



IHAF

المنتدى الدولي لهيئات إعتاماد الحلال
INTERNATIONAL HALAL ACCREDITATION FORUM

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Policies and Procedures for Expansion of the Scope of the IHAF MRA to new Halal Schemes

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1 Forward

The International Halal Accreditation Forum (IHAF) is an independent, non-government network of accreditation agencies all mandated to enforce halal standards in their countries and regions. It is established with the aim of unifying and harmonizing halal accreditation practices on global level, to comply with Islamic principles (Sharia), and to develop and maintain Halal Multi-Lateral Recognition Arrangements (MRA) among IHAF member accreditation bodies. This will result in removing technical barriers facing halal products and services, and facilitating international halal trade, hence protecting the growing number of halal consumers.

The effective date for implementation of this document is the date of endorsed by IHAF General Assembly. The document shall be published on IHAF website www.ihaf.org.ac.

2 Introduction

One of IHAF main roles is to provide and maintain confidence in halal certificates and marks issued by Conformity Assessment Bodies through approving halal certification schemes and having a mutual acceptance for these schemes between member accreditation bodies in the field of halal.

The IHAF has established the IHAF MRA. The scope of the IHAF MRA includes main scopes and sub-scopes. The MRA is in 5 levels as per the International Accreditation Forum IAF and International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation ILAC. Membership of the IHAF MRA for a main scope provides confidence that CABs accredited by IHAF MRA accreditation body signatories under that main scope are equally reliable in the outcomes of conformity assessment activities.

A main scope of the IHAF MRA may specifically define a sub-scope(s) which is(are) a conformity assessment scheme(s) (e.g. for specific product, management system and/or persons) based on relevant Halal standards or normative documents as endorsed by IHAF. The membership of the IHAF MRA for a sub-scope further provides confidence to Halal Regulators and authorities that the outcomes of the specific conformity assessment scheme (e.g. UAE Halal Scheme) operated by CABs accredited by the IHAF MRA accreditation body signatories under that sub-scope are equivalent.

3 Scope

The purpose of this document is to set the policies and procedures for the expansion of the IHAF MRA and the evaluation criteria for halal schemes under level 4 of the IHAF MRA structure as in IHAF-MRA-001.

4 Normative References

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application of this document. The latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies:

- ISO/IEC 17000: 2004, Conformity assessment — Vocabulary and general principles.
- IHAF-MRA-001, IHAF Multi-Lateral Recognition Arrangement (MRA)
- ISO/IEC 17011:2017 Conformity assessment -- Requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015 Conformity assessment -- Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems -- Part 1: Requirements
- ISO/IEC 17065:2012 Conformity assessment -- Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services

5 Terms and definitions

Terms and definitions contained in ISO/IEC 17000 shall be applied in addition to:

5.1 Halal Conformity Assessment Scheme (HCAS):

Related to specified objects of Halal conformity assessment; rules, procedures and management for carrying out Halal conformity assessment (demonstration that halal requirements) relating to a product, process, service, system, person or body are fulfilled, to which the same halal requirements, rules and procedures apply.

A conformity assessment scheme establishes the following:

- (i) The benefits and objectives of the scheme for the Halal industry;
- (ii) The requirements against which Halal conformity is to be assessed;
- (iii) The mechanism by which Halal conformity is determined;
- (iv) Any requirements placed on Halal conformity assessment bodies (CABs) by the scheme owner (SO), and any specific applications or interpretations thereof, if applicable;
- (v) Any specific applications or additions of ISO/IEC 17011, if applicable; and
- (vi) Any specific application or additions of ISO/IEC 17021-1, ISO/IEC 17065, ISO/IEC 17024 etc.

5.2 Halal Scheme owner (SO):

Person or organization responsible for developing and maintaining a specific Halal conformity assessment scheme. The following are examples of SOs:

- Standardization bodies¹;
- Local Authorities;
- Organizations that use services provided by CABs;
- Organizations that buy or sell Halal products subject to conformity assessment activities;
- Manufacturers and their associations that have established their own HCAS;
- Organizations set up specifically for that purpose, and,
- CABs or CABs' associations.

