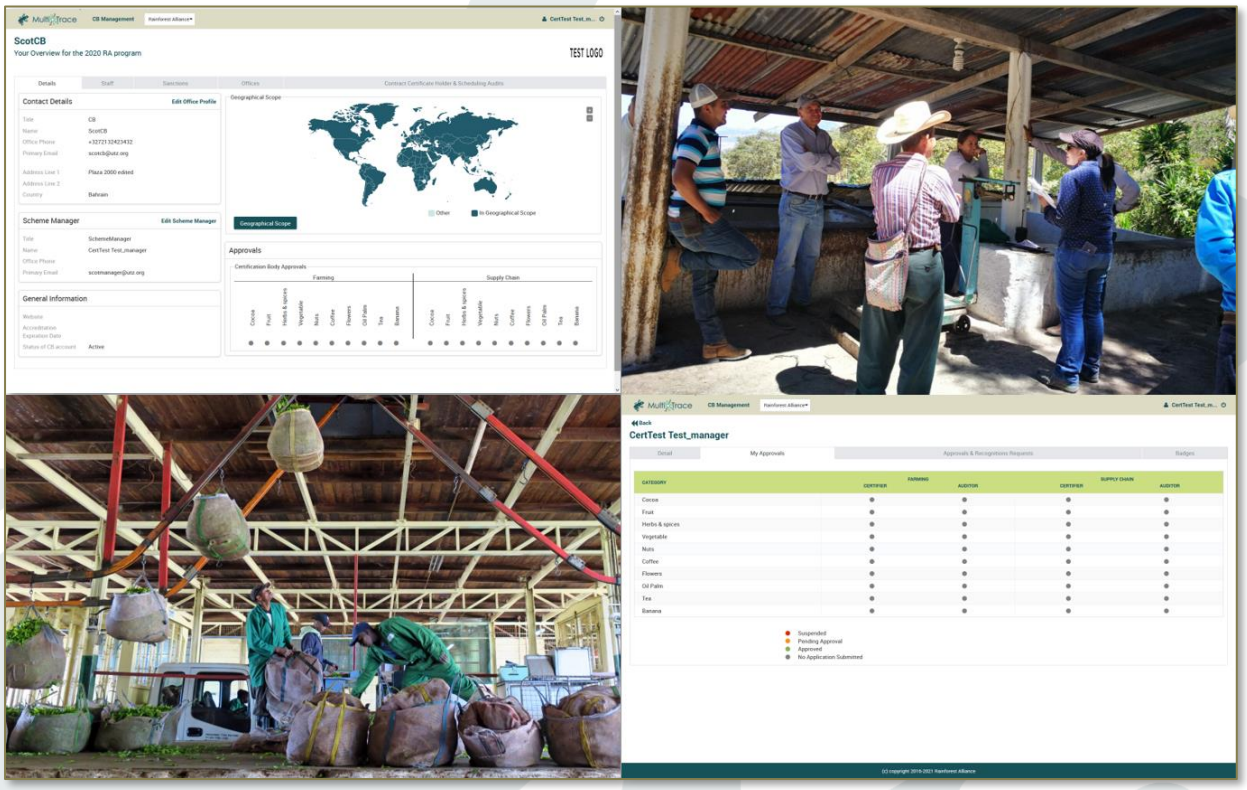
RACP USER MANUAL

FOR

CERTIFICATION BODIES



Learn how to use the Rainforest Alliance Certification Platform (RACP) in the Rainforest Alliance 2020 Certification Program.

Version 4.2, April 2023

RAINFOREST ALLIANCE

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EDITOR'S NOTES

The Rainforest Alliance Certification Platform (RACP) is the general name for the applications used in the new Rainforest Alliance certification program. While most of the actions described in this manual are performed in MultiTrace, we use the name RACP throughout this manual.

This manual is being created in parallel with the RACP system development. Screenshots are taken from the test client, and may slightly differ from the live version of the RACP due to ongoing development. All data shown is for training purposes only.

ABOUT THIS USER MANUAL

This manual is meant for Certification Body (CB) personnel's use and describes in detail the steps necessary to manage the certification process in the Rainforest Alliance Certification Platform. While the Scheme Manager is the main CB employee using the RACP, other personnel, for example a data administrator, may also benefit of this user manual.

ROLES OF CERTIFICATION BODY PERSONNEL

CB personnel refers to all those hired workers, independent contractors, and consultants who hold a legal relationship with a Rainforest Alliance approved CB and who are involved and/or carry out assurance activities within the Rainforest Alliance certification process. The Rainforest Alliance authorized CB structure consists of two sub-teams: Program Management team and Audit team.

The Program Management Team includes CB personnel involved in the management of an audit program. The Audit team includes CB personnel involved in activities related to conducting an audit.

The table shows the Rainforest Alliance authorized CB personnel structure.

Role	
Program Management	Scheme Manager
	Certifier
	Database administrator
Audit Team	Trainee
	Auditor
	Lead Auditor
	Lead Auditor for Social Topics
	CB Instructor
	Technical Expert

This manual uses screenshots of the RACP, to illustrate all steps that need to be performed by the Scheme Manager. Topics include the following:

- Understanding contents and scope of the RACP for managing CB user profiles;
- How to edit user profiles and scope of responsibilities of staff members;
- How to add new staff, assign their responsibilities and request approval thereof;
- How to contract Certification Holders.

GLOSSARY

The table below lists the most frequently used terms and abbreviations and their significance for working with the Rainforest Alliance Certification Platform.

See also our glossary of the terms used in the documents for the 2020 Rainforest Alliance Certification Program.

Term	***Definition***
Certificate Scope	A set of activities, processes, actors, and products covered under the certification of a certificate holder.
Certified	The reference of the term "certified" in the requirements refers to crop/volume produced and traded by Certificate Holders, verified against the 2020 Rainforest Alliance Sustainable Agriculture Standard.
Farm	All land and facilities used for agricultural production and processing activities under the geographical scope of the farm/group

	management. A farm may be composed of several neighbouring or geographically separate farm units within one country provided that they are under a common management body. All farms and farm units falling within this geographical scope must comply with the Rainforest Alliance standard, even when a different crop from the certified one is cultivated (e.g. farm/farm unit with a plantation of rice belonging to a producer part of a certified group for coffee that falls within the same geographical scope). A farm may be composed of several neighbouring or geographically separate units of land within one country if they are under a common management body.
Farm scope	All land and facilities used for agricultural production and processing activities under a common management body of a farm.
Geographical scope	The geographical area covered by separate farm units within one country that are under a common management body.
Group	An association of organized producers that have a shared Internal Management System (IMS) and are certified together under the Rainforest Alliance standard Certification Protocol. The group of organized producers can be organized in an association or cooperative or managed by a supply chain actor (such as an exporter) or another entity.
Group Management	The entity that signs the certification agreement with the Rainforest Alliance accredited certification body and takes responsibility for the development and implementation of the group's internal management system and all member farms' management systems. The group management is responsible for assuring member farms' compliance with the Standard.
Group Member	A producer who is certified as part of a group. It is the person who is the actual operator of the farm (e.g. a sharecropper) and does not need to be the landowner.
Intermediary	Any actor that trades (buys and sells) Rainforest Alliance Certified product before it reaches first buyer level. Intermediaries can also physically handle and based on their activities, intermediaries shall be compliant with the applicable requirements of the Farm Standard.
Internal Management System (IMS)	A documented system of quality management with the purpose to facilitate an efficient organization and management of the group and of ensuring that the group and group members comply with the applicable requirements of the Rainforest Alliance Sustainable Agricultural Standard.
Management Plan	A detailed overview, set up by the management, of the goals that are set to be compliant with the requirements (for both management, workers, and/or group members) and the respective services necessary to meet these goals. The services can include training, technical assistance, access to inputs (e.g. seedling), and awareness-raising activities. The Management Plan indicates details on the services such as the timeline, the responsible person for the provision of the services, and the beneficiaries.
Mandated user rights	Authorization is given to a supply chain certificate holder to make transactions in the traceability platform on behalf of a farm certificate holder.
Mass Balance	Administrative traceability that allows supply chain actors to claim product as Rainforest Alliance Certified when the equivalent quantity was sourced as Rainforest Alliance Certified.
Multi-site	A supply chain actor that does not have farming in the scope of its Rainforest Alliance certification and has an identified central location under which two or more sites are operating.

Producer	A person (either male or female) who owns and/or operates an agricultural enterprise, either commercially or to sustain him or herself or his/her family.
RACP	Rainforest Alliance Certification Platform, comprising all systems and modules involved in the Rainforest Alliance certification process, the main applications being MultiTrace and Marketplace 2.0.
SCRA	As a part of the assurance system, data is collected through the Supply Chain Risk Assessment (SCRA) which is embedded in the registration and profile completion process. The SCRA, only applicable to supply chain actors, evaluates the potential risks of an organization's operations on individual site level in order to determine the type and frequency of verification required.
Site	A geographically separate entity belonging to a Certificate Holder (farm or supply chain actor) where a specific number and type of operations are conducted.
Small farm	Small farms primarily rely on family or household labour or workforce exchange with other members of the community. They might hire temporary workers for seasonal tasks or even hire (few) permanent workers. Small farmers are usually organized in a group to be certified and rely on the Group Management for record development and record keeping.
Subcontractor	An organization or individual contracted to carry out one or more specific operations on the certified products, for example, processing, storing, packaging, and/or labelling products.
Supply chain actor	Any non-farming organization that relates to the certified product from its production up to its final sale.
Verification level	The verification level is the result of the Supply Chain Risk Assessment (SCRA) and defines the type, intensity and frequency of verification that is required.

RACP OVERVIEW

This section provides an overview of all sections of the CB management application in the RACP in terms of contents, purpose and available functionality.

