

## **SUMMARY: FINALISED GSCP EQUIVALENCE PROCESS RESULTS FOR THE KENYA FLOWER COUNCIL CERTIFICATION SCHEME QUALITY SYSTEM REGULATIONS AND THE FLOWERS AND ORNAMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY STANDARD, TO THE GLOBAL SOCIAL COMPLIANCE PROGRAM (GSCP) REFERENCE CODE, AUDIT PROCESS AND METHODOLOGY CRITERIA**

### ***The Kenya Flower Council (KFC)***

The Kenya Flower Council (KFC) is an association of growers and exporters, formed in 1996. The vision was; for Kenya to become and remain an international player, farms would have to comply with and exceed international standards. This notion brought forth the creation of standards on environmental and socio-economic sustainability principles. Registration of flower producers and exporters for certification is voluntary.

In February 2016, the equivalence process to the GSCP Reference Code, Audit Process and Methodology criteria, for the KFC Certification Scheme Quality System Regulations and the Flowers and Ornamental Sustainability Standard was completed.

### ***About the GSCP Equivalence Process***

With a growing number of sustainability standards emerging, identifying and comparing the different schemes has become a key challenge for value chain actors. To address the need for clarity and transparency, the GSCP developed a set of Reference tools. This is accompanied by a robust benchmarking service - the Equivalence Process. Compiling best existing practice in social and environmental compliance, the Reference tools serve as the basis for comparison of standards.

The Equivalence Process is a credible tool for purchasing companies to benchmark standards. It is also essential to bodies that audit best existing corporate practice. This provides companies with choices of schemes. By using the Equivalence Process, standard-setting and audit bodies benefit through continuous improvement and promote their schemes. This creates a level playing field, increases transparency, enhances trust, promotes valid approaches and reduces audit duplication.

Through a "share and compare" or "share only" section; schemes that have completed the process can make their result transparent, which allows other users to:

- **Assess** – the level of equivalency of the standard or auditing body with the relevant GSCP Reference tool(s).
- **Compare** – their independently validated Equivalence Assessment criterion by criterion.
- **Recognize** – standards, auditing bodies and other companies' value chain compliance systems.

An independent expert panel conducts the Equivalence assessment based on the scheme's Self-Assessment. Users have to provide evidence on how the respective GSCP requirement is covered, and also how it is implemented or cross-checked in the field.

*NB: The Equivalence Process is a desk-based review and does not deliver certification or accreditation.*

### ***Certification Scheme– Scope and Compliance to International Standards and Conventions***

The KFC Certification Scheme, Quality System Regulations and the Flowers and Ornamental Sustainability Standard are managed in accordance with ISO/IEC 17065, Conformity Assessment – Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes, and services.

The scope of the Certification Scheme audits, cover the controlled production process of Flowers and Ornamentals' in a single location or multiple sites owned by individual producers within one country. Upon compliance, producers are awarded either Silver or Gold Certificate.

The KFC Certification Scheme, Quality System Regulations and the Flowers and Ornamental Sustainability Standard is also bench-marked to the International Trade Centre (ITC) Environmental and Socio-Economic Sustainability criteria as well as the GLOBALG.A.P Integrated Farm Assurance, Flowers and Ornamentals, Version-4.0. KFC standards are available on the ITC standards Map.

### ***Membership***

The number of registered producers is 94 farms, representing over 70% of the national total exports of flowers and ornamentals'. KFC is the focal point for the sector. The membership has also attracted 67 associate members from flower markets in the EU, fiscal and non-fiscal service providers, agro- chemical companies, farm input companies, florists among others.

In line with a strategic plan to ensure “an all-inclusive” representation of the floriculture industry, membership includes small, medium and large flower producers spanning from 0.1 hectares to 220 hectares.

### ***Benefits of benchmarking the KFC Certification Scheme to the GSCP***

By KFC standards being bench-marked to GSCP, have attained international recognition. This is of great value to producers, purchasing companies and all other players within the value chain. Some of these benefits are listed below:

1. The Equivalence Process is contributing to the harmonization of social and environmental compliance schemes in global value chains.

2. KFC joins a growing community of partners who are actively fostering collaboration and harmonization in global value chains standards.
3. Enables KFC certified producers' easy and seamless access to global value chains.
4. KFC has supported best practice, where continuous improvement in social economic environmental sustainability of value chains.
5. Sharing and comparing results is crucial for building trust and achieving mutual recognition of global social and environmental certification schemes and standards.
6. The GSCP platform is providing the capacity for producers, buyers, markets and stakeholders within the value chain to build comparability, transparency and sustainability.
7. The capacity to Share and compare not only increases recognition but sets the stage for collaboration within the value chain.