¹ Does not include cases where the scheme is fully defined in standards and the role of the standardization body is limited to the standard production.

5.3 Scheme owner authorization of a conformity assessment body:

SO authorization means that the SO authorizes a CAB to issue the statement oh “Halal” as defined by the scheme for the purposes of confirming that a demonstration of fulfilment of Halal requirements by a system or product/service/process or persons has been successfully completed. As a result of SO authorization, the CAB can perform conformity assessment activities covered by the HCAS or may have the right to use the SO’s mark. The CAB shall be accredited by an IHAF MRA signatory body.

5.4 Scheme owner recognition of an accreditation body:

The relationship between SO and AB will be established between the SO and the Recognized AB for the provision of accreditation services against a HCAS shall be made publicly available by the SO.

5.5 Scheme specific requirements for Halal Conformity assessment bodies:

This refers to specific requirements on the conformity assessment bodies laid down by the SO, in addition to AB’s rules and any International standard.

6 General Policy for Expansion of the scope of the IHAF MRA to a new Halal Scheme

6.1 The general criteria for evaluating suitability for inclusion of a standard or other normative documents under the IHAF MRA for main scope and/or sub-scope include:

- i) Significant relevance Halal CABs’ accreditation under the scope IHAF activities;
- ii) Sufficient substance to enhance the recognition of competence;
- iii) Fulfils appropriate needs on an international, regional or national basis;
- iv) Lack of inclusion poses threats to IHAF leadership in Halal accreditation;
- v) Complementary to or supportive of any of the other IHAF MRAs;
- vi) Does not contradict any existing standard(s) under the IHAF MRA;
- vii) Scheme Documents/Standards must be produced by a consensus process.

6.2 A precondition for IHAF expanding the IHAF MRA into a new main scope shall be that an international standard for accreditation of conformity assessment bodies has been developed and published which contains requirements applicable to the types of conformity assessment bodies other than those covered by the existing main scopes.

7 Requirements for the establishment of relationships with Scheme Owners

Before IHAF cooperates with a SO, IHAF shall ensure that the following conditions are met:

1. The SO shall be a legal entity.
2. The SO shall be able to take full responsibility for the HCAS. The SO shall have the mandate to modify the HCAS, as necessary and appropriate, and to cooperate with the AB.
3. The SO shall be able to demonstrate market need or support for the HCAS. Such support may include government initiatives or regulatory needs. IHAF acknowledges that the number and nature of these “relevant interested parties” Of particular relevance and importance in the demonstration of market support is the view of interested parties representing the HCAS end-users (e.g. consumers or industry).
4. The HCAS documents shall be publicly available (with or without request). The SO shall make publicly available a list of the CABs recognized under each HCAS, indicating the date of recognition, the date of validity (if applicable) and the scope recognized (as applicable).
5. The scheme owner shall maintain the information for the participation on the scheme on all of the SO offered services and related SO fees if applicable, making it readily available, alongside information on certificates that are held or granted, on scopes, etc. Conditions must be agreed upfront.
6. HCAS that only certify compliance with legal requirements may not claim that the certified item possesses special characteristics other than those legally required.
7. Nor should the SO make statements regarding the suitability of legal requirements or its controls or benchmark with legal HCAS.
8. A HCAS may not prejudice existing official standards and/or requirements, nor aim to replace them; they should also not purport to be a substitute for official controls, carried out by the competent authorities.
9. The conformity assessment process described or chosen by the SO shall fall within the scope of one of the IHAF MRA Level 3 standards and supplementary technical standards and guidelines endorsed by IHAF, if relevant. The assessment process shall not contradict the applicable standard under the MRA.
10. The requirements for the CABs shall not contradict, or exclude, any of the requirements included in the relevant international standard applicable for the CABs and any other relevant IHAF and other mandatory documents and requirements.
11. If any HCAS specific requirements are placed on ABs they shall not contradict or exclude any of the requirements of ISO/IEC 17011, relevant IAF and ILAC guidelines, policies and other requirements.
12. An agreement or any other form of cooperation describing the relationship and the terms of cooperation between the SO and the AB shall be established.
13. An agreement describing the relationship and terms thereof between the SO and CABs shall be established indicating that the SO has reserved the use of the scheme to accredited CABs. Such an

agreement must guarantee at least that the CABs will use the scheme as it is, without any limitations and without any additions, unless so authorized in the agreement.

