3: Adjustments taking up the Q&A Document of the European Commission of 14.03.2024 and feedback from DG ENER
1.4	19.07.2024	Version 1.4: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Additional requirements on integrity rules and processes</li><li>- Clarity on avoiding conflicts of interest</li><li>- Adjustments to requirements for Auditors</li></ul>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Clarifications on training requirements</li></ul>
1.5	25.07.2024	Version 1.5:  Minor amendment on the competence management of Certification Bodies
1.6	31.10.2024	Version 1.6:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Editorial adjustments</li><li>- Update of Figure 2</li></ul>



## 2. Purpose of this document

The Purpose of this document is to describe the conditions Economic Operators shall meet when going through certification according to the CertifHy EU RFNBO Voluntary Scheme, and describes requirements related to the application for the certification, the preparation of the Audit as well as the responsibilities during and after the Audit.



### **3. Scope and Normative References**

This procedure applies to all Economic Operators intending to be certified under the CertifHy EU RFNBO Voluntary Scheme for RFNBOs. All provisions of this document are to be complied with separately for each location/ installation.

## 4. General procedure

The overall procedure to follow for being certified according to the requirements of the CertifHy EU RFNBO Voluntary Scheme is summarized in Figure 1 (for illustration purposes only).

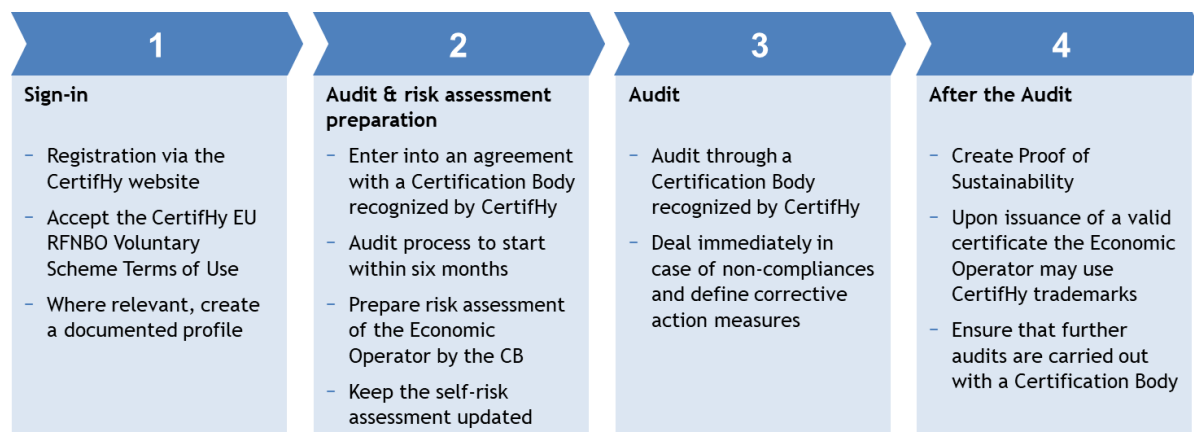


Figure 1: CertifHy EU RFNBO Voluntary Scheme registration and auditing process

The certificate's term (period of validity) under the CertifHy EU RFNBO Voluntary Scheme is one year.

Figure 2 illustrates the different types of certifications possible under the CertifHy EU RFNBO Voluntary Scheme, which consists of:

- Certification Audit
- Re-certification Audit
- Surveillance Audit

Economic Operators seeking to extend their certification shall undergo Re-certification prior to the expiry of the certificate.

Certification Bodies are entitled to conduct announced or unannounced surveillance Audits at any time during the certificate's validity period. If necessary, CertifHy may request Certification Bodies to conduct surveillance Audits at any time during the certificate's period of validity.



