



Changes Affecting a Certification Cycle

Issue 3.0

21-July-2025

1.0 Scope and Purpose

- 1.1 This policy describes the scope, eligibility, and procedures for changes affecting a certification cycle of various Global Seafood Alliance (GSA) Standards.
- 1.2 This policy is applicable to certified facilities subject to review and acceptance by GSA.
- 1.3 The details presented herein describe requirements for Certification Bodies (CBs) on handling situations affecting such changes.

2.0 Normative Documents¹


- 2.1 Requirements for Certification Bodies Offering Certification Against the Criteria of the Global Seafood Alliance (current issue) ².
- 2.2 ISO/IEC 17065:2012 Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes, and services.
- 2.3 GSA Policy on Supplemental Audits of Facilities (current issue).
- 2.4 CBs internal policies and procedures for changes affecting certification.

3.0 Types of Cycle Adjustments/ Definitions

- 3.1 **Extension:** A short term adjustment (30-60 day as noted below) that allows for a temporary extension of a certificate expiration date. The recertification date and annual projected expiration date does not change.
- 3.2 **Expiration Date Adjustment:** An expiration date adjustment results in a permanent change to the certification period and moves the expiration date either earlier or later from the date specified on a current certificate against a GSA Standard. Once an expiration adjustment has been issued, a new 12-month audit cycle and subsequent KPIs are established based on the new certificate expiration date.
- 3.3 **Seasonal Processing/Production Facilities:** Processing plants and farms that only conduct major production activities during a short period of not more than 6 consecutive calendar months in a 12-month period.

¹ For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

² Or replacement document currently in draft review titled “Global Seafood Alliance - Certification Body Requirements” (current issue)

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4.0 Agreements and Approval

- 4.1 Cycle adjustments shall be considered and agreed upon collaboratively by GSA and CBs on a case-by-case basis and must be requested by the CB that issued or has accepted (in event a certificate transfer is required between accredited CBs) the current certificate to be adjusted. GSA has final approval of requests that are made. Requests, agreements and approvals shall be documented in written form (emails, formal letters, etc.) between GSA and the CBs as accorded for record keeping purposes.

5.0 Procedure for an Extension

Extensions shall be considered for active/valid certificates only under the following conditions:

- 5.1 Standalone or cluster farms with long production cycles going fallow.
- 5.1.1 Up to a 60 calendar day extension only may be considered for standalone or cluster farms going fallow if they meet all of the following criteria:
- The production cycle of fish in production (under the extension request) exceeds 12 consecutive calendar months.
 - The facility shall be going fallow after the harvest is complete, and the planned fallow period is such that maintaining the current certification cycle is not possible because the facility will not be in production at the expected time of the next recertification audit.
 - Requests to GSA must be initiated a minimum of 60 days prior to the facility's expiration date.
 - Requires a ½ day surveillance audit by CB.
- 5.2 Seasonal Processing/Production Facilities needing a permanent change in their certification cycle due to unforeseen factors that arise after initial certification (reference 3.3 and 6.1.1).
- 5.2.1 Applies only to facilities requesting a permanent adjustment under 6.1.1.
- 5.2.2 One-time adjustment only.
- 5.2.3 Extension shall not exceed 30 calendar days.
- 5.2.4 The recertification audit must occur prior to the expiration of the extended certificate.
- 5.2.5 If the new certificate cannot be issued within the 30-day extension period, the certificate shall lapse, and the facility may remain on the BAP Renewals in Process page until the new certificate is issued, or for an additional 90-days after the expiration of the extended certificate, whichever comes first.
- 5.3 Operational Deficiencies – facilities have met recertification KPI requirements, but operational problems prohibit an audit from being fully completed before the facility's expiration date.
- 5.3.1 Operation deficiencies are defined as problems imposed by GSA or CBs in meeting recertification audit KPI requirements.
- 5.3.2 Extensions shall be 30-60 calendar days in length.

6.0 Procedure for an Expiration Date Adjustment

Expiration Date Adjustments shall be considered under the following conditions:

6.1 Adjustments moving the expiration date outward (later) from the date specified on a current certificate against a GSA Standard.


6.1.1 Seasonal Processing/Production Facilities needing a permanent change in their certification cycle due to unforeseen factors that arise after initial certification (reference 3.3).

- a. One-time adjustment only.
- b. Once the recertification audit is complete the new expiration date shall be 1-year from the date of the certificate issuance from a successful audit.

6.2 Adjustments moving the expiration date inward (earlier) from the date specified on a current certificate against a GSA Standard.

6.2.1 A one-time adjustment per 5-year period may be considered under the following conditions:

- a. Certified farms joining clusters or groups.
- b. Organizations requesting combined audits with multiple facilities (farms and/or hatcheries) in close proximity to each other. Such a change is limited to farms and hatcheries only.
- c. The new expiration date will be one-year following the issue date of the new certificate.

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