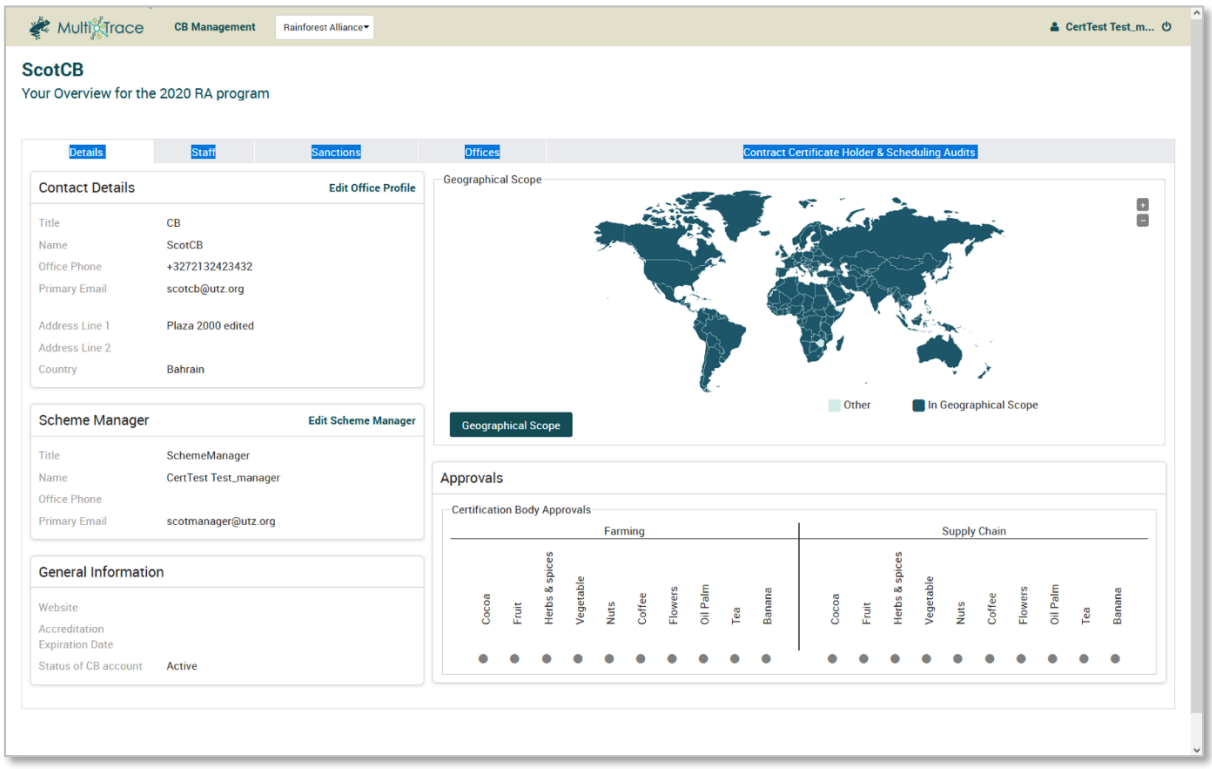
After accessing the RACP, you arrive at the home page that provides some general information of your Certification Body's organization related to the 2020 Rainforest Alliance Certification Program. This page is divided in five tabs, described below.

DETAILS

This tab shows the contact details of the Certification Body you are part of, contact details of the Scheme Manager and some general information.

More details on Farm or Supply Chain scope for each country are available with clicking on the tab 'Geographical scope'. Hovering over the map highlights the countries, and you can also zoom in and zoom out on the chart.

The table 'Approvals' shows for which products this CB is approved to perform certification activities for farms and Supply Chain Actors respectively.



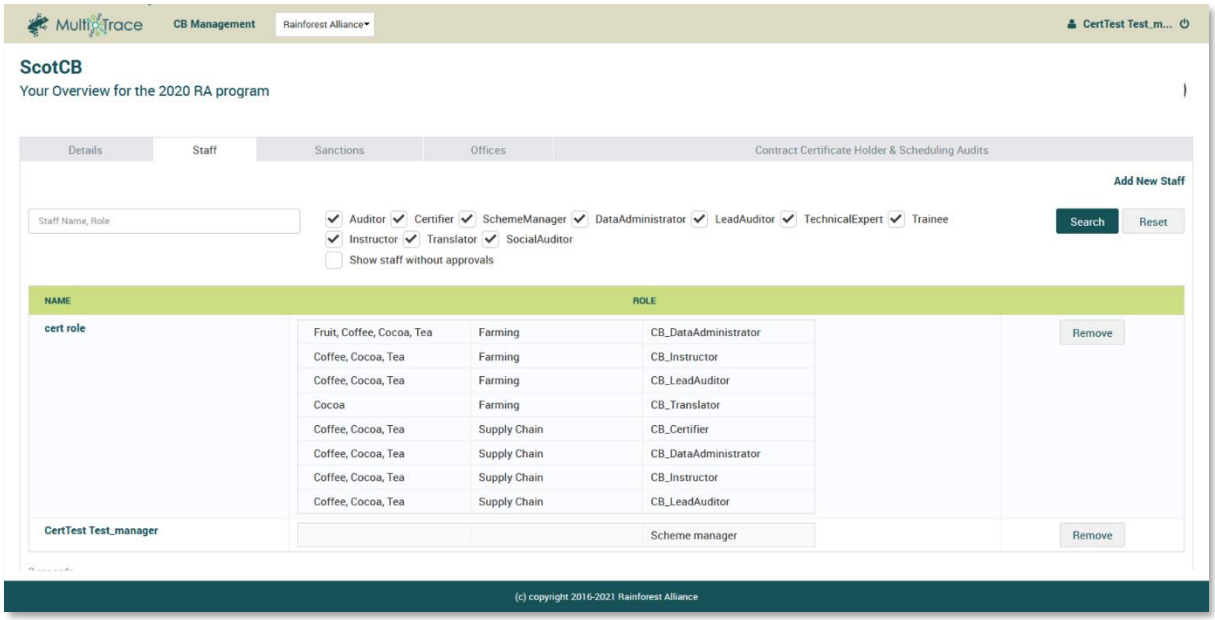
The homepage features a brief overview of your CB and five tabs with detailed information

STAFF

This is a key page of the RACP for Certification Bodies, showing the list of staff members in your team, their responsibilities and role(s). Staff members can have multiple roles for different crops.

With long lists, the filters and the search function are useful to quickly find a specific staff member. Note the tick-box 'show staff without approvals', shows those staff members for which RA approval is pending or no role has been given.

At this page you can do three things: remove a staff member, edit a set of information pertaining to a staff member (click on the name), and add a new staff member.

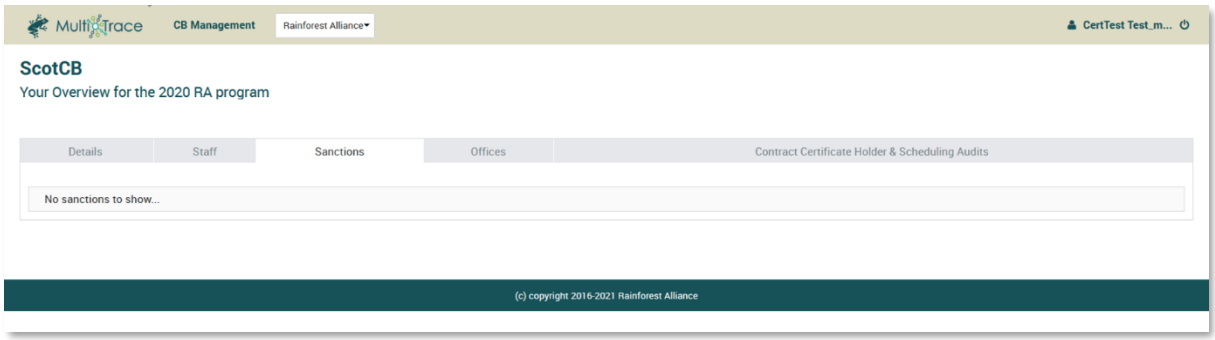


This page shows staff members in your team, their responsibilities and role(s).

SANCTIONS

As described in the document '2020 Rules for Certification Bodies', the Rainforest Alliance reserves the right to sanction CBs based on evidence of improper procedure or behaviour that jeopardizes the credibility of the Rainforest Alliance and/or compromises its assurance system.

Applied sanctions are visible at this tab 'Sanctions'.



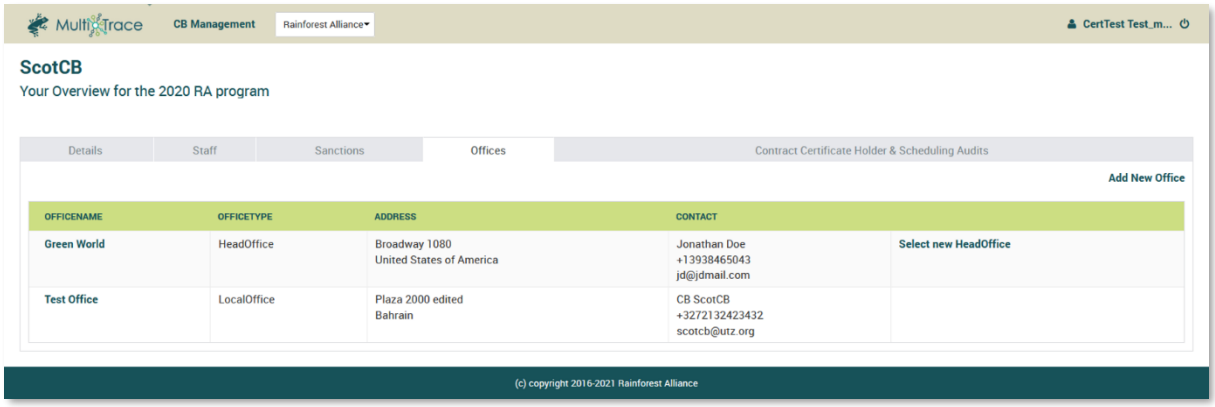
The tab Sanctions shows any sanctions applied by the Rainforest Alliance

OFFICES

In case the CB has more than one office, this tab is used to list all offices with some basic information. By definition, there is only one head office, while any other office will be designated as local office.