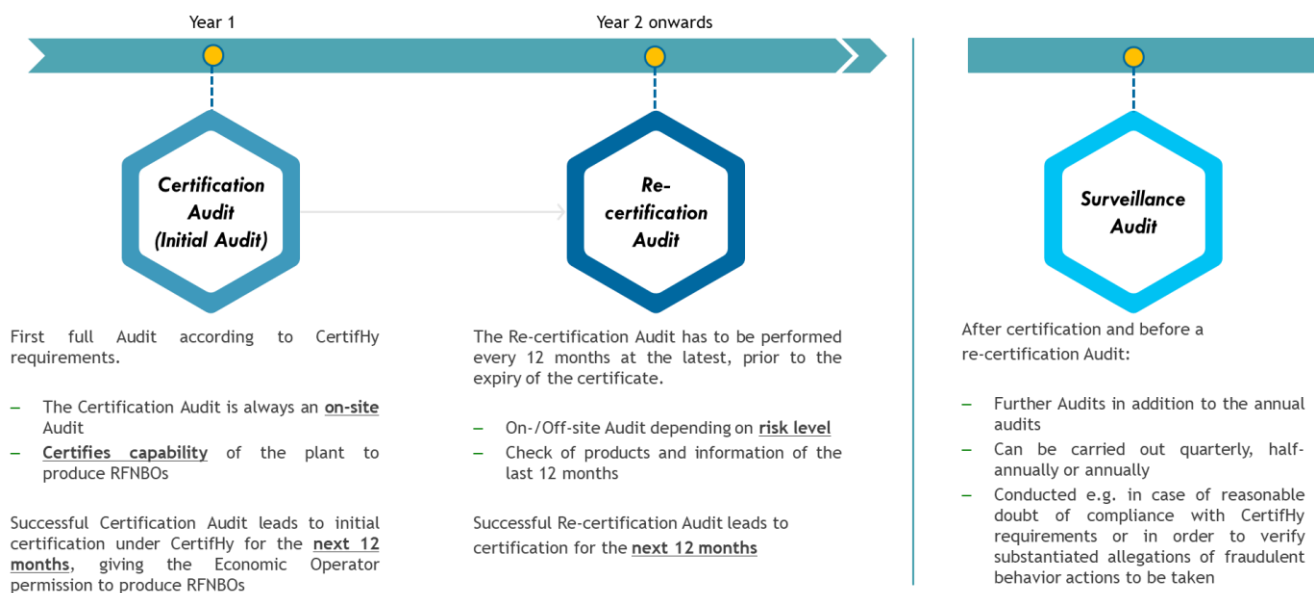


Figure 2: Audit cycle under the CertifHy EU RFNBO Voluntary Scheme



## 5. Registration

### 5.1 Registration requirements

To register as an RFNBO System User, the Economic Operator shall follow the procedure indicated on CertifHy's website & accept / sign the CertifHy EU RFNBO Voluntary Scheme Terms of Use.

The following information is necessary for the Economic Operator to register:

- Information about the Economic Operator (e.g. name, address, etc.)
- Address of the processing unit to be certified
- Legal Representative of the company
- Contact person (which will be listed in the CertifHy database as main contact for all matters related to the CertifHy EU RFNBO Voluntary Scheme)
- The certification scope (including input materials and certified outputs)
- Whether they or their legal predecessor are currently participating in another Voluntary Scheme or have participated in another Voluntary Scheme in the last 5 years
- Decisions to suspend or withdraw their certificates in the last 5 years
- Whether the Economic Operator withdrew from a scheme before the first Re-certification Audit.

The CertifHy EU RFNBO Voluntary Scheme Terms of Use include the following conditions:

- Evidence demonstrating that the Economic Operator's activities have not been suspended as a result of administrative or legal action taken by a public authority or any other group or individual
- A confirmation that the Economic Operator supports the CertifHy Voluntary Scheme and the CertifHy Voluntary Scheme requirements
- A commitment to fully comply with all CertifHy Voluntary Scheme requirements that apply, as specified in the certification scope
- Assurance that no social or environmental dispute or conflict, including legal or criminal proceeding occurred, which may reflect badly on or affect the reputation of CertifHy, or which go against the vision and mission of CertifHy
- A list of all parties the Economic Operator has contracts with and that are relevant for the certification scope
- Circumstances under which the CertifHy Scheme Operator may suspend or terminate the Terms of Use
- The right for the CertifHy Scheme Operator to publish CertifHy EU RFNBO certificates and the summary Audit report on the CertifHy website.