14. The SO shall have implemented effective procedures for dealing with complaints related to the HCAS.

8 Policy for Expansion of the Scope of the IHAF MRA based on Halal Schemes

8.1 IHAF welcomes the opportunity to work with scheme owners which demonstrate that they represent substantial parts of the scheme's designated sector, to expand the scope of the IHAF MRA. Expanding the IHAF MRA is also beneficial to the scheme owner as it allows IHAF accreditation body members to contribute their expertise to the ongoing development of the scheme whilst also providing access to the IHAF world-wide recognition program.

8.2 IHAF is interested in working with any Halal scheme owner which wishes to operate a third-party sector scheme provided that the criteria as described in Section 6 are fulfilled and additionally the Halal scheme :

- (i) is based upon a publicly available normative document(s) (e.g. for product, management system and/or persons) which has (have) been developed and will be reviewed and updated as required at appropriate intervals in an open and transparent manner, through a consensus process involving participation by interested parties, and is(are) set out preferably in separate normative documents from the conformity assessment requirements, in order to assist transparency, non-discrimination and open competition among Halal conformity assessment bodies;
- (ii) has demonstrable clear international, regional or national market support;
- (iii) has demonstrable clear international, regional or national recognized Islamic Institutions' support;
- (iv) is operated and administered in an open, non-discriminatory and transparent manner, avoiding conflicts of interest or limitation on the acceptance of conformity assessment bodies or accreditation bodies other than relevant technical and Halal considerations;
- (v) is based on the international standards for accreditation of conformity assessment bodies without any requirements which either contradict or exclude any of the requirements of the relevant accreditation standard;
- (vi) will make effective use of the expertise of IHAF MRA signatories and the value of the IHAF world wide MRA;
- (vii) will use IHAF application documents, with specific requirements for accreditation bodies and conformity assessment bodies;
- (viii) will involve accreditation bodies which are signatories of the IHAF MRA in the operation of the scheme, and
- (ix) agrees to make all normative documents relevant to its sector scheme available at a fair and reasonable cost for Members of IHAF and their applicants/accredited bodies to adopt into their accreditation/conformity assessment programs.

- 8.3 From time to time IHAF may develop supplementary policies in the application of the policy in accordance with relevant rules of IHAF.

9 Procedure for Expansion of the Scope of the IHAF MRA based on Halal Schemes

- 9.1 An application for IHAF membership for a specific agreement with IHAF shall be submitted to the IHAF Secretary by the scheme owner, covering the proposed scheme. The application shall comprehensively explain the scope of the proposed scheme, any specific requirements, the interaction/ responsibilities to be assigned between the scheme owner and IHAF and how the scheme complies with the IHAF policy described in Section 8.
- 9.2 The board of Directors will appoint a Task Group consisting of the MRAC Chair, the scheme owner contact person, the TC Chair and the Shariaa Committee Chair or their nominees and other persons as necessary, to review “Information covered in scheme owner Applications for Halal Schemes” with conclusion on the compliance with the specific requirements as described in Section 8 as well as the general criteria as described in Section 6, for consideration by the Board of Directors.
- 9.3 An agreement with a scheme owner for a Halal scheme will only be established if, in the opinion of the IHAF BoD, an application submitted by the scheme owner confirms that:
- i) the scheme owner’s proposed scheme meets the IHAF policy for expansion of the scope of the IHAF MRA based on Halal schemes and it is clearly understood and accepted as to what IHAF can and cannot provide;
 - ii) the scheme owner agrees to contribute to the development and preparation of any requirements specific to its scheme in order to meet the scheme owner’s particular needs (if such specific requirements are needed);
 - iii) the scheme owner agrees to appoint a liaison person to IHAF for their scheme;
 - iv) before the IHAF endorsed Halal scheme is changed, the scheme owner transmits the new draft version document(s) with a gap analysis and proposed transition plan for implementation of the new version document(s) to IHAF in order to allow IHAF to make sure, that the scheme continues to comply with the requirements of this document.
- 9.4 The following actions shall be taken prior to signing the Halal Scheme Agreement with the scheme owner:
- i) the BoD will confirm that the person nominated as the representative of the scheme owner is correctly identified and that contact details are correct.

