

Adopted 39<sup>th</sup> AMAF Meeting 28/9/2017



**GUIDANCE MANUAL FOR USING  
THE ALIGNMENT ASSESSMENT TOOL OF  
ASEAN GOOD AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES  
(ASEAN-GAP)**

# Guidance Manual for Using the Alignment Assessment Tool

## Introduction

For the alignment activities, the Philippines used the tool developed by the International Task Force on Harmonization and Equivalence for Organic Agriculture Systems (ITF), which was further modified by the Task Force on ASEAN Standards for Organic Agriculture (TF-ASOA). The Alignment Assessment Tool was designed to provide an initial self-assessment of the National Standard against the ASEAN Standard. Further, it enables the users to identify points for clarification/modification or have action lines for provisions of the national standard that deviate from the regional standard.

The first column is the **Base Standard** – where provisions of the base standard are written. The second column is the **Referred standard** – where corresponding provisions of the national standards are filled-in relevant to the requirements in the Base standard (ASEAN GAP). Assessors are required to determine the degree of alignment in whether it is fully aligned (E) or the national standard has additional or more requirements (A); or not aligned (N) including the declaration that the national standard has omitted or does not have a corresponding provision with that of the Base Standard.

A column for justification or clarification is on the 4<sup>th</sup> column (example: that another law or standard covers the provision; or having additional or more provisions in the national standard due to religious requirements such as Halal, etc).

### I. **Scope & Purpose**

This document provides guidelines in filling-up the Alignment Assessment Matrix in assessing the alignment of the ASEAN Member States (AMS) National Good Agricultural Practices Standard with the ASEAN Standard for Good Agricultural Practices (ASEAN GAP). The purpose of this document is to provide common understanding among AMS in using the adopted Alignment Assessment Matrix.

### II. **Objective of the Alignment Assessment** (Alignment with the ASEAN GAP)

The purpose of the Alignment Assessment is to align the AMS' National Good Agricultural Practices Standard with the ASEAN GAP of the Expert Working Group on ASEAN GAP. In order to achieve this end, the following objectives are to be met by the AMS:

1. Provide self-assessment on the alignment assessment matrix;
2. Review the self-assessment conducted by other AMS (peer review);
3. Resolve issues that may occur during peer-review; and
4. Determine the degree of alignment of AMS' National Good Agricultural Practices Standard against the ASEAN GAP.

### III. Guidelines

#### Step A: Self-Assessment

- For the purpose of the Alignment Assessment, the **base standard** is the ASEAN GAP and the **referred standard** is the AMS National Good Agricultural Practices Standard.
- A certain requirement is assessed by ticking the corresponding box under the **Self-Assessment column**.
- The following serves as legend for filling up the alignment assessment matrix:
  - E - (fully) aligned; have equivalent requirement in the national standard
  - A - if the requirement/s of the referred standards have additional or more requirements than the base standard
  - N - Not aligned
- Relevant reference/legislations/regulations of the AMS should also be cited as deemed appropriate in meeting the requirements of the ASEAN GAP. This can be recorded in the Justification column
- Alignment assessment may include following cases:

#### Case 1: ASEAN GAP requirement is broader

A specific ASEAN GAP requirement is met by several corresponding requirements in AMS' National GAP Standard. In such cases, it will be deemed aligned and E will be ticked for several corresponding requirements of AMS' National Standard. Otherwise, if one of the corresponding requirements is not included, it is deemed as not aligned (N).

Example:

ASEAN GAP Requirement	AMS (Philippines) GAP Requirement	Assessment
<p>The <u>risk of contaminating produce with chemical and biological hazards</u> from the previous use of the site or from adjoining sites <u>is assessed for each crop grown and a record is kept of any significant risks identified.</u></p>	<p>Potential sources of <u>contamination from the environment, natural or man-made should be identified.</u> Specifically, production and primary processing should not be done in areas that are near or previously used as dumping sites for solid wastes and mine tailings.</p> <p>In the case of new site(s), the <u>risk of causing environmental harm within or outside the site should be assessed</u> for the proposed use. A <u>record of all potential hazards identified</u> should be kept. Risk assessment should consider the prior use of the site and potential</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> E</p> <p>*Only one tick for the two AMS requirements. If the 2<sup>nd</sup> one is not included, it is deemed (N) not aligned.</p>

	impact of adjacent sites to the new site(s).	
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### Case 2: AMS' National GAP Standard requirement is broader

A specific requirement of AMS' national GAP standard meets several ASEAN GAP requirements. In such cases, AMS' requirement is filled-in to several corresponding rows/cells and assessed accordingly. Other references such as legislations and regulations should be cited as deemed appropriate under the justification/comment column.

Example:

ASEAN GAP Requirement	AMS (Philippines) GAP Requirement	Self-Assessment	Justification/Comment
Empty chemical containers are disposed of according to relevant country regulations and in a manner that minimises the risk of contaminating produce. Official collection and disposal systems are used where available.	Expired or banned chemical should never be used for crop protection purposes. Obsolete chemicals are disposed of through official collection systems or in legal off-site areas.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N	PhilGAP does not directly address the manner of disposal of empty chemical containers.  Recommendation to add provisions on disposal of empty chemical containers.
Obsolete chemicals are disposed of through official collection systems or in legal off-site areas.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> E	

### Case 3: ASEAN GAP requirement is addressed under different AMS' standard/regulation

A specific requirement of ASEAN GAP is not addressed by AMS' national GAP standard but provided under different AMS' standard/regulation. In such cases, AMS' requirement is filled-in to several corresponding rows/cells and assessed accordingly. Other references such as legislations and regulations should be cited as deemed appropriate under the justification/comment column.

