



Guidance to GLOBALG.A.P. SPRING assessment and certification

Amended abstract from the SPRING General Rules ¹

SPRING program

The **Sustainable Program for Irrigation and Groundwater Use (SPRING)** is an add-on to the **GLOBALG.A.P. Integrated Farm Assurance (IFA)** Standard. The Spring Standard regulates in detail how producers shall reduce the impact of their water-use on the environment and on society.

This guidance document shall support producers / producer groups to prepare for assessment and certification.

Preconditions and rules for applicants

- Producers or producer groups applying for SPRING certification must be certified against GLOBALG.A.P. IFA or an equivalent scheme
- Producers or producer groups applying for an audit and certification under the SPRING Program must fill in an application form and send it to their GLOBALG.A.P. SPRING accredited certification body (CB). The application form is provided by the CB
- The applicant must have records that all requirements of the SPRING Program have been complied with for at least 3 months prior to the audit
- It is mandatory to carry out a self-assessment before the audit takes place

SPRING checklist

The provisions of the SPRING standard are listed in the checklist as “control points”. The checklist can be downloaded from the GLOBALG.A.P. Website. Compliance with the provisions (control points) is verified by the CB prior to and during the assessment. The checklist can also be used to carry out a self-assessment and to prepare for the audit.

¹ https://www.globalgap.org/uk_en/for-producers/globalg.a.p.-add-on/spring/

Scoring System

There are four degrees of compliance for every control point. Based on the auditor's recommendations the CB decides how many points can be given for a specific control point.

3 points	Full compliance
2 points	Compliance to a great extent. Observations of the auditor/ CB are considered recommendations
1 point	Compliance is insufficient – the producer(s) must propose corrective action
0 points	Full non-compliance

Control points levels

There are three different levels of control points: *critical*, *major* and *minor* criteria

Critical criteria: Critical criteria must be fulfilled as a condition for certification. At least 2 scoring points must be achieved. 0 or 1 scoring points for Critical criteria implies that certification cannot be granted, and a new audit must be applied for. The new audit can take place not before three months after the initial audit.

Major Criteria: At least 2 scoring points must be achieved. 0 or 1 point implies that the producer must take immediate corrective action and submit proof of correction within 28 days. Failing to do so results in non-certification.

Minor Criteria: At least 2 scoring points must be achieved. 0 or 1 point implies that the producer must submit a corrective action plan within 28 days. The corrective actions must be implemented before the follow-up audit. Failing to submit a corrective action plan within 28 days after the audit or failing to implement the corrective actions before the follow-up audit do so results in non-certification.

Self-Assessment

A self-assessment shall be carried out before the audit takes place. The integral SPRING checklist can be downloaded from the GLOBALG.A.P. Website (page "CPC"). The checklist is in Excel format.

There are five main chapters in the SPRING program standard and the corresponding checklist:

1. Assessment of water risks and objectives
2. Assessment of legal conformity
3. Management and use of water resources
4. Environmental management. Protecting water resources
5. Traceability

Each chapter has one or more articles. E.g. Chapter 1 "Assessment of water risks and objectives" has 4 articles:

- Art. 1.1 Register of water risks and objectives
- Art. 1.2 Analysis of water risks
- Art. 1.3 Identification of stakeholders
- Art. 1.4 Aims and objectives

In the checklist each article includes one or more provisions (control points) and for each provision the relevant compliance criteria.

1			Assessment of water risks and objectives Chapter 1		
1	1		Register of producers, production sites and water resources Article 1.1		
1	1	1	<table border="1"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> Provision / Control Point 1.1.1 Register of producers: Register of producers, production sites and water resources: Complete registers must be kept of all producers and/or all production sites comprising sources of water supply. </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> Compliance criteria for Control Point 1.1.1 Producers shall keep a register of the producer group members (in case of producer groups) and/or production sites involved in the SPRING Program. This register shall include, as a minimum, the following information: production sites (per producer group member in case of producer groups) and their identification, land-registry references (municipality/commune, parcel, industrial area...), crops grown, origin and identification of sources of water supply (organization managing shared water resources, artificial lake, well...), identification and exact geographical location (coordinates) of storage facilities for water. The register shall be regularly updated and signed by the responsible manager. </td> </tr> </table>	Provision / Control Point 1.1.1 Register of producers: Register of producers, production sites and water resources: Complete registers must be kept of all producers and/or all production sites comprising sources of water supply.	Compliance criteria for Control Point 1.1.1 Producers shall keep a register of the producer group members (in case of producer groups) and/or production sites involved in the SPRING Program. This register shall include, as a minimum, the following information: production sites (per producer group member in case of producer groups) and their identification, land-registry references (municipality/commune, parcel, industrial area...), crops grown, origin and identification of sources of water supply (organization managing shared water resources, artificial lake, well...), identification and exact geographical location (coordinates) of storage facilities for water. The register shall be regularly updated and signed by the responsible manager.
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Obligatory documentation

As a condition SPRING certification, a number of documents must be submitted to the CB prior to the assessment or presented to the SPRING auditor during the assessment. The paragraph of the document refers to the relevant control point in the checklist.

Documents that must be sent to the CB prior to the assessment

- 1.1.1 Register of the producer (or producer-group in case of producer-groups)
 - Production sites and their identification
 - Land registry references
 - Crops grown
 - Origin and identification of water sources
 - Identification and coordinates of water-storage facilities
- 1.2.1 Impact Risk Assessment updated and approved by the management.
 - a) Current legislation
 - b) Origin of the water sources and quality of the water concerned (contaminants)
 - c) Storage system (evaporation, leaks, etc.)
 - d) Distribution and irrigation systems (efficiency, leaks, etc.)
 - e) Soil (water retention capacity, permeability)
 - f) Depth of ground water
 - g) Sources of pollution (organic waste, fertilizers, phytosanitary products, etc.)
 - h) Possibilities for subsequent clean-up (water treatment, treatment of effluents, etc.)
 - i) Influence of the farm operations and the produce handling units on the sustainability of the watershed
- 1.4.1 List of objectives and procedures to mitigate risks, updated and approved by the management
- 1.4.3 Training plan and list of participants attesting that those responsible to achieve the objectives

Documents that must be presented during the assessment

- 1.3.1 List of water-stakeholders in the watershed with their risks and challenges
- 2.1.1 Identification of legal requirements regarding the environment, updated
- 2.1.2 Proof of the legality of fields and land
- 2.1.3-4 Proof of legality of the sources of water supply, including flow rates and max. allowed quantity of water
- 2.1.5 Proof of legality of buildings and infrastructure
- 3.1.1 Complete, updated farm-map
 - all production sites, irrigated and non-irrigated
 - all water-sources
 - all water storage facilities
 - distribution and irrigation systems
 - handling units
- 3.1.4 Registers of water-consumption
- 3.1.5 Evidence that you comply with restrictions (flow rates, maximum allowed water quantities)
- 3.1.10 Proof that regular maintenance is carried out on the irrigation installation
- 3.1.11 Proof that regular leakage checks are carried out
- 3.1.15 Documented participation in watershed governance
- 4.1.1 Documentation and identification of waste water resources
- 4.3.1 Assessment plan for efficient, possibly renewable energy use

Imprint

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