- ii) the Task Group appointed by the BoD will develop an implementation plan/work program for the new Halal scheme. This plan will include the identification of the needs and expectations of the Halal scheme that can currently be met, and those needs and expectations that will require further scheme development.
- iii) the Task Group will prepare and agree on any requirements of the MRA specific to the Halal scheme. The analysis of the application, implementation plan/work program and draft agreement will be forwarded to the MRA Committee for review and comment.
- iv) the Task Group will then forward the new scheme implementation plan/work program and agreement to the IHAF BoD for endorsement and subsequent ballot to all IHAF members.
- v) should IHAF members approve the new scheme, IHAF will incorporate the Halal scheme into the MRA as a level 4 sub-scope by including the sector scheme in the list of IHAF Endorsed schemes.

9.5 The representatives of the sector scheme will be invited to observe the relevant accreditation assessment and/or peer evaluation processes if it is defined in the relevant agreement between the scheme owner and IHAF for the Halal scheme.

ANNEX 1 : Application form for Halal Scheme Endorsement

Information covered in scheme owner's applications for Halal Scheme Endorsement

The information below is considered mandatory for the IHAF to make evaluation of the HCAS. SO feedback to the questions and the IHAF conclusions are records that must be kept within the IHAF management system. These records must include the rationale for the IHAF decision in relation to the HCAS and may be requested by ABs members of IHAF.

- (i) Is the SO willing to have a unique contact point for the evaluation of the HCAS?
- (ii) Is the HCAS currently being used by CABs under accreditation from any of the IHAF members?
If yes, please specify.
- (iii) Provide a full description of the SO including:
 - a. Name and acronym;
 - b. Type of legal entity;
 - c. Address and web address;
 - d. Members (if relevant) and membership rules;
 - e. Brief history;
 - f. Any other activities performed if relevant;
 - g. Relations to or links with other organizations and authorities;
 - h. Technical area of activity, for example aerospace, electrical testing, Halal Food safety, etc.;
 - i. Conformity assessment procedure suggested by the SO, i.e. management systems or product/service/process certification; and
 - j. Geographical area of acceptance.
 - k. Reference to the Islamic Institutes supporting the Scheme.
- (iv) Business Model
 - a. Describe the business model of the scheme owner;
 - b. Specify if the scheme is available for free, or under payment;
 - c. Specify if there are mandatory training courses for CABs or ABs;
 - d. Specify if there are fees to be paid by the AB or by the CAB to the SO; and

- e. How does the scheme's governance ensure that there is no conflict of interest, which could call into question its impartiality and integrity.
 - f. Does the scheme have in place an appropriate number of staff (internal or external) with adequate resources to effectively manage the scheme's day to day operations, and is there in place a defined organisational and reporting structure, key job descriptions and documented operating procedures.
- (v) Does the SO establish scheme specific requirements for the operation of CABs wishing to operate within the HCAS. Describe the specific HCAS requirements and identify the HCAS documents where these are described. Also state how such requirements are made publicly available.
- (vi) Does the HCAS cover the following elements:
- **Selection** of the object(s) of conformity assessment, including selecting specified requirements to be assessed and planning information collection and sampling activities;
 - **Determination**, including the use of one or more determination methods (e.g. test, audit and/or examination) to develop complete information regarding fulfilment of the specified requirements by the object of conformity assessment or its sample;
 - **Review and attestation**, including the review of evidence from the determination stage, and a subsequent attestation that the object of conformity assessment has been reliably demonstrated to fulfil the specified requirements, and any subsequent marking or licensing and their related controls, where applicable;
 - **Surveillance**, systematic iteration of conformity assessment activities as a basis for maintaining the validity of the statement of conformity.