The registration request from the Economic Operator is subject to verification and approval by the CertifHy Scheme Operator through a due diligence process. This process involves:

- Each Economic Operator must fill in a KYC (*“Know Your Customer”*) questionnaire. The KYC Questionnaire includes questions related to the identity, financials, motivations and certification history, including the name of previously used EU Voluntary Schemes, prior relationship with Certification Bodies, the list of valid, withdrawn and suspended certificates of other voluntary certification schemes.
- In the case where an Economic Operator has used another EU Voluntary Scheme for the purpose of RFNBO certification, it must agree to make all relevant information available to the Certification Body. This includes the mass balance data, sustainability declarations, GHG calculations and the auditing reports from previous audits as well as from other sustainability certification schemes used. This agreement will be required as part of the registration process.
- The questionnaire and registration request are reviewed by the CertifHy Scheme Operator and checked against public data to assess the veracity of the Economic Operator’s statements.
- The CertifHy Scheme Operator applies the principles set out in Chapter 8 “Quality and Risk Management” from the CertifHy EU RFNBO Scheme Document. Special attention is given to the certification history of the applicant as well as the risk of fraud and / or conflict of interest.
- Following its own internal assessment, the CertifHy Scheme Operator may approve or reject the registration request from the applicant.
- The CertifHy Scheme Operator may consult the CertifHy Steering Committee whenever an arbitration is necessary.

The Economic Operator must commit to share with the Certification Body all relevant information including the mass balance data, sustainability declarations, GHG calculations and the auditing reports from previous Audits as well as from other sustainability certification schemes used.

If the participation of an Economic Operator, or its legal predecessors, in another Voluntary Schemes is suspended or terminated due to the withdrawal of its certificate following a confirmed critical non-conformity, for example, the CertifHy Scheme Operator may refuse the participation of that Economic Operator for at least 2 years following the suspension or termination of participation in the other Voluntary Scheme.

## 5.2 Documented Profile

The Economic Operator shall, upon request, provide and keep updated a documented profile of all activities and operations under the certification scope that are affecting, or could affect how CertifHy EU RFNBO Voluntary Scheme requirements are put in place. The Economic Operator’s profile shall include, at a minimum, the following information:

- A description of its legal status.

- A list of the governing bodies and a description of their role and responsibilities within the organisation.
- Names, details, descriptions, organisational charts and any other relevant information about subsidiaries, branch offices, connected organisations, other organisations or individuals contracted or otherwise involved, operational structures, sites, facilities, processing and production units, supply chain structures, authorities, functions, roles and responsibilities, and if it applies, management systems including policies, procedures, and controlling systems and risk-management systems.

The Economic Operator shall define the certification scope, including:

- The product(s) for which the certification is intended
- The sites and facilities that the certification is covering

Additionally, the Economic Operator shall provide, at a minimum, the following information:

- The name and details of the management representative who has overall responsibility for compliance with all CertifHy EU RFNBO Voluntary Scheme requirements that apply.
- The details of all the operation sites, subsidiaries, branch offices, individuals, and supply chain structures where CertifHy EU RFNBO-compliant products are produced, processed, acquired, handled or forwarded, as listed in the certification scope, including name of location.

The Economic Operator shall have contracts with all the groups, people, and structures that are involved in the certification scope. These contracts shall specifically refer to the commitment of the groups, people, and structures to put in place and comply with the CertifHy EU RFNBO Voluntary Scheme requirements. The commitment to put in place and comply with CertifHy EU RFNBO Voluntary Scheme requirements shall include a commitment to provide unrestricted access by CertifHy Scheme Operator personnel or Certification Bodies and their Auditors to any of these groups, people and locations, as well as to all relevant documents for the purpose of an Audit.

## 5.3 Confidentiality and data protection

The CertifHy Scheme Operator collects, stores, and uses personal data insofar as this is permitted by legal provisions or required by the legislator. The CertifHy Scheme Operator will treat personal data as confidential and according to the provisions of the applicable data protection law.

