

ISCC 201-6 GUIDANCE DOCUMENT: CERTIFICATION PROCESS FOR WILD COLLECTION OF SHEA

Version 1.0



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1 Introduction

ISCC is a certification system to prove the ecologically and socially sustainable production of biomass, the traceability through the supply chain and savings of greenhouse gas emissions. In the following, guidance is given for the identification and certification of shea supply chains.

Introduction to shea

Shea is traditionally used for many purposes such as food, cosmetic and medicine. Residues from processing can even be used as construction material for local housings. Increasingly, shea (mostly the kernels) are exported as feedstock for applications in the food and cosmetics industry. It may also be used for other technical applications, e.g. the production of biodiesel.

The certification of shea supply chains is supported by ISCC due to the manifold positive effects inherent to shea. Shea trees only grow in Africa, in a belt stretching from Sudan to Senegal. The picking and further processing of the wild growing shea fruits is traditionally done by local women for whom this work means an important source of income to support their families. The shea, which is not sold, is used as feedstock for several applications in the local households, e.g. as nutrition, medicine or for personal care.

Origin and tradition of shea

Shea trees can be encountered in dry savannas, forests and parklands. Shea trees are traditionally not cultivated but are wild growing. They reach a height of up to 12 to 20 metres and have short and thick branches. The cork bark is greyish, deeply sprung and very resistant to bush fires. Shea trees fruit once a year and develop the shea nut. The shea nut is a greenish-yellow berry and is picked between June and August when fully mature.

Characteristics of shea trees and nuts

Shea trees can become more than hundred years old. The cultivation of shea trees is little studied and hardly worthwhile since it may take up to 15 to 25 years for shea trees to bear fruits. The common practice is the collection of shea nuts from wild populations. Due to their economic value, the trees are usually well protected. Ripe shea nuts fall from the tree under their own weight. Local women traditionally do the picking and further processing. The women either work on individual basis or in family/ village groups but not on basis of employment contracts. An average of 15 to 20 kilograms of fresh fruit can be collected from a tree. Kernels of ripe fruits may contain around 50% fat, which makes shea one of the most important oil crops in Africa.

Cultivation and harvest of shea

After collection the women manually process the shea. The fruits are cooked and sun-dried to remove the kernel. To extract the oil and produce shea butter the kernels are crushed and further cooked.

Processing

Despite the above described positive characteristics of shea some sustainability concerns remain and should be addressed with the certification of the shea supply chain. These are mainly social issues including:

Social Concerns

- > Health and safety (e.g. indoor air pollution through solid fuel used for cooking and heating, occupational dusts and fumes, snake bites, boiling burns)

- > Child labor and inadequate access to education for girls helping their families collecting and processing shea
- > Access to markets and fair payment (dependence of women on traders to buy their products, lack of bargaining power and unawareness of market prices, income of women below poverty threshold)

During certification auditors should place particular attention that these social issues are properly addressed. Regional or local NGOs may be useful information sources. NGOs and company projects may address and support women's empowerment, labor rights, health and safety issues and the development of rural communities. The requirements of ISCC Principle 4 (*"Biomass production shall not violate human rights, labor rights or land rights. It shall promote responsible labour conditions and workers' health, safety and welfare and shall be based on responsible community relation"*) would need to be fulfilled if applicable. Several requirements only apply for employed farm workers.

Relevant ISCC requirements for a certification of shea

Due to the fact that shea trees are not cultivated and land use change does not take place, ISCC Principle 1 (*"Biomass shall not be produced on land with high biodiversity value or high carbon stock. HCV areas shall be protected"*) is normally fulfilled. The collection from wild population and non-cultivation of shea also means that the requirements with regard to agriculture and good management practice are not relevant. ISCC Principles 2, 3, 5 and 6 do not need to be checked.

2 Scope

This guidance document is solely applicable in case of wild growing of shea. The scope of the document at hand is to give guidance on the identification and certification of shea supply chains from the processing of shea in conversion units up to the wild collection of the shea. Auditors should follow this guidance when auditing elements of the shea supply chain.

Scope of the document is guidance on certification of shea

The certification of elements of the shea supply chains would be relevant for the exported shea for biodiesel (ISCC EU) as well as for food and cosmetics application (ISCC PLUS). Shea that is used locally does not need to be covered by certification.

The guidance on the certification of the supply chain of shea might also be applied to other wild growing crops for which similar characteristics with regard to ecological and social criteria apply.

3 Normative References

In general, all relevant ISCC documents have to be applied for the scope of application. The normative references display the documents whose contents are linked and have to be considered conjointly.

Relevant documents

Relevant references:

- ISCC 201 System Basics
- ISCC 202 Sustainability Requirements
- ISCC 203 Traceability and Chain of Custody
- ISCC 204 Audit Requirements and Risk Management
- ISCC 205 GHG Emissions
- ISCC 207 Risk Management
- ISCC 206 Group Certification

4 Elements of the shea supply chain and certification requirements

The women collecting shea often sell the shea kernels directly in their villages to bush agents (traders) who deliver the kernels to market places to be sold to further traders. Often, many middlemen are involved between the collection of the shea and the crushing of the kernels. This makes the supply chains hard to trace and may lead not only to a lack of quality control but also a smaller share of income for the collecting women.