Example:

ASEAN GAP Requirement	AMS (Philippines) Requirement	Self-Assessment	Justification/Comment
Actions are taken to resolve complaints related to food safety, and a record is kept of the complaint and actions taken.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> E	This provision is addressed in the Administrative Circular on Certification Guidelines.

**Note:**

For submissions, the submitting country must:

- Fill-in the name, contact details and country of the Focal Person and the date of self-assessment (YY/MM/DD) in the space provided in the Alignment Assessment Matrix.
- The AMS submits the self-assessment matrix including the English translation of AMS standard and other requirements to the Philippine Secretariat (Email: [standards.bafs@gmail.com](mailto:standards.bafs@gmail.com)).

Assessor

FOCAL PERSON	LEAD REVIEWER (NAME)	2ND REVIEWER
CONTACT DETAILS (E-MAIL ADDRESS)	CONTACT DETAILS	CONTACT DETAILS
COUNTRY	COUNTRY	COUNTRY
DATE OF SELF-ASSESSMENT (YYYYMM/DD)	DATE OF REVIEW (YYYYMM/DD)	DATE OF REVIEW

  

ALIGNMENT ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL STANDARD AGAINST ASEAN GAP STANDARDS												
Sections and Requirements in the ASEAN GAP		Corresponding Requirements in National Standard & Other Regulations		Self-Assessme	Justification/Comme	Lead Review	Comment	2nd Review	Comment	Validation Result	Comment	
Ref.	Description	Ref.	Description	COUNTRY:			Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	
				E	A	N	E	A	N	E	A	N
2	Food Safety Module											
	Site History and Management											

Figure 1. Designated space to be filled-out by the Assessor and Reviewers on the Alignment Assessment Matrix.

**Step B: Peer-Review**

- There shall be two (2) reviewers to conduct peer-review: 1 Lead Reviewer and 1 Second Reviewer
- The Lead Reviewer shall be from a country that have an existing standard and certification in place and has experienced in using the alignment assessment tool.
- The designated Reviewers will simultaneously do the review of Self-Assessment Results.
- The Reviewers and the Country of the referred national standard may need to meet either physically, via teleconference, or other means of electronic communication.
- The Reviewers must not review each other’s standard.
- The choices for the assessment of alignment in the matrix are:
  - E - (fully) aligned; have equivalent requirement in the national standard
  - A - if the requirement/s of the referred standards have additional or more requirements than the base standard
  - N - Not aligned
- For the Reviewers, mark only against the ASEAN GAP requirement. If the Reviewer’s assessment is not the same with that of the Self-assessment, provide comments on the corresponding rows of AMS requirements as relevant under the “Justification/Comment” column.

**Note:**

For submissions of peer review, the Reviewer must:

- Fill-in the name, contact details of the Reviewer and the date (YY/MM/DD) in the space provided in the Alignment Matrix.
- The Reviewer submits the results of the peer review to the Philippine Secretariat (Email: [standards.bafs@gmail.com](mailto:standards.bafs@gmail.com)).
- The Philippine Secretariat transmits the results of the peer review to the country of the referred standard furnished the Reviewers.

Lead Reviewer

Second Reviewer

FOCAL PERSON	LEAD REVIEWER (NAME)	2ND REVIEWER
CONTACT DETAILS (E-MAIL ADDRESS)	CONTACT DETAILS	CONTACT DETAILS
COUNTRY	COUNTRY	COUNTRY
DATE OF SELF-ASSESSMENT (YYYYMM/DD)	DATE OF REVIEW (YYYYMM/DD)	DATE OF REVIEW

  

ALIGNMENT ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL STANDARD AGAINST ASEAN GAP STANDARDS												
Sections and Requirements in the ASEAN GAP		Corresponding Requirements in National Standard & Other Regulations		Self-Assessme	Justification/Comme	Lead Review	Comment	2nd Review	Comment	Validation Result	Comment	
Ref.	Description	Ref.	Description	COUNTRY:			Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	
				E	A	N	E	A	N	E	A	N
2	Food Safety Module											
	Site History and Management											

Figure 1. Designated space to be filled-out by the Assessor and Reviewers on the Alignment Assessment Matrix.

**Step C: Resolution of Issues and Validation (Group)**

- If necessary and applicable, issues identified and clarifications demanded by the Reviewers will be discussed with the Country of the referred standard during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Workshop for the ASEAN GAP Alignment.
- The Country of the referred standard should prepare response to the issues/clarifications posed by the Reviewers and submit the Discussion/Position Paper to the Philippine Secretariat (Email: [standards.bafs@gmail.com](mailto:standards.bafs@gmail.com)) for use as working document during the Workshop.
- The reviewed assessment will be discussed in plenary by the Expert Working Group on ASEAN GAP for validations of the results of the review and to resolve unresolved issues, if any. All reviewed assessment will undergo group validation.