The CertifHy Scheme Operator shall exclusively store and process the Economic Operator's data for the purposes resulting from the CertifHy EU RFNBO Voluntary Scheme "Terms of Use". Upon request, the CertifHy Scheme Operator shall at any time provide the Economic Operator with information about the data stored and associated with the Economic Operator. Regarding corresponding requests for information and questions, the Economic Operator may contact the CertifHy Scheme Operator in writing, by e-mail or fax.



## 5.4 Exclusion of Economic Operators

CertifHy can exclude Economic Operators from the certification scheme under the following cases:

- a) They do not disclose the information listed in chapter 5.1 and 5.2 of this document.
- b) They or their legal predecessor failed the initial Audit under another Voluntary Scheme, unless such initial Audit took place more than 3 years before the application or if in the meantime the other scheme ceased its certification activities, which prevented the Economic Operator for re-applying. Where the CertifHy Scheme Operator accepts the justification of the Economic Operators and decides to assess their application, the scope of the initial Audit shall be adjusted to cover all relevant issues and specifically focus on the shortcomings identified in the initial Audit that they failed in the other Voluntary Scheme.
- c) They or their legal predecessor withdrew from another scheme before the first Re-certification Audit took place, unless the operator can prove that it had a valid reason for doing so. Where the CertifHy Scheme Operator accepts the justification provided by the Economic Operator, the scope of the initial Audit shall be adjusted to cover all relevant issues of the Re-certification Audit.




## 6. Certification Process

### 6.1 Preparing the Audit

To prepare for Audits, the Economic Operator shall do the following:

- Enter into an agreement with a Certification Body recognised by CertifHy for Audits against CertifHy EU RFNBO Voluntary Scheme requirements through an official Audit process.
- Make sure the first Audit process starts within six months of the plant registration, and that this first Audit is an on-site Audit.
- Make sure that the management representative is kept fully informed about putting in place CertifHy EU RFNBO Voluntary Scheme requirements. The Economic Operator shall also ensure that records are complete and up to date, covering all parts of complying with CertifHy EU RFNBO Voluntary Scheme requirements and that these records are kept for at least five years after the Audit has been finalised.
- Disclose to the Certification Body and the Auditor all relevant information, including the mass balance data and the Auditing reports and, where applicable, any decisions to suspend or withdraw the Economic Operator certificates taken within the last 5 years.
- Disclose whether the Economic Operator, or its legal predecessor, withdrew from a certification scheme before the first Re-certification Audit.
- Make sure that the management representative has all the systems and methods they need to fully comply with CertifHy EU RFNBO Voluntary Scheme requirements.
- Inform the CertifHy Scheme Operator and the Certification Body immediately about any changes to the Economic Operator's ownership and legal structure, business scope, organisational structure, and management responsibilities as well as any changes to the documented profile and the certification scope.
- Prepare the risk assessment by the Certification Body, the result of which represents the basis for the intensity of the Audit and influences the size of the sample.
- The Economic Operator shall keep updated the risk self-assessment (see also CertifHy EU RFNBO Voluntary Scheme document 'Risk Management'), in conformity with the procedure of the CertifHy EU RFNBO Voluntary Scheme for Risk Management and inform the CertifHy Scheme Operator and the Certification Body immediately about any changes to the results of the risk self-assessment.
- The Economic Operator shall carry out and keep updated a self-evaluation of the operations as defined in the certification scope, to comply with CertifHy EU RFNBO Voluntary Scheme requirements. The Economic Operator shall include in the self-evaluation all the requirements the CertifHy EU RFNBO Voluntary Scheme asks for in the applicable documents. Where available, the Economic Operator should use indicators and checklists to demonstrate that they are complying with CertifHy EU RFNBO Voluntary Scheme requirements. If necessary, the Economic Operator may introduce further indicators and checkpoints. The Economic Operator shall clearly indicate any extra indicators and checkpoints in the self-evaluation.



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- The Economic Operator shall provide the Certification Body with a risk self-assessment upfront for the Audit, to allow the definition of a risk profile.