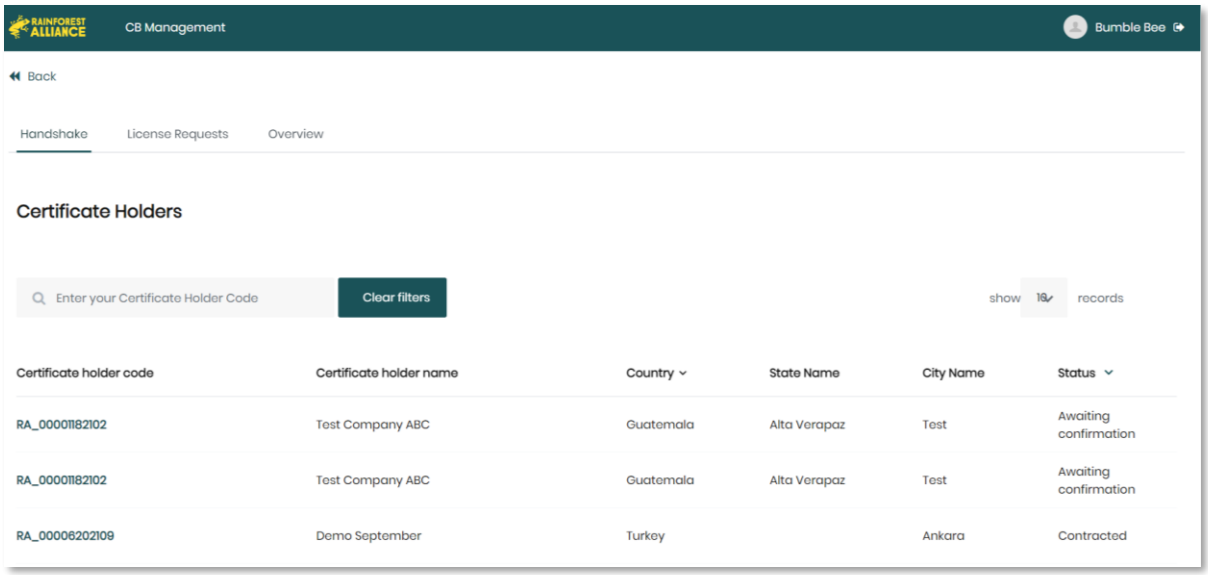
You can easily add more offices, while any of the offices can be made the head office.

Only the head office will be shown on the home page with the details as described above in the section 'Details'.



This tab shows the head office and local offices

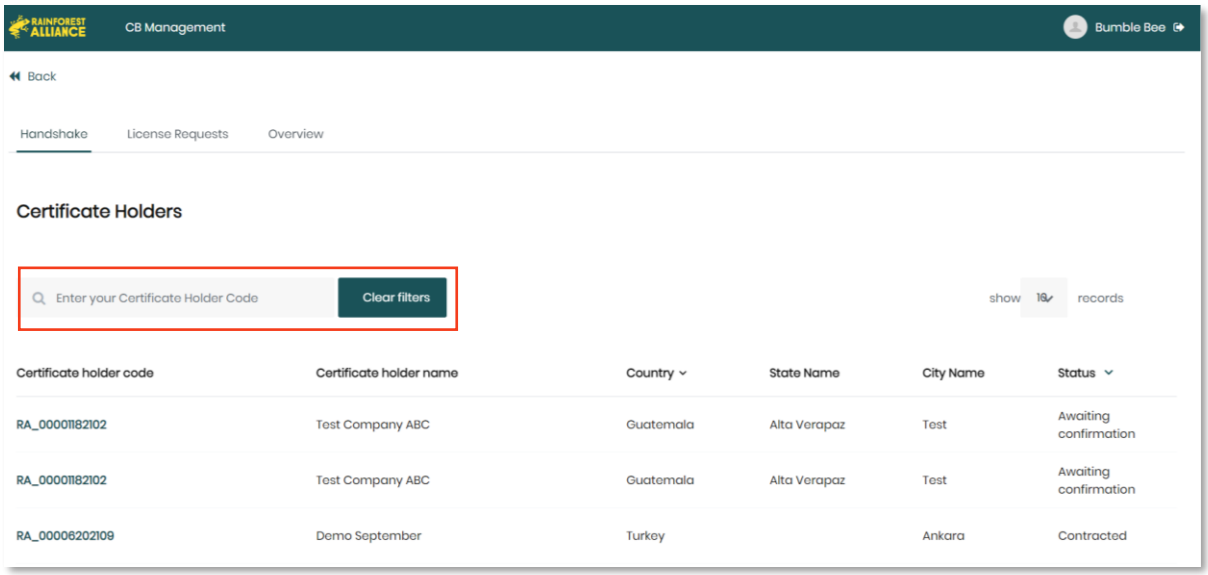
CONTRACT CERTIFICATE HOLDERS, SCHEDULING AUDITS & PREPARATION



Certificate Holders that have a contract with your CB are listed at this tab

As a Certification Body, you may collaborate with multiple Certificate Holders (CHs). This tab shows all Certificate Holders that have a contract with your CB. It shows the Certificate Holder's code, name, the status of their contract- as well as the country of their operations.

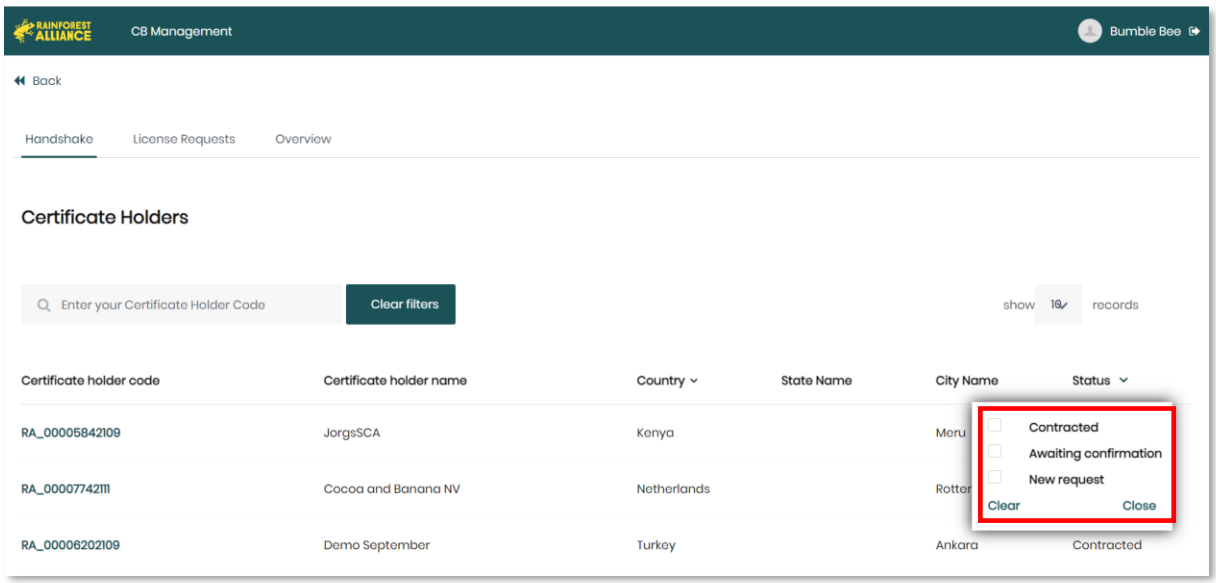
With the knowledge that there can be a long list of contracted CHs, the search function on the top left-hand side of the screen is available to easily find specific Certificate Holders.



Search function is displayed in red above

Simply enter the 'Certificate Holder Code' (i.e RA_00005842109) or the country they operate within, in order to refine the search to the desired CHs.

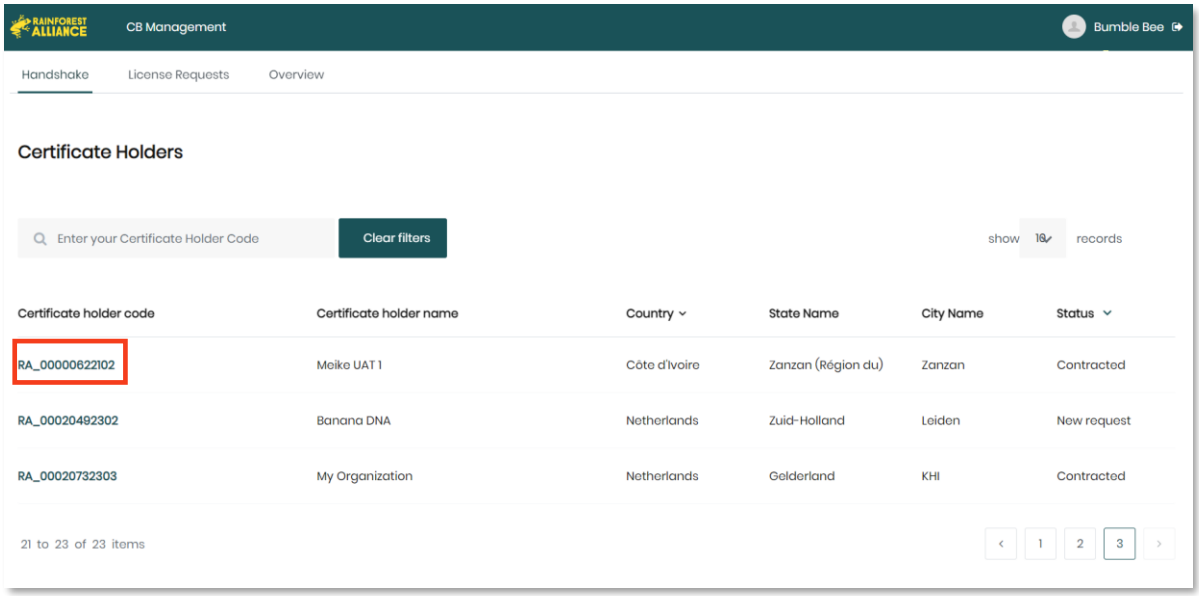
Another function that can be used to refine your list of contracted Certificate Holders is to click on the drop-down function of the 'Status' column, as displayed below:



'Status' drop-down allows filtering of CHs according to their stage in the contracting process

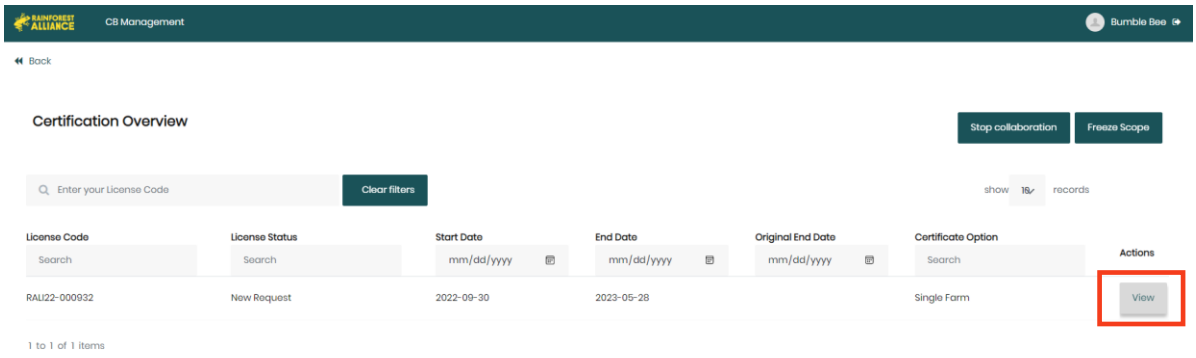
From here, it's possible to choose CHs according to their status, for example, selecting 'contracted' will display all CHs that have already established and confirmed the contract with your CB. Choosing 'Awaiting Confirmation' will display CHs which are yet to confirm their approval of your contract, and respectively, 'New Requests' will display CHs that are awaiting to be approved by your CB.

