



COTTON
MADE IN
AFRICA



CmiA Appeals Procedure

Introduction

1. According to CmiA's Assurance Manual (adopted in 2022), decisions for issuing a CmiA sales certificate for a Managing Entity are made by CmiA Verification Management. Licensing decisions are based on the outcomes of self-assessment and external verification. Managing Entities (or CmiA Units) may appeal against a licensing decision by submitting a written application, along with objective evidence, within 15 working days of being informed of the cancellation or denial of a CmiA certificate.
2. The appellant (i.e. the Managing Entity) must submit a completed [Appeals Submission Form](#) as found on the CmiA website. All appeals need to include:
 - a) a clear rationale for each non-conformity being appealed; and
 - b) detailed supporting evidence for each non-conformity being appealed.
3. Appeals are reviewed and decided by select members of CmiA's Appeals Committee, which is composed of AbTF senior management, independent third-party verifiers, and other experts deemed necessary and useful. For more information on the Appeals Committee, please refer to the [CmiA Appeals Committee Guidelines](#).
4. Appeals decisions are based on a detailed review of the objective evidence provided, both from the verification mission and from the Appeals Submission Form, and must fulfil both the letter and the spirit of the criteria and indicators in the version of the Principles, Criteria, and Indicators document valid at the time of the appeal.
5. A decision can have the following outcomes:
 - a) *Original decision overturned*: The decision being appealed against or reviewed will be changed by the CmiA Verification Manager. The effect of this changed decision is explained to the appellant along with the communication of the decision.
 - b) *Original decision confirmed*: The decision being appealed against or reviewed is confirmed and will not be changed. The appellant will be informed about the decision in writing, and the reasoning behind the decision will be explained.

Appeals Procedure

PROCESS STAGE	RESPONSIBLE	REQUIRED ACTIONS
1. Appeal submitted	Appellant (Managing Entity)	<p>1a. Managing Entity completes the appeal using the Appeals Submission Form available on the CmiA website in English and French.</p> <p>1b. Managing Entity emails the appeal to complaints@abt-foundation.org with the supporting documents.</p> <p>Appeals must be submitted within 15 working days of the Managing Entity being informed of the licensing decision.</p>
2. Appeal received and checked for eligibility	CmiA Verification Management	<p>2a. AbTF confirms to the appellant that the appeal has been received.</p> <p>2b. AbTF assesses the eligibility of the appeal, i.e. checks whether:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">* it has been submitted by a Managing Entity;* the correct template has been used;* it has been submitted within 15 working days of the Managing Entity having received the licensing decision;*the Appeals Submission Form has been sufficiently completed; and*evidence is provided for each appealed indicator assessment made by the verifiers. <p>2c. If the appeal is not eligible, the Managing Entity is informed and may submit the appeal one more time within five working days.</p> <p>2d. If necessary, eligible appeals will be translated into English (in co-ordination with the CmiA Verification Manager).</p>
3. Appeal processed	CmiA Appeals Committee	<p>3a. AbTF appoints three or more select members of the Appeals Committee to join the case-specific Appeal Task Force to review and decide on the submission. Members of the Appeal Task Force are selected based on local knowledge and availability; AbTF ensures that selected members are free from any direct conflict of interest.</p> <p>3b. The Appeal Task Force confirms availability and receives the full appeal submission package from AbTF, including the appeal submission and all relevant documentation (CAP¹ Assurance with the self-assessment, third-party indicator assessment, and verification report).</p>

¹ CAP = Cotton made in Africa Assurance Platform, an online tool for the entire verification process. A CAP Assurance covers one complete field- or ginnery-level verification of a Managing Entity.



4. Appeal decision made	CmiA Appeal Task Force	<p>4a. The Appeal Task Force has a minimum of five working days to review the materials received.</p> <p>4b. CmiA Verification Management schedules and co-ordinates a virtual meeting of the Appeal Task Force.</p> <p>4c. The Appeal Task Force evaluates the appeal and reaches a decision.</p> <p>4d. The Appeal Task Force documents the decision in writing, including its rationale.</p>
5. Notification of the appeal decision provided	CmiA Verification Management	<p>5a. The decision is communicated to the appellant via email. All decisions made by the Appeal Task Force are final.</p> <p>CmiA aims to communicate final decisions to the appellant within 25 working days of receiving an (eligible) appeal submission.</p>

Related Documents

The following documents supplement the Appeals Procedure document and can be found on the CmiA website:

- **CmiA Assurance Manual**
- **CmiA Appeals Submission Form**
- **CmiA Appeals Committee Guidelines**