(vii) **Object**

- a. What is the object of certification;
- b. Which (group of) products / services / processes / systems / competencies does the conformity assessment scheme cover?
- c. What aspect of the product / service / process / system / competency does the statement of conformity relate to?

A HCAS, that includes legal requirements, shall formulate those requirements in such a way that compliance with those legal requirements is a condition for certification.

Provide information that demonstrates that the requirements are written in terms of results or outcomes, together with limiting values and tolerances, where pertinent.

- (viii) Please provide information that demonstrates that the requirements are stated unambiguously using wording that is objective, logical, valid and specific.

(ix) **Conditions**

- a. Which is the certification method used in order to determine conformity?
- b. How do you demonstrate that your method is suitable for supporting the conformity statement?
- c. Which method do you rely on to monitor that the certificate holder continues to comply with requirements?
- d. How do you demonstrate the suitability of your method in order to monitor that the certificate holder continues to comply with requirements?

(x) **Certificate**

- a. What is the conformity statement which appears on certificates?

(xi) **Does the CAS consider the use of marks of conformity?**

Where the scheme provides for the use of certificates, marks or other statements of conformity, there shall be a license or other form of enforceable agreement to control such use. Licenses can include provisions related to use of the certificate, mark or other statement of conformity in communications about the certified product/system/person, and requirements to be fulfilled when certification is no longer valid. Such licenses may be between two or more of the following:

- a. scheme owner;
- b. certification body; and
- c. client of the certification body. Where marks of conformity may be used, the ownership, use and control of the marks; the requirements of ISO/IEC 17030 should be applied.

(xii) **Does the scheme owner take into consideration the following elements when setting up the conformity assessment normative documents?**

- a. The scheme shall be governed by documented rules and procedures that, upon request, will be made available to any interested party, in a reasonable and timely manner. The following elements must be specified :
 - b. The criteria and processes that must be adhered to, in order to access the scheme;
 - c. How documentation is controlled;
 - d. The specifications and/or standards on which the system or scheme is based;
 - e. How conformity evidence is to be achieved and maintained;
 - f. How conformity evidence is to be documented;
 - g. How integrity, impartiality and competence are to be maintained; and
 - h. The procedural regarding complaints/appeal.

- (xiii) Does the scheme owner clearly define the scope of its operations and the applicability of the conformity assessment normative documents.
- (xiv) Does the scheme owner prepare the assessment documents, guides and procedures, in a transparent, open, impartial and coherent manner.
- (xv) Does the scheme owner analyse and identify the parties who are interested in the scheme.
- (xvi) Does the scheme have a structure which allows all of the concerned interested parties in the chain to both contribute to the scheme's development, and take part in the decision-making, in a representative and balanced way.
- (xvii) Are the participation mechanisms for any interested party, as well as the names of the organisations that are involved, documented and made publicly available.
- (xviii) Are all of the conformity assessment normative documents designed by persons who are demonstrably competent in that capacity. Their competence shall cover both the technical field of expertise and the adopted conformity assessment procedure.
- a. The scheme owner shall demonstrate the scheme's conformity, against an appropriate accreditation standard.
1. Are the certification procedures described and where?
 2. Has the suitability of the procedures been demonstrated?
- (xix) As regards the identification of the relevant documents that are applicable to its operations, the scheme owner shall have a documented procedure in place. The SO shall have established, maintained and implemented documented procedure for its operation. The documented procedure shall enable the SO to comply with the requirements specified in this document. (Please attach)
- (xx) Does the SO (by itself or through another organization) implement and perform integrity programme / monitoring of CABs, beyond requiring that they are accredited to the scheme requirements? If so, describe it and refer to the scheme document where it is required. For informational purposes only.
- (xxi) Has the SO established scheme specific requirements for the operation of ABs? If YES, please identify the scheme document where these are described.
- (xxii) **Expertise**
- a. Are there competency requirements for certification auditors?
 - b. Are there competency requirements for decision-makers?
 - c. Are there competency requirements for other staff members?

d. How has it been substantiated that the competency requirements are appropriate?