Clicking on the Certificate Holder code opens a page with relevant information about audits for that Certificate Holder, i.e scope of audits and audit preparation data.
Below the steps to navigate this information is shown.



Press on the 'Certificate Holder code' to get more specific information

Upon clicking the 'Certificate Holder code' the 'Certification Overview' page will appear.



This shows the display of the 'Certification Overview' tab

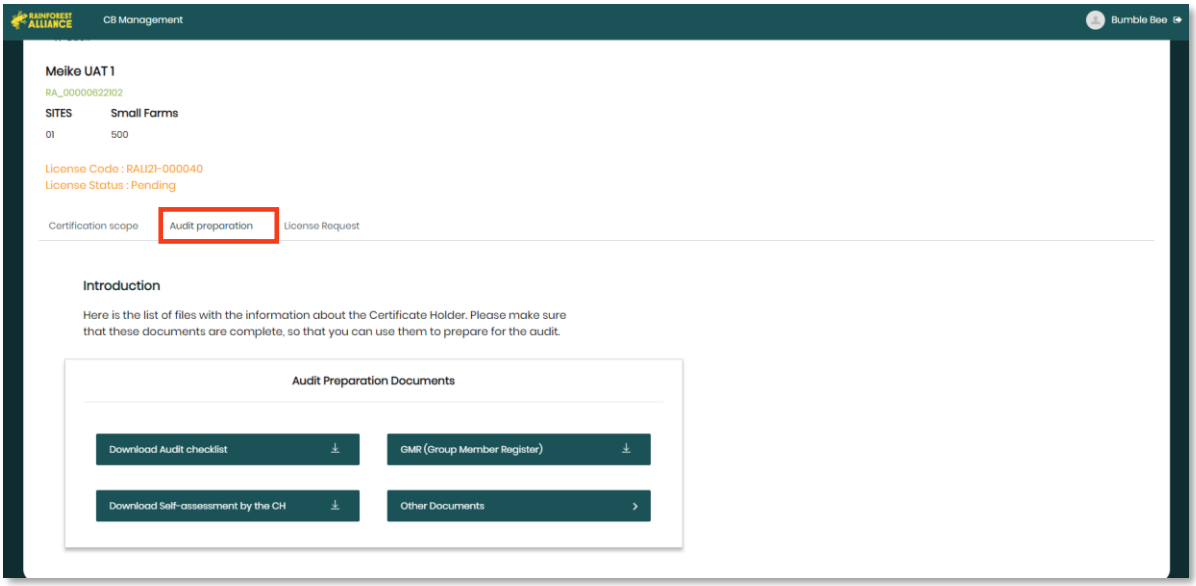
Information of the CH's: 'license code', 'license status', start and end date as well as the certificate option are displayed here. Also, on this page it is possible to 'Stop Collaboration' with the CH and 'Freeze Scope' using the buttons in the top right-hand corner. Before scheduling an audit, the Certificate Holder's certification scope can be frozen to ensure that the CH cannot make adjustments without your knowledge. Only when you as a certification Body unfreeze their scope, can they make adjustments.

Clicking 'View', as outlined in red above, will take you to a tab containing deeper information on the CH's 'certification scope' and the relevant documentation on planning for 'audit preparation'.

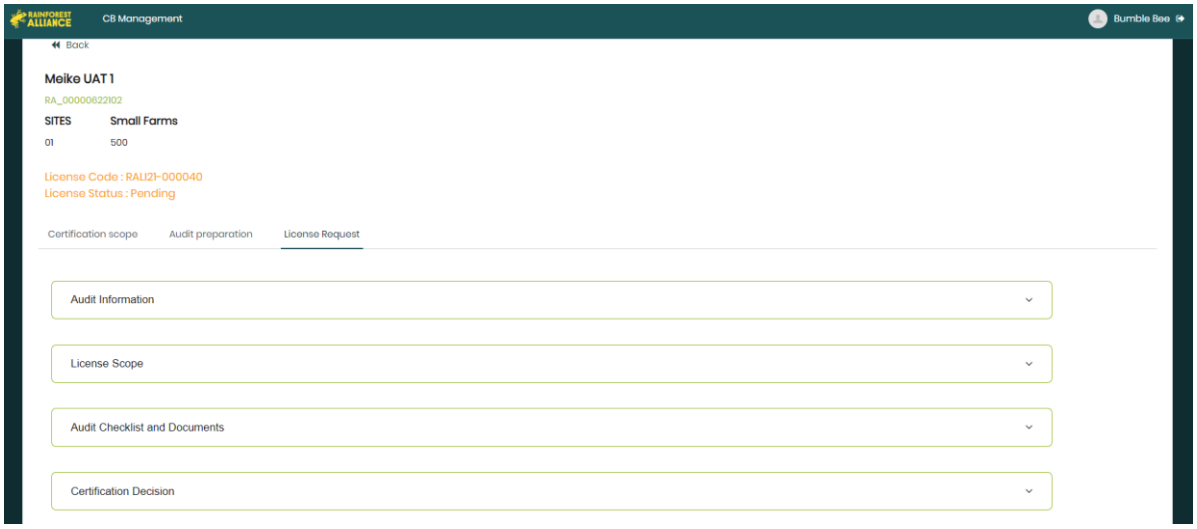
This tab shows the 'certification scope'

Details on the number of CH sites, farms or farm-groups 'type', 'location', 'activities' and 'commodities' appear here.

Clicking the 'Audit preparation' tab, outlined in red below, will take you to the documents filled out by the CH.

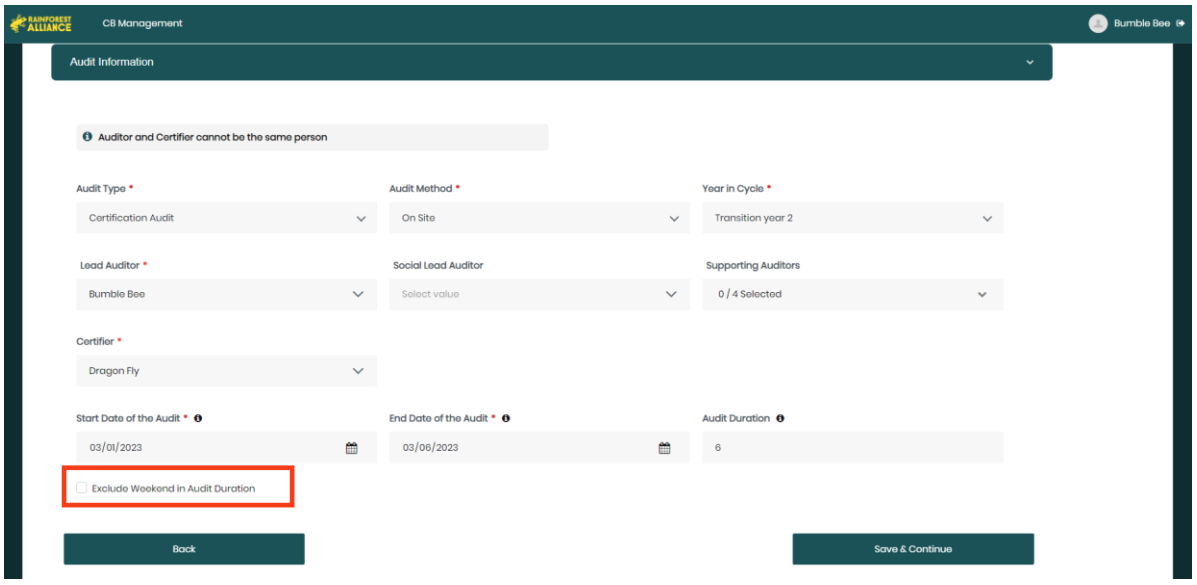


This shows the display of the 'Audit preparation' tab



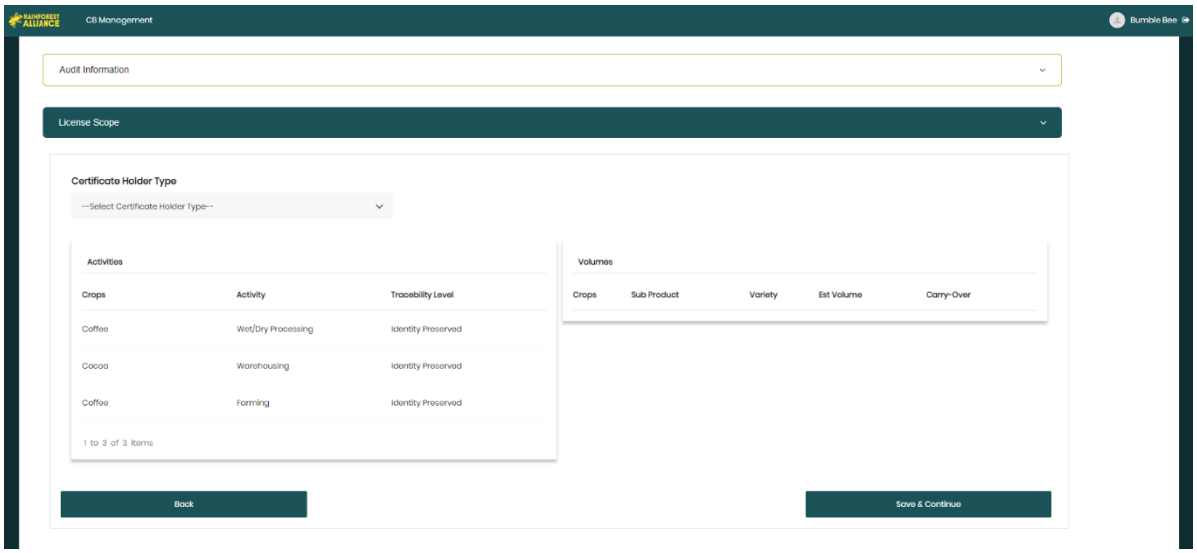
This shows the display of the 'License Request' tab

You can then click onto the 'License Request' tab. Here you will be required to fill out four different steps in order to make the license request to S&A.