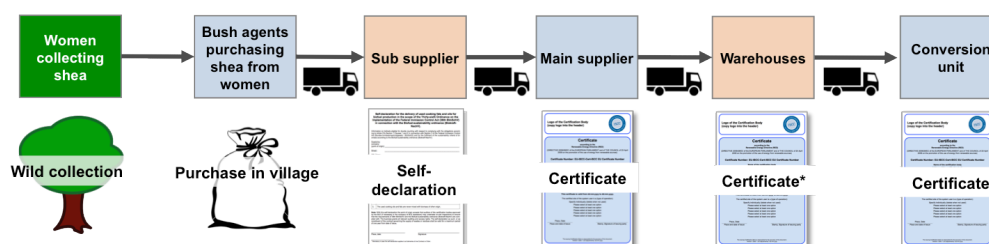
Traceability

Typical elements of shea supply chains delivering products to export markets are:

Elements of a shea supply chain

- > Women collecting the shea
- > Bush agents
- > Sub supplier
- > First gathering point / main supplier
- > Warehouses
- > Conversion units

Simplified shea supply chain



A typical supply chain

* May be covered by main supplier certificate

The following elements of the shea supply chain must receive certificates:
Main supplier / FGP, warehouses, and conversion units.

1 Conversion Units

Conversion units are kernel crushing plants, refineries, biodiesel plants and other processing factories. This includes any kind of conversion or treatment where the physical or chemical properties of the incoming materials are changed. Each conversion unit has to be certified individually and is subject to an on-site audit.

Audit requirements:

- > Management system
- > Traceability/ mass balance
- > Greenhouse gas emissions (Note: For shea no default values are available.)

Audit requirements conversion units

2 Warehouses

Warehouses store sustainable material. All warehouses storing sustainable material have to be covered by a certificate. Independent warehouses have to be certified individually. Dependent warehouses can be covered by the certification of the main supplier/ FGP or conversions units.

Dependent warehouses receive and store material on demand of the main supplier/ FGP and do not trade the biomass. A sample of warehouses acting on behalf of the main supplier/ FGP or conversion unit has to be audited.

Independent warehouses receive, store and dispatch the material on their own account and risk. A group certification of independent warehouses (logistic network) is possible. The requirements of ISCC system document 206 apply.

Audit requirements:

- > Management system (only relevant for independently certified warehouses)
- > Traceability/ mass balance
- > Greenhouse gas emissions for transport

Audit requirements warehouse

3 Main supplier / FGP

The main supplier may act on a regional or national level in the countries where the shea is collected. The main supplier is regarded as first gathering point (FGP). The first gathering point receives the shea from the sub supplier. The first gathering point has to sign a contractual agreement with the sub supplier stating that the sub supplier is purchasing the shea on behalf of the first gathering point.

Additionally, the first gathering point has to keep a copy of the self-declarations signed by each sub supplier (see also point 3).

An important task of the first gathering point is the determination and documentation of the amount of incoming and outgoing material. Each first gathering point has to be certified individually and is subject to an on-site audit.

Audit requirements:

- > **Management system**
The requirements according to ISCC System Document 203 and respective audit procedures apply (e.g. list of all sub supplier, self-declarations from sub supplier, appointed member of staff responsible for sustainability requirements, conduction of internal audits, appropriate documentation and records).
- > **Traceability/ mass balance**
The requirements according to ISCC System Document 203 and respective audit procedures apply (e.g. complete and consistent information on in and outgoing material, fulfillment of ISCC requirements for delivery documents, correct calculation of mass balance).
- > **Greenhouse gas emissions**
Relevant are the greenhouse gas emissions for transport up to the first gathering point. No emissions occur for the growing of shea since there is no use of fertilizer and diesel as compared to conventional agriculture. Neither are there emissions related to the collection of shea since this is done manually. For the cooking of shea in villages untreated wood is normally used, thus the impact on the GHG emission balance is zero.
- > **Audit of sample of sub supplier**
Audit of the sample of dependent warehouses (if applicable)

*Audit requirements
main supplier
/ FGP*

4 Sub supplier

Sub supplier act on a regional level in the countries where shea is collected. They purchase the shea from bush agents. Sub suppliers have to sign a contractual agreement with the first gathering point/ main supplier stating that the shea is purchased on behalf of the first gathering point/ main supplier.

Each sub supplier has to sign a self-declaration for wild collection of shea. A template of the self-declaration is provided by ISCC.

Content of the self-declaration for wild collection

- > Statement that shea grows ecologically sustainable. The sustainability criteria according to Art. 17, 2009/28/EC are fulfilled.

*Sub supplier
sign a self-
declaration*

- > The wild collection is socially sustainable: working conditions are safe, there is no indication of forced labour, no indication of child labour as per ILO C138 and C182, children helping their families have adequate access to school education.
- > If compliance with social sustainability is covered e.g. by surveillance through NGOs or company projects, the names have to be stated.

A sample of the sub supplier has to be checked as part of the certification audit of the first gathering point. If the auditor is in doubt about the coverage of the social sustainability, an on-site visit of villages where the shea is collected may be necessary.

Audit requirements:

- > Examination of signed contractual agreement and copy of signed self-declaration.
- > Examination of records of types and amounts of input material (e.g. shea kernels or shea butter), names and places of their supplier (bush agents)
- > Examination of the evidence that social sustainability is covered, e.g. by NGO or company project (name of NGO, company, documents, etc.)

Audit requirements sub supplier

5 Bush agents

Bush agents act on local level. They purchase the shea in the villages from the women and sell it to the sub supplier. Bush agents do not receive a certificate but may be visited and interviewed by the auditor to check whether in particular social issues (as indicated above) are properly addressed.

Bush agents may be visited to check compliance

6 Women collecting the shea

Women do not receive a certificate but may be visited by an auditor to check the compliance with social sustainability requirements. A helpful indication for the compliance with social sustainability requirements could be surveys carried out by NGOs or research bodies.

Women may be visited to check compliance