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ITR-EEC-RG-03

Rules for the Authorisation of Biosphere Certification Bodies

Document Control

Scheme Owner	Responsible Tourism Institute (RTI)
Document	Rules for the Authorisation of Biosphere Certification Bodies
Code	ITR-EEC-RG-03
Version	1.0
Effective Date	24/09/2026
Status	In force

1. Purpose and Scope

These Rules establish the conditions applicable to certification bodies for obtaining and maintaining authorisation from the Responsible Tourism Institute (RTI) to operate the Biosphere Scheme.

They apply to certification bodies seeking to obtain such authorisation and to those already authorised to operate the Scheme.

2. Conditions for Access to the Scheme

To obtain authorisation from RTI to operate the Biosphere Scheme, the certification body shall:

- a) operate in conformity with ISO/IEC 17065:2012;
- b) enter into and maintain in force the corresponding agreement with RTI for the operation of the Scheme and the use of the Biosphere mark.

3. Authorisation to Operate the Scheme

The authorisation granted by the Scheme Owner, the Responsible Tourism Institute (RTI), entitles the certification body to operate the Biosphere Scheme within the scope established in that authorisation.

The authorisation is formalised through the corresponding agreement between RTI and the certification body, which establishes its scope and the applicable conditions.

The authorisation granted by RTI relates exclusively to the operation of the Biosphere Scheme and does not constitute accreditation of the certification body.

4. Conditions Applicable During Authorisation

While the authorisation remains in force, the certification body shall:

- a) operate the Biosphere Scheme within the scope for which it has been authorised;
- b) apply the current requirements, rules and other provisions of the Biosphere Scheme without introducing modifications or omissions;
- c) apply modifications to the Scheme that are approved and communicated by RTI in accordance with the conditions established for their entry into force.

5. Information and Communication with RTI

The authorised certification body shall inform RTI of any change or circumstance that may affect the conditions under which it was authorised to operate the Biosphere Scheme.

6. Operation of the Scheme and Use of the Biosphere Mark and Certification Marks

The authorised certification body may operate the Biosphere Scheme and use the Biosphere mark exclusively within the scope of the authorisation granted by RTI and in accordance with the current Scheme documentation.

The use of the Biosphere mark and certification marks shall be in accordance with the Rules for the Use of the Biosphere Mark and Certification Marks.

7. Maintenance of Authorisation

The maintenance of authorisation to operate the Biosphere Scheme is conditional upon maintaining the conditions under which it was granted and the conditions applicable while the authorisation remains in force.

8. Suspension and Withdrawal of Authorisation

RTI may suspend or withdraw authorisation to operate the Biosphere Scheme where the conditions applicable to its granting or during its period of validity are no longer maintained, where there is a serious or repeated breach of the obligations arising from that authorisation, or where circumstances arise that are incompatible with the certification body continuing as an authorised certification body for the operation of the Biosphere Scheme.

The suspension or withdrawal of authorisation entails, as applicable, the suspension or termination of the certification body's entitlement to operate the Biosphere Scheme and use the Biosphere mark and certification marks.

9. Public Information on Authorised Certification Bodies

RTI makes publicly available the list of certification bodies authorised to operate the Biosphere Scheme.