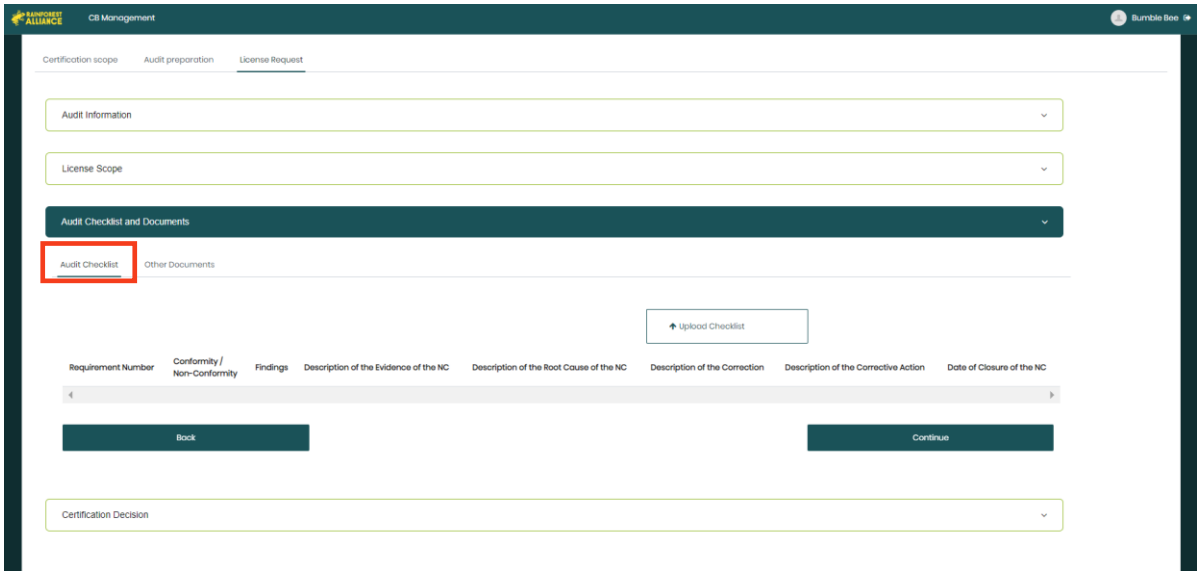


This shows the display of the 'Audit Information' tab

Firstly, you will have to click on the 'Audit Information' tab and make sure to fill in all required fields marked by a red star. Please note, when placing the audit start and end date, you can choose to tick the box (marked in red in the image above) to exclude weekend days if those were not within the audit days.



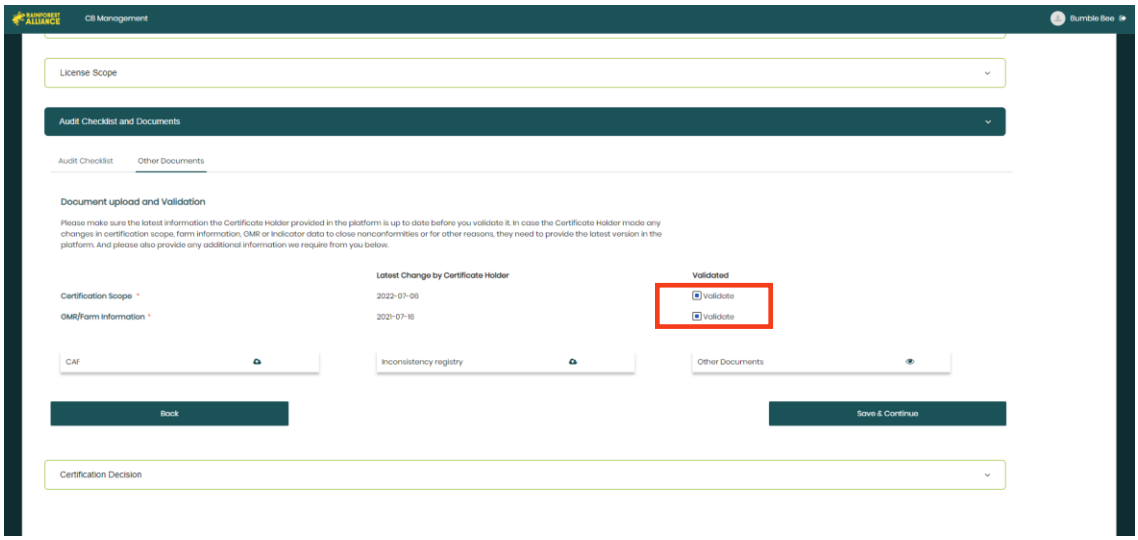
This shows the display of the 'License Scope' tab



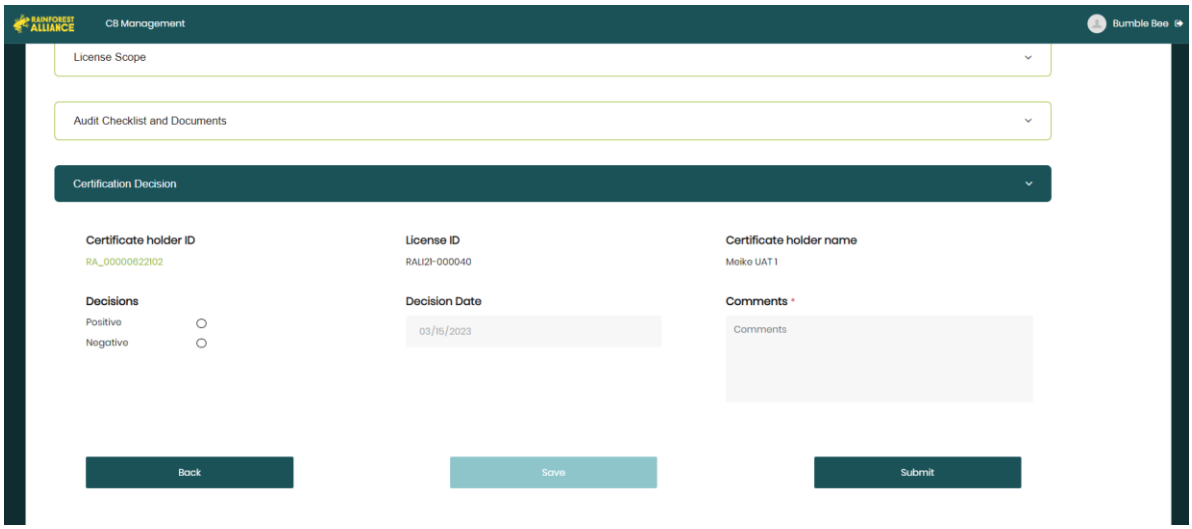
This shows the display of the 'Audit Checklist' tab

Here is where you can upload the checklist, as well as any other documents in the tab next to it named 'other documents'.

In ‘other documents’, you must tick and validate the boxes as shown below.



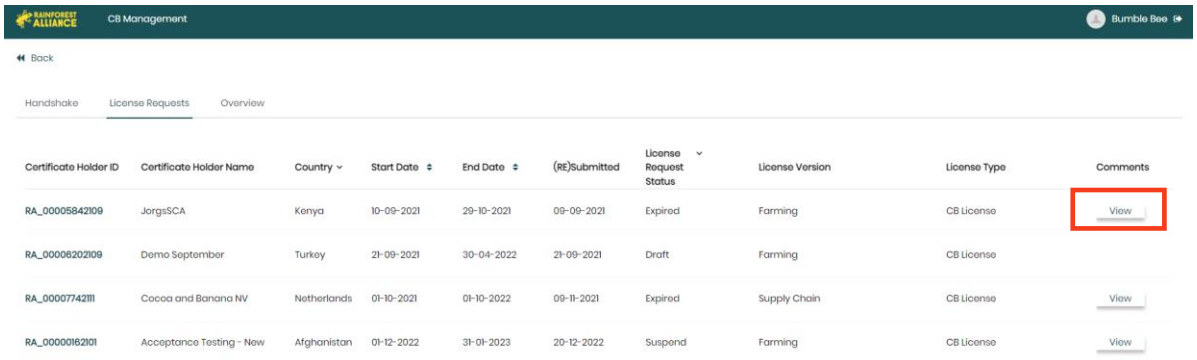
This shows the display of the ‘Other Documents’ tab



This shows the display of the ‘Certification Decision’ tab

When clicking on the ‘Certification Decision’ tab, you can either tick positive (for a certification decision) or negative (for a non-certification decision). The decision date is filled in automatically and you can leave a comment for the RA S&A officer in the comment box, before submitting.

When you have completed everything, you can submit the request.



