

Certification Regulation for IFS ESG Check

Standard or Certification scheme:	IFS ESG Check
Check preparation / Self-assessment:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ In case of renewal check the expected dates are verified by TÜV AUSTRIA via the IFS audit portal. ✓ The check details are announced in the IFS Audit portal, by TÜV AUSTRIA ✓ The check result is uploaded in the IFS Audit Portal <p>The company shall fulfil a compulsory fields list (self-assessment). This list is an exercise that will oblige the company to put in work and think deeply about many aspects related to sustainability and its implementation in their own facilities.</p> <p>Once completed, this compulsory fields list shall be sent back to the auditor / assessor at least fourteen (14) days before the check takes place. This list is the basis for the auditor / assessor to cross check this information and verify its real implementation during the check.</p> <p>For those cases where the company has additionally chosen the carbon footprint module, the calculation of the carbon footprint shall be done before the check takes place.</p>
Check duration:	<p>The duration of the check can vary depending on the chosen module(s) and the data to be verified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only ESG Check (main module): a minimum of two (2) to four (4) hours is expected. • ESG Check plus one (1) additional module: a minimum of 4 (h) up to six (6) hours. • Additional extra module: two (2) hours up to four (4) hours. <p>The more thoroughly the compulsory fields list (self-assessment) is completed, the more representative the impact on the overall check duration.</p>
On-site evaluation of requirements:	<p>Every requirement IFS ESG self-assessment are evaluated by the auditor during the check.</p> <p>Note 1: See the full scoring system in Annex II.</p>
Confirmation check cycle:	<p>The IFS ESG Check can be applicable for companies which are already IFS certified, while also being applicable as a “standalone” standard for companies which are not IFS certified. This check can be organized right after the IFS Audit (IFS Food) or can be performed at a later date. Independent of the chosen option, the check is performed on-site.</p> <p>The IFS ESG Check is in principle an annual verification check whose frequency could be increased within the year to show more progress.</p> <p>The letter of confirmation is valid effectively from the date of issue stated on the certificate itself and ends after 12 months.</p> <p>The time between the date of the check and the issuing of the letter of confirmation is determined as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 2 weeks for the auditor to send the provisional report and provisional improvement action plan for completion to the company. to check the proposed corrective actions, for the certification procedure and upload of the audit report, the action plan and the certificate to the audit portal ✓ 4 weeks (since the last day of the check) for the company to propose improvement actions for those requirements (scored with 0, 1 and 2) <p>In total: 6 weeks between the date of check and uploading the report in the IFS Database / issue of the letter of confirmation:</p>

Target time: 6 weeks,
Maximum time: 8 weeks.
Due date of the letter of confirmation is determined as follows: initial check date + 8 weeks
Note: the compulsory field lists (self-assessment) are uploaded into the database along with the notes made by the auditor / assessor.

Example

Initial check date:	01. October, 2023
Date of issue of the letter of confirmation:	26. November, 2023
Letter of confirmation valid until:	25. November, 2024
Renewal check date:	25. September, 2024
Letter of confirmation valid until:	25. November, 2025 (independently from the renewal check date)

Appeals and complaints management

TÜV AUSTRIA's relevant procedure can be found on our website. Especially for IFS the following additional rules apply: Appeals will be finalised within 20 working days of receiving information from the auditee. For complaints, an initial response will be given within ten (10) working days of receiving it. A letter confirming receipt of the complaint will be issued within a maximum of five (5) working days. A full written response will be given after the completion of a full and thorough investigation into a complaint.
If the complaint relates to the quality of the content of IFS checks or IFS check reports, IFS offices require that TÜV AUSTRIA provide a statement on the cause and the measures introduced to rectify the problem within 2 weeks. If the complaint relates to administrative errors, IFS offices ask TÜV AUSTRIA to provide a statement and rectify the problem within one (1) week. The statement shall be issued in writing by email or post.

Audit Documentation

1. Application
 2. Offer
 3. Agreement
 4. Audit program
 5. Audit report
 6. Release of audit documentation form
- Letter of confirmation text form

Annex I – Check Procedure / operational language:

The self-assessment is cross checked by the auditor / assessor to verify its real implementation during the check.
The IFS ESG Check is carried out in the working language of the site.
The use of English is allowed in cases where it is necessary for better comprehension among the participants.
The check is structured based on the following steps:

- Short opening meeting
- Documentation and record review / inspection connected with the answers provided within the self-assessment document. Evaluation of documents related to the specific criteria. Interviews with relevant personnel
- Final conclusions drawn from the verification check / wrap up
- Closing meeting: end of the check

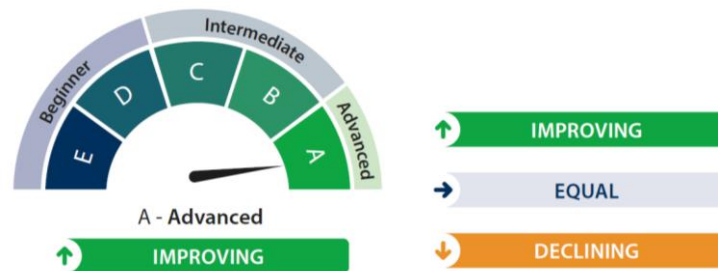
**Annex II –
Scoring system
/ Final results
IFS ESG Check
/ Actions:**

The scoring of the requirements consists of a basic numeric evaluation of:

- 0 points: there is no intention / no implementation. Further improvement action required
- 1 point: there is intention / no implementation. Further improvement action required
- 2 points: there is intention / partial implementation. Further improvement action required
- 3 points: there is intention / full implementation
- N / A (non-applicable): only possible to score for the requirement related to the calculation of the Product Carbon Footprint (PCF), as it is voluntary

The company shall propose improvement actions for those requirements scored with 0, 1 and 2 within maximum of four (4) weeks (since the last day of the check).

The total amount of points will generate a final scale which goes from A to E giving a final result of Advanced – Intermediate – Beginner



The results of the different module(s) are stated in only one letter of confirmation. The results in the different modules of the IFS ESG Check are independent of each other. If there is a current IFS Certificate and the ESG Check is failed and / or the modules are too, this does not have an impact on the main IFS Certificate (IFS Food).

TÜV AUSTRIA issues a reviewed report plus an improvement action plan stating the remote technique used in case the check has been performed remotely, and the date(s) of the IFS ESG Check.

- TÜV AUSTRIA completes the confirmation letter – companies are to receive the document.
- Additional handwritten notes are taken by the auditor / assessor and are available upon request.

For IFS to be accepted internationally and to make it widely understandable, the following explanations are translated into English:

IFS Report:

- Scope of the check
- Highlights of the module(s) (main summary of the check)
- Explanations of the requirements rated with 0 and 1

Improvement action plan:

- Explanations for those requirements rated with 0 and 1
- Improvement action proposed by the company for requirements rated with 0 and 1