## 6.2 During the Audit Process

When the Audit process is being conducted by the Certification Body, the Economic Operator shall do the following:

- Present all relevant documented evidence to the Auditor.
- Deal immediately with any issues relating to not complying with CertifHy EU RFNBO Voluntary Scheme requirements ('non-conformity') which may be identified during the Audit.
- Assess the root causes for major Non-conformities to identify the source or origin of Non-conformities, as well as any contributing factors involved.
- Define corrective action measures and their timelines (activities that the Economic Operator is planning to take) to address Non-conformities and their root-causes.
- Submit a corrective action plan and the actions the Economic Operator has taken to deal with Non-conformities to the Certification Body for evaluation and approval.
- Provide any additional information as requested by the Certification Body to resolve Non-conformities.
- Major Non-conformities shall be corrected within 40 days of the Audit closing meeting, minor Non-conformities shall be corrected according to the corrective action plan within 12 months of the Audit closing meeting.

The Certification Body will evaluate the corrective action plan and communicate to the Economic Operator whether the corrective action plan is accepted. The Certification Body will also monitor and evaluate all actions taken by the Economic Operator to address Non-conformities.

The Certification Body will issue a certificate of compliance, unless major or critical Non-conformities (see CertifHy EU RFNBO Voluntary Scheme document 'Risk Management') are found in the operations, which cannot be corrected within the period for the implementation of corrective measures.

The Certification Body will document the Audit findings and conclusions in a public summary Audit report. It is the responsibility of the Certification Body to ensure that the public summary Audit report does not include any element of confidential nature.

The CertifHy EU RFNBO Voluntary Scheme certificate and the public summary Audit report will be published on the CertifHy website.

In case the Economic Operator disagrees with the results of the Audit by the Certification Body, they may appeal against the decision following the grievance procedure of the CertifHy EU RFNBO Voluntary Scheme (see CertifHy EU RFNBO Voluntary Scheme document 'Grievance, Whistleblowing & Appeals procedure').



## 6.3 After the Audit

If the Economic Operator fails to achieve a successful Audit, the Economic Operator shall make sure they are audited again by the Certification Body within six months; otherwise, they will lose their registration as Economic Operator.

Upon issuance of a valid certificate by the Certification Body, the Economic Operator shall do the following:

- Use CertifHy trademarks according to the requirements defined by the CertifHy EU RFNBO Voluntary Scheme (see the CertifHy EU RFNBO Voluntary Scheme document 'Logos, Labels & Claims');
- Make sure further Audits are carried out with the Certification Body, in accordance with the agreed Audit schedule and before the valid certificate runs out;
- Not carry out or take part in any activity which could damage the reputation or go against the vision and mission of CertifHy.

Economic Operators may only make actual GHG values claims after their capability to conduct actual value calculations has been verified by an Audit.

The CertifHy Scheme Operator and the Certification Body must immediately be informed if CertifHy trademarks or claims are being misused. Misuse includes cases where CertifHy EU RFNBO Voluntary Scheme requirements are not being met or are at risk of not being met. This applies to all operations, whether or not they are within the certification scope, and whether or not they are formally engaged with the CertifHy EU RFNBO Voluntary Scheme or any other party.

Whenever new operations are to be included in the certification scope, the Economic Operator shall:

- Have valid contracts in place in line with the requirements described in Chapter 5.2;
- Carry out a risk self-assessment in line with the requirements set out in the CertifHy EU RFNBO Voluntary Scheme document 'Risk Management';
- Carry out a self-evaluation in line with Chapter 6.1; and
- Submit the amended certification scope to the Certification Body for evaluation.

The Certification Body will assess the documentation received and determine the type of Audit needed to confirm the amended scope. For example, for industrial facilities added to the scope of certification, the evaluation will include an on-site Audit.

Following the evaluation, the Certification Body will issue the revised formal Audit and certification documentation.

Only after the new operations have been approved by the Certification Body to the certification scope, those operations are considered to be part of the CertifHy EU RFNBO Voluntary Scheme certification scope.





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