This shows the display of the 'License requests' tab

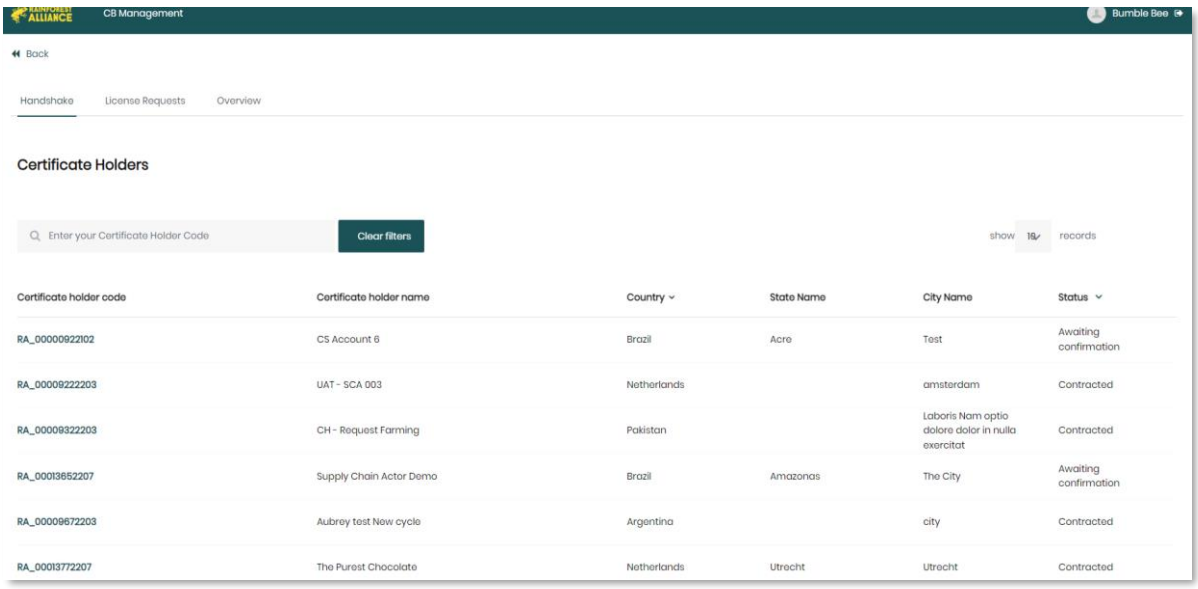
When going back to the general tab, you can click on the license request tab, where all your license requests will be listed. When clicking on 'view', you can see the comments placed by S&A, once they have reviewed your license request, as well as keep track of the status of the license request.

CONTRACTING A 'NEW' CERTIFICATE HOLDER

All CHs that require a CB certification audit, shall sign a certification agreement with the selected CB. This is a manual activity outside the RACP. Only when this agreement has been signed by both the CH and CB, it is confirmed in the RACP through the so called 'handshake' process. This will give the CB access to the full profile of the CH where progress can be monitored and the necessary information for the audit preparation shall be shared.

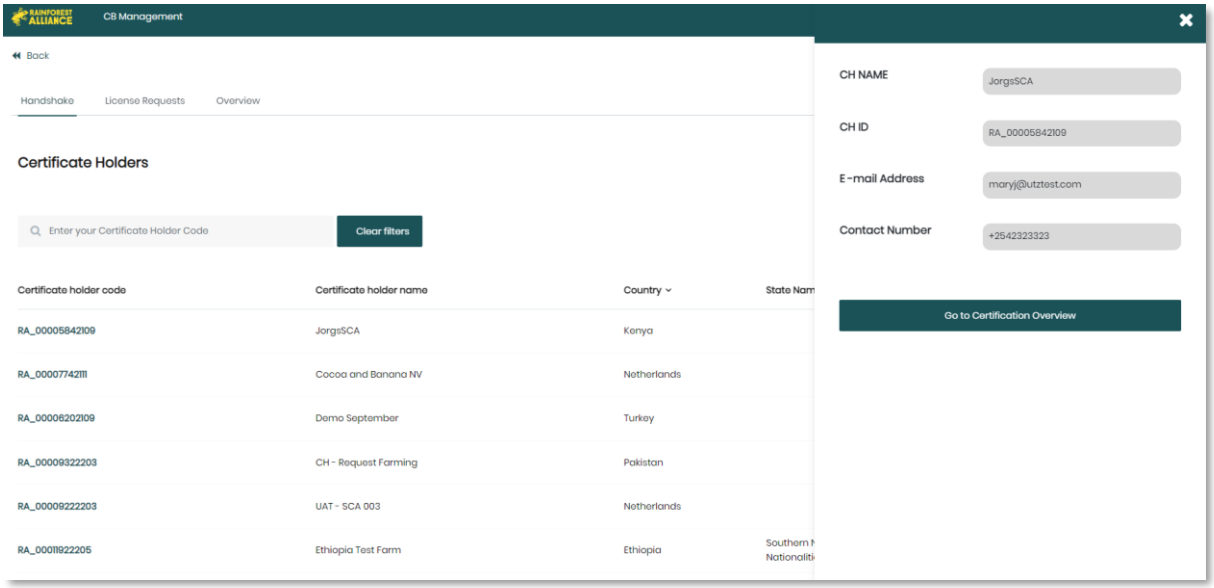
Certificate Holders that have a contract with your Certification Body are listed at the tab 'Contract Certificate Holders & Scheduling Audits', together with the status of the contract. To contract another Certificate Holder, use the button 'Find Compatible CHs'. You may change your selection until you sign the contract with the CH.

With the button 'Find Compatible CHs', you can look up any Certificate Holder that is registered with the Rainforest Alliance and proceed to formalize your collaboration with a contract. You may change your selection until you sign the contract with the Certificate Holder.



From this overview page, you can start the contracting process with a new Certificate Holder

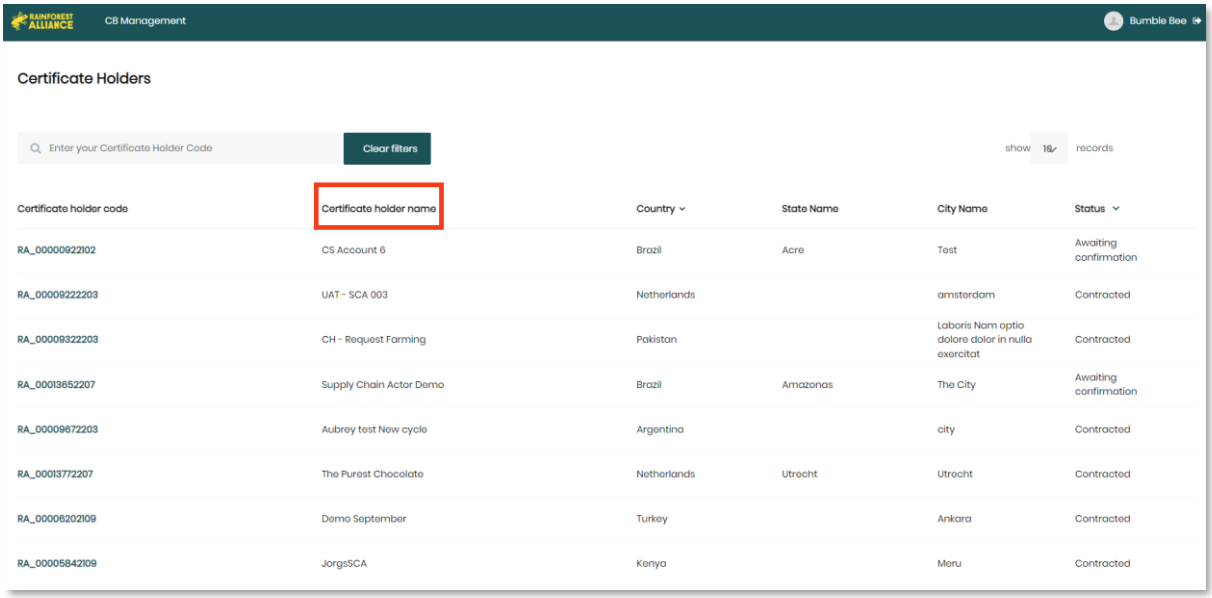
After clicking on 'Find Compatible CHs' first a window will open with several filters which can refine your search according to: standard, country, commodity, state or even city name. Bear in mind that these fields need to be entered in sequential order, from top to bottom- if no entries appear, the most likely explanation is that there are no matches to the filters you applied.



Select the relevant filters to find compatible Certificate Holder's to contract

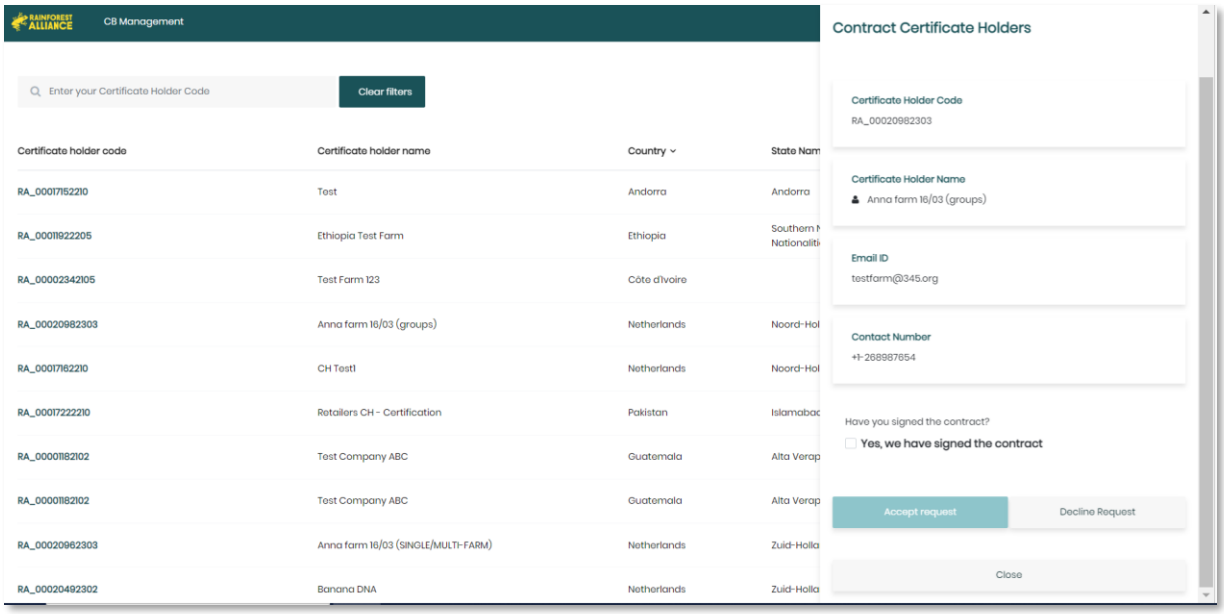
After refining your search, a list of possible Certificate Holders that you can contract will appear.