(xxiii) **Public nature**

e. Where are the scheme documents published?

f. Are they made public?

g. Does the SO have any market surveillance, for example list of certified products, services, etc.?

(xxiv) **Maintenance and changes in the HCAS**

a. Does the scheme owner adopt a continuous development approach, within which the existing feedback mechanisms will regularly review rules and requirements, in a participatory manner. Please describe:

b. Does the owner define a process for reviewing the operation of the scheme on a periodic basis in order to confirm its validity and to identify aspects requiring improvement, taking into account feedback from stakeholders. The review should include provisions for ensuring that the scheme requirements are being applied in a consistent manner. Please describe:

c. Does the owner monitor the development of the standards and other normative documents which define the specified requirements used in the scheme. Where changes in these documents occur, the scheme owner should have a process for making the necessary changes in the scheme, and for managing the implementation of the changes (e.g. transition period) by the certification bodies, clients and, where necessary, other stakeholders. Please describe:

Checklist

General description/explanation of the proposed sector scheme (please provide information on its scope, any specific requirements for the relevant scope of the MRA, the interaction/responsibilities to be assigned between the scheme owner and IHAF and any other information relevant to the scheme's operation):

| IHAF Requirement | Yes/No | Descriptive information of how requirement is met or to be met* | Comment from Task Group |
|---|---------------|--|--------------------------------|
| General Criteria | | | |
| i) Significant relevance Halal CABs' accreditation under the scope IHAF activities; | | | |
| ii) Sufficient substance to enhance the recognition of competence; | | | |

| | | | |
|---|--|---------------|--|
| iii) Fulfils appropriate needs on an international, regional or national basis; | | | |
| iv) Lack of inclusion poses threats to IHAF leadership in Halal accreditation; | | | |
| v) Does not contradict any existing standard(s) under the IHAF MRA; | | | |
| vi) Scheme Documents/Standards must be produced by a consensus process. | | | |
| A precondition for IHAF expanding the IHAF MRA into a new main scope shall be that an international standard for accreditation of conformity assessment bodies has been developed and published which contains requirements applicable to the types of conformity assessment bodies other than those covered by the existing main scopes. | | | |
| Further Actions Required | | Plan** | |
| a) Need for the development of specific IHAF application documents. | | | |
| b) Need for additional preparations for peer evaluations. | | | |

* Sufficient descriptive information as how the IHAF requirement is met, the information is provided by the scheme owner and confirmed by the Task Group appointed by the BoD .

** The need for the development of specific IHAF application documents or other actions if needed .

| IHAF Requirements | Yes/No | Results | Comment from Task Group |
|--|--------|---|-------------------------|
| Objective evidence | | Explanation/evidence of how requirement is met or to be met* | |
| a) Evidence of the scheme owner representing a substantial part of the Halal sector and market impact of the Halal scheme. | | | |

| | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| (i) is based upon a publicly available normative document(s) (e.g. for product, management system and/or persons) which has (have) been developed and will be reviewed and updated as required at appropriate intervals in an open and transparent manner, through a consensus process involving participation by interested parties, and is(are) set out preferably in separate normative documents from the conformity assessment requirements, in order to assist transparency, non-discrimination and open competition among Halal conformity assessment bodies; | | | |
| (ii) has demonstrable clear international, regional or national market support; | | | |
| (iii) has demonstrable clear international, regional or national recognized Islamic Institutions' support; | | | |
| (iv) is operated and administered in an open, non-discriminatory and transparent manner, avoiding conflicts of interest or limitation on the acceptance of conformity assessment bodies or accreditation bodies other than relevant technical and Halal considerations; | | | |
| (v) is based on the international standards for accreditation of conformity assessment bodies without any requirements which either contradict or exclude any of the requirements of the relevant accreditation standard; | | | |
| Policy Declarations | | Scheme owner to declare how the IHAF Policy requirements will be met | |
| (vi) will make effective use of the expertise of IHAF MRA signatories and the value of the IHAF world wide MRA; | | | |
| (vii) will use IHAF application documents, with specific requirements for accreditation bodies and conformity assessment bodies; | | | |
| (viii) will involve accreditation bodies which are signatories of the IHAF MRA in the operation of the scheme, and | | | |
| (ix) agrees to make all normative documents relevant to its sector scheme available at a fair and reasonable cost for Members of IHAF and their applicants/accredited bodies to adopt into their accreditation/conformity assessment programs. | | | |