The following screenshots clearly illustrate the process of how to contract them.
Scroll through the list to find the applicable CH and select it by clicking on the name.

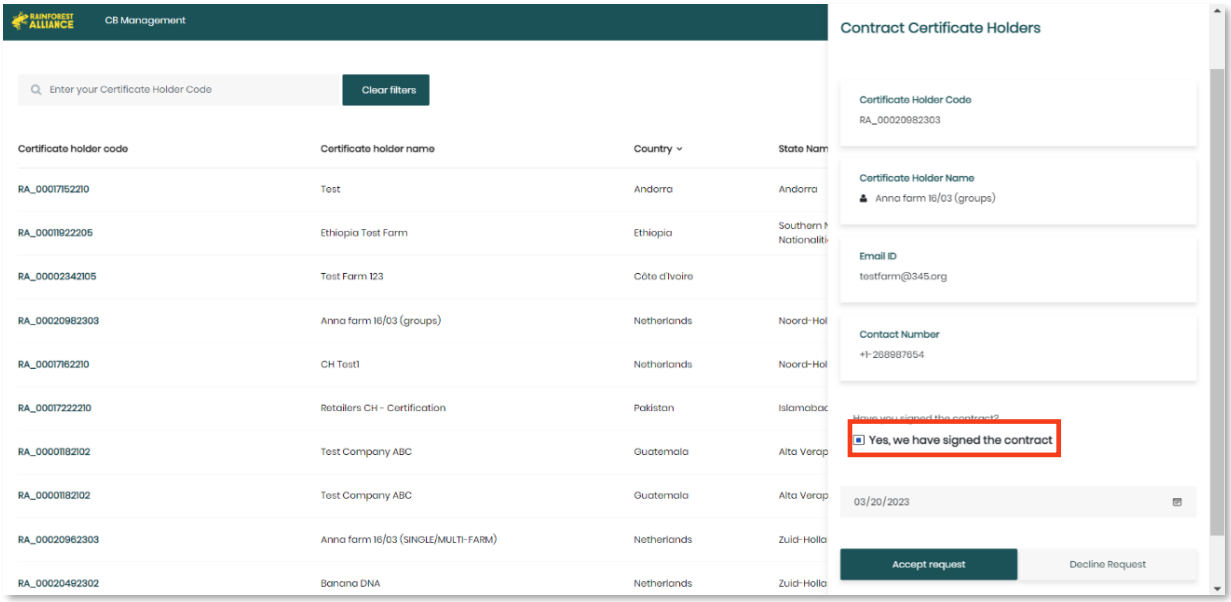


Based on your information, you may collaborate with one of the certificate holders shown

After clicking on the ‘Certificate holder name’ the following feature will appear, as shown below.



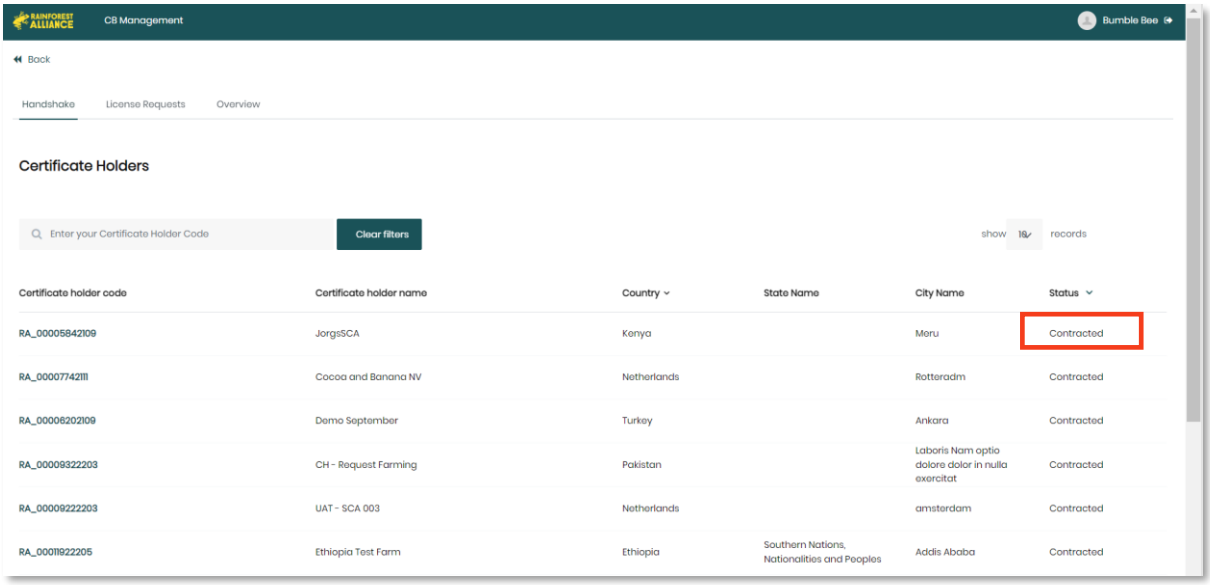
At this moment you need to confirm that you already have signed a contract for the audit outside of the RACP. Only then can you proceed with this process in the RACP.



If you have signed a contract for the audit, you can proceed

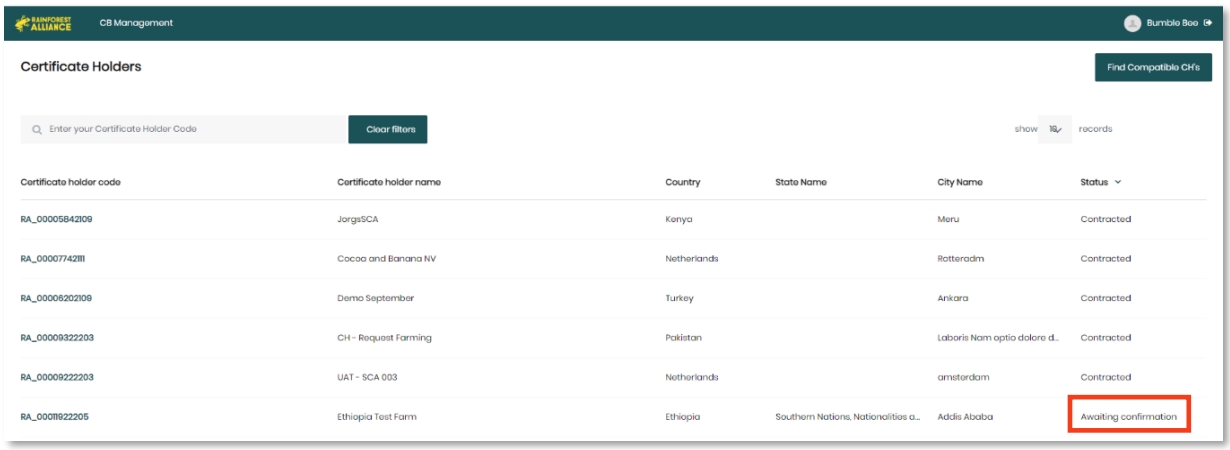
If you have signed this contract, click the ‘Yes, we have signed the contract’ box, highlighted in red, before entering the date of signing which can be done manually, and then proceed to ‘Accept request’.

Upon clicking the button 'Accept Request' the CH is added to your list of contracted CHs. If the status of the CH turns to 'contracted' it means you have already been approved as their selected CB.



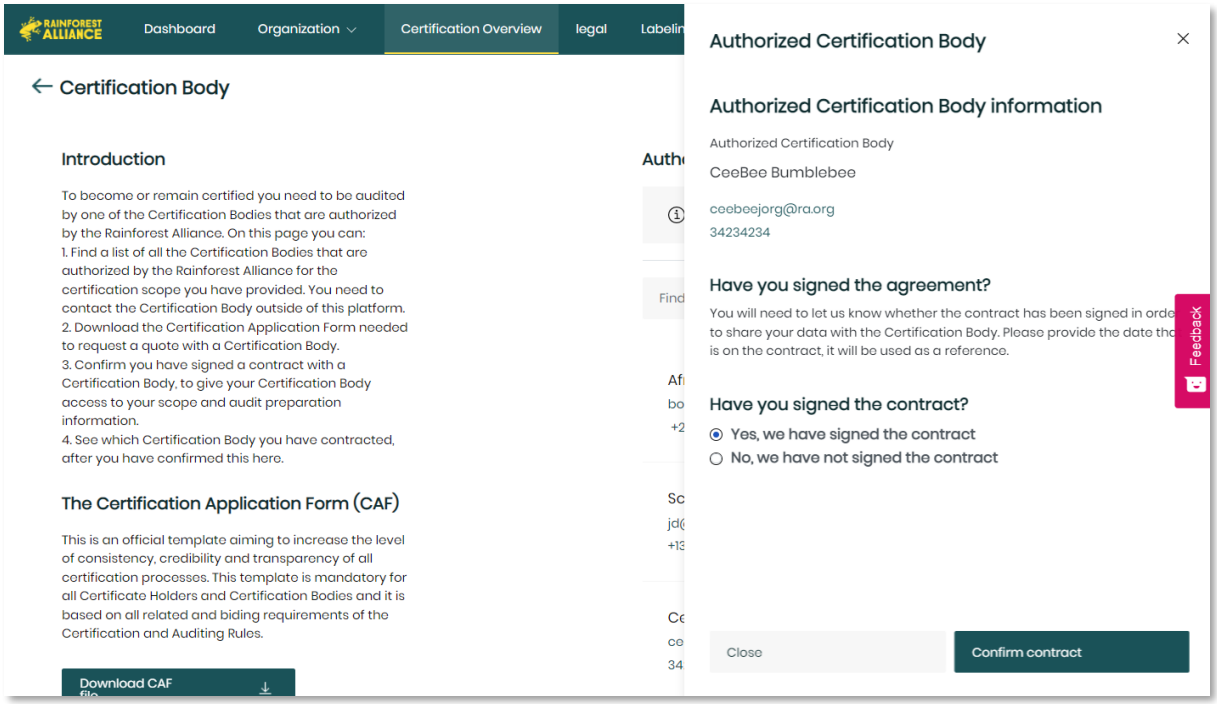
The newly contracted Certificate Holder is added to the list, with status 'Contracted'

However, it's important to mention that sometimes after pressing 'Accept Request' you might see the status change to 'Awaiting confirmation'. This means that you will have to wait for that Certificate Holder to approve confirmation on their side.



The newly contracted Certificate Holder is added to the list, with status 'Awaiting Confirmation'

Just for your information, below screenshot illustrates what the CH will see in their account.



The Certificate Holder will see your invitation in their RACP account as shown above

Once the Certificate Holder has accepted your invitation, you will see the result in your account with the status now showing 'Contracted'.

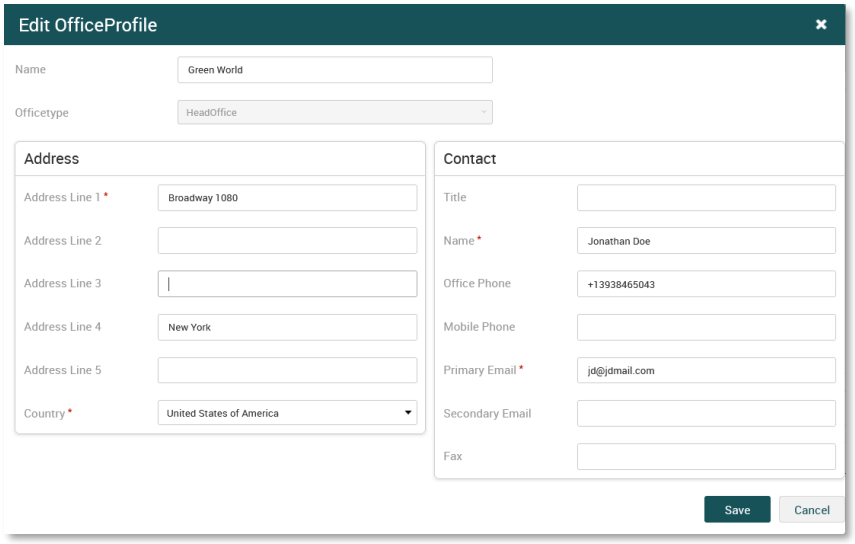
Now that your collaboration with this CH is formalized, audit preparations may begin.

EDITING INFORMATION IN THE RACP

In this section, you will learn how to edit data in the various tabs in the RACP, given you have the correct access rights for making changes.

EDIT OFFICE PROFILE

Making changes in the basic data of the head office uses one straightforward form. Any field, except the Office type can be edited and saved.

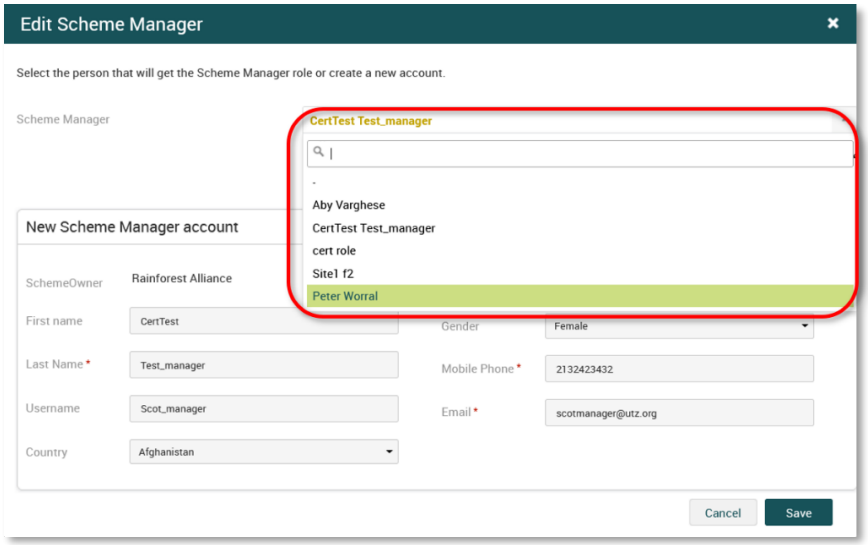


Changes to the head office profile can be made easily using this form

CHANGE SCHEME MANAGER

It is possible to select another CB staff member that will get the Scheme Manager role.

Please note: upon making another person Scheme Manager, you will not be able to edit any information anymore. Only the new Scheme Manager can do so.

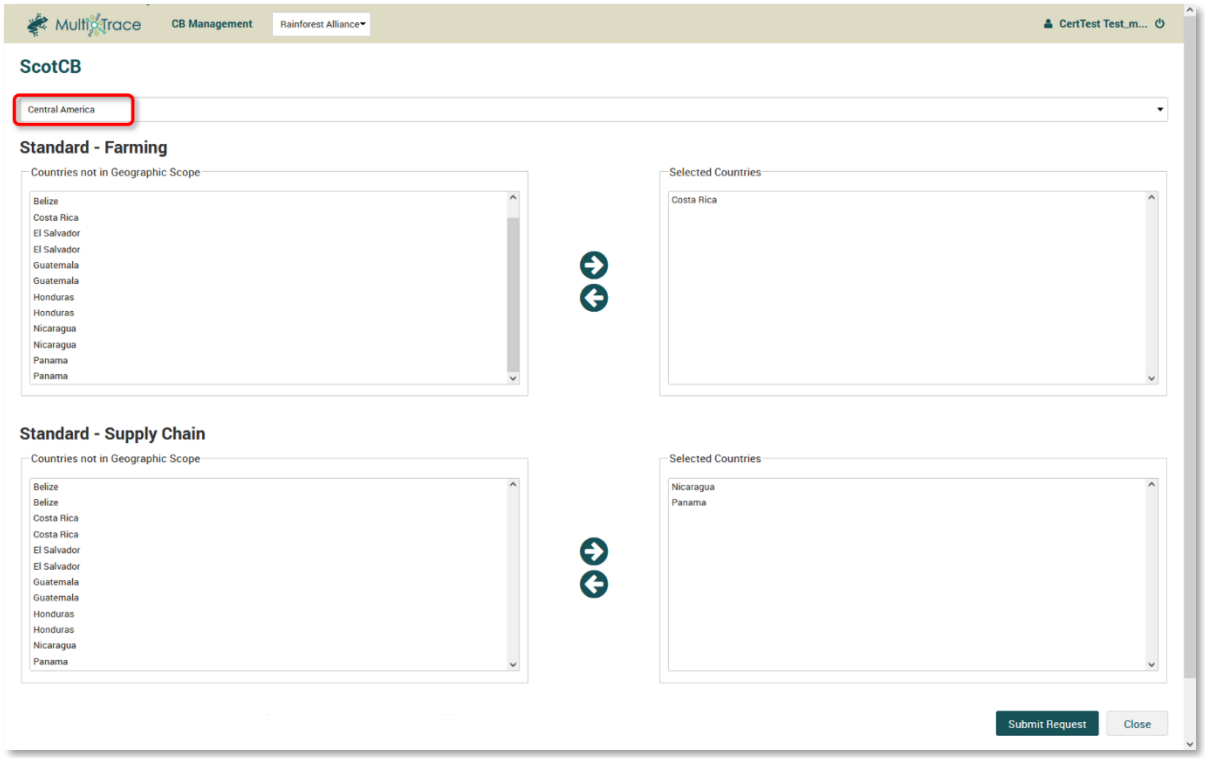


A new Scheme Manager can be selected from the pull-down list

UPDATE GEOGRAPHICAL SCOPE

You can request to amend the geographical scope of your Certification Body. Any change must be approved by the Rainforest Alliance. The geographical scope is divided in two areas, one for Farming and one for Supply Chain Actors.

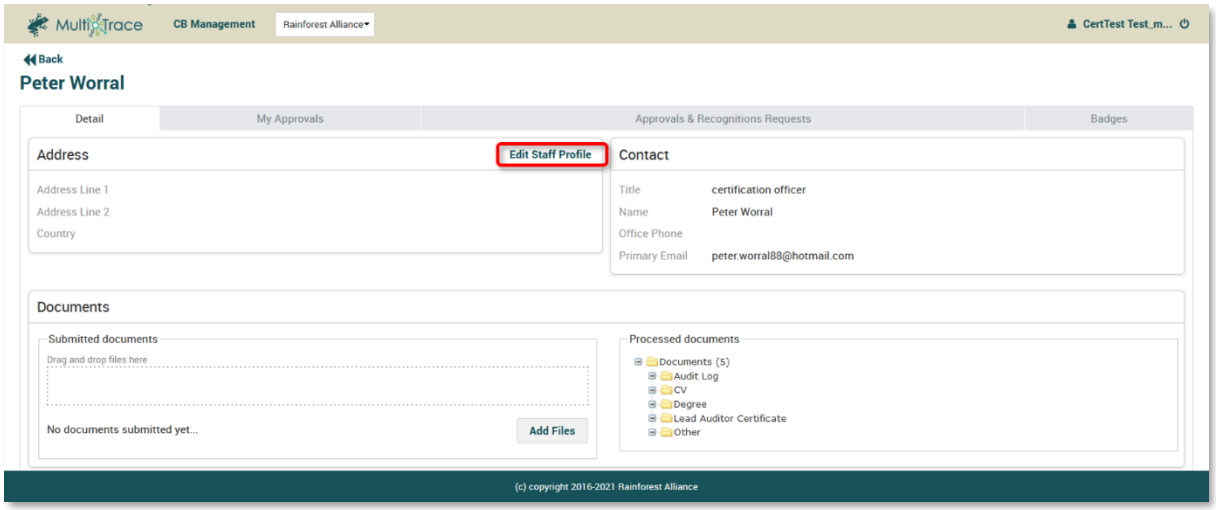
To request a change, use the button 'Geographical Scope' next to the world map and a form will open. Select one or more countries from the list on the left and use the arrow to add them to the list on the right. To facilitate this update, you can select a specific region with the pull-down list at the top. When done, click the button 'Submit Request'.



With a few clicks, you can request other countries to be added to your geographical scope

EDIT STAFF MEMBER DETAILS

To update contact details of any staff member, just click on their name in the list at the 'Staff' tab. A page will open with all essential data pertaining to this staff member. To edit their contact details, just click on the link 'Edit Staff Profile' to open a straightforward form.



This page contains essential data about this staff member, including basic contact details

ADD NEW CB STAFF MEMBERS