| Specific Requirements | | Information to be provided by scheme owner | |
|---|--|--|--|
| (i) Specific requirements for accreditation bodies and conformity assessment bodies prescribed by the sector scheme (if any). | | | |
| (ii) Need for IHAF to develop specific requirements for accreditation bodies and conformity assessment bodies for the sector scheme. | | | |
| (iii) scheme owner liaison representative's name and contact details. | | | |
| (iv) scheme owner agrees to provides new draft version document(s) with a gap analysis and proposed transition plan for implementation of the new version document(s) to IHAF in order to allow IHAF to make sure, that the scheme continues to comply with the requirements. | | | |

*Information and/or documented evidence as to how the IHAF requirements are met, or will be met by the sector scheme, are to be submitted to the IHAF Secretary by the scheme owner.

**Comment is filled in by the Task Group appointed by the BoD .

Annex 2: Example of an IHAF agreement with a Scheme Owner

IHAF and “Scheme Owner” AGREEMENT

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The (“SCHEME OWNER”) has sought and received recognition of the “SCHEME OWNER” Guidance Document and benchmarking process for Halal Food safety management systems schemes by the IHAF. Recognition of the “SCHEME OWNER” Guidance Document and benchmarking process will facilitate the endorsement of “SCHEME OWNER” benchmarked Halal Food safety management systems schemes that apply to have their “SCHEME OWNER” benchmarked schemes endorsed as a sub-scope of the IHAF MRA in accordance with IHAF Policies and this Agreement.
- 1.2 “SCHEME OWNER” is a division of the Consumer Goods Forum. “SCHEME OWNER” was launched in May 2000. The “SCHEME OWNER” Board of Directors is drawn from major global retailers, Halal Food manufacturers and Halal Food service operators. Together this group provides the strategic direction for and oversees the daily management of “SCHEME OWNER”.
- 1.3 The “SCHEME OWNER” objectives are to, among other things; reduce Halal Food safety risks by delivering equivalence and convergence between effective Halal Food safety management systems. The equivalence is delivered by benchmarking schemes to a set of requirements contained in the “SCHEME OWNER” Guidance Document. The sixth and seventh editions of the Guidance Document were submitted to IHAF as part of their application for recognition.
- 1.4 “SCHEME OWNER” and benchmarked scheme owners intend to make effective use of IHAF MRA accreditation body signatories and the value of the world wide IHAF MRA. “SCHEME OWNER” and benchmarked scheme owners intend to require certification bodies (CBs) operating in a “SCHEME OWNER” benchmarked scheme to be accredited by an accreditation body that is a signatory to the IHAF MRA with a main scope of product certification management systems or persons certification and to have their scope extended to include one or more of the “SCHEME OWNER” benchmarked schemes as sub-scope(s) to the IHAF MRA (IHAF MRA signatories).
- 1.5 The **International Halal Accreditation Forum (IHAF)** is the world association of conformity assessment accreditation bodies in the fields of management systems, products, services, process, persons and other similar programs of conformity assessment.

- 1.6 IHAF is responsible for the harmonization and continuous improvement of the accreditation practices of its members with the ultimate goal to ensure the technical competence and impartiality of accredited CBs and to support its IHAF MRA.
- 1.7 The IHAF MRA is established and maintained on the basis of the requirements of ISO/IEC 17011 through regular peer evaluations and is the tool by which IHAF contributes to the elimination of technical barriers to trade and to promoting the free circulation of accredited certificates issued by accredited CBs.

2. Administration and Cooperation

- 2.1 Both IHAF and “SCHEME OWNER”, by means of this formal Agreement, have decided to develop and maintain a close cooperation between the two organizations to ensure harmonization in the accreditation practices performed by IHAF members in the “SCHEME OWNER” benchmarked Halal Food safety management systems schemes and to cooperate in the continuous improvement of the “SCHEME OWNER” Guidance Document and benchmarking process.
- 2.2 In their respective roles, the IHAF and “SCHEME OWNER” shall operate in an open, non-discriminatory and transparent manner, avoiding conflicts of interest or limitation on the acceptance of Halal Food safety management systems schemes other than relevant technical considerations.
- 2.3 Both IHAF and “SCHEME OWNER” shall appoint a liaison person of each organization to act as contact persons.
- 2.4 The “SCHEME OWNER” benchmarking process will ensure that “SCHEME OWNER” benchmarked schemes will be open to all CBs that are accredited by IHAF MRA signatories that have the main scope of Product certification (ISO/IEC 17065) Management Systems certification (ISO/IEC 17021) or Persons Certification (ISO/IEC 17024).
- 2.5 The “SCHEME OWNER” benchmarking process will ensure that benchmarked scheme owners will only work with IHAF MRA signatories and will stop working with any accreditation body that is not, or no longer, a signatory to the IHAF MRA.

2.6 When a scheme benchmarked by “SCHEME OWNER” applies for IHAF endorsement, the specific procedure for expansion of the scope of the IHAF MRA based on privately owned sector schemes as described in IHAF Policies will apply. However, the compliance of the scheme with the specific requirements as described in Clauses 4.1 as well as the general criteria as described in Clause 2.1 and 2.2 which is defined in Clause 4.2.2 will only be randomly checked by IHAF as the evaluation of the compliance has already been completed on the basis of the recognition of the “SCHEME OWNER” Guidance Document and benchmarking process.

3. Information Exchange

In order to achieve such goals both organizations have agreed upon the following:

3.1 “SCHEME OWNER” shall inform the IHAF of the following:

- (a) Any proposed changes to “SCHEME OWNER” Guidance Document and/or benchmarking process;
- (b) Any proposed changes to “SCHEME OWNER” policy that may have impact on the relationship between IHAF and “SCHEME OWNER” or the benchmarking process;
- (c) Changes to the list of “SCHEME OWNER” Benchmarked schemes;
- (d) Any problems “SCHEME OWNER” may have regarding IHAF MRA signatory accreditation bodies; and
- (e) Change of liaison person.

3.2 IHAF shall inform “SCHEME OWNER” of the following:

- (a) Intended changes in policy, procedure or documentation that may have impact on the IHAF’s recognition of the “SCHEME OWNER” Guidance Document or benchmarking process in accordance with IHAF policies;
- (b) Intention to develop technical documents that may have impact on the “SCHEME OWNER” Guidance Document and any “SCHEME OWNER” benchmarked schemes;
- (c) Any questions that arise that relate to the “SCHEME OWNER” Guidance Document or benchmarking process;
- (d) Any issues arising with scheme owners which question the benchmarked scheme’s compliance with the “SCHEME OWNER” Guidance Document; and
- (e) Change of liaison person.

4. Technical Co-operation

- 4.1 The IHAF will be considered as a stakeholder and invited to participate in any changes to the “SCHEME OWNER” Guidance Document and/or benchmarking process.
- 4.2 The “SCHEME OWNER” will be considered as a stakeholder and invited to participate in the development of specific IHAF application documents that relate to Halal Food safety management systems product or persons certification.

5. Implementation

- 5.1 This agreement will come into effect on the date the agreement is signed by both parties.
- 5.2 IHAF and “SCHEME OWNER” shall each bear their own costs.

6. Confidentiality

- 6.1 IHAF shall hold all information, not already in the public domain, in strictest confidence and shall only use it for the purpose for which it was provided and shall not disclose or make available such information to any third party without the prior written consent of “SCHEME OWNER”.

7. Cancellation

- 7.1 This Agreement between “SCHEME OWNER” and IHAF can be cancelled by either party in writing with a period of notice of three months.

International Accreditation Forum, Inc.

“SCHEME OWNER”

Signature of authorized person

Signature of authorized person

Chairman of IHAF On behalf of “SCHEME OWNER”

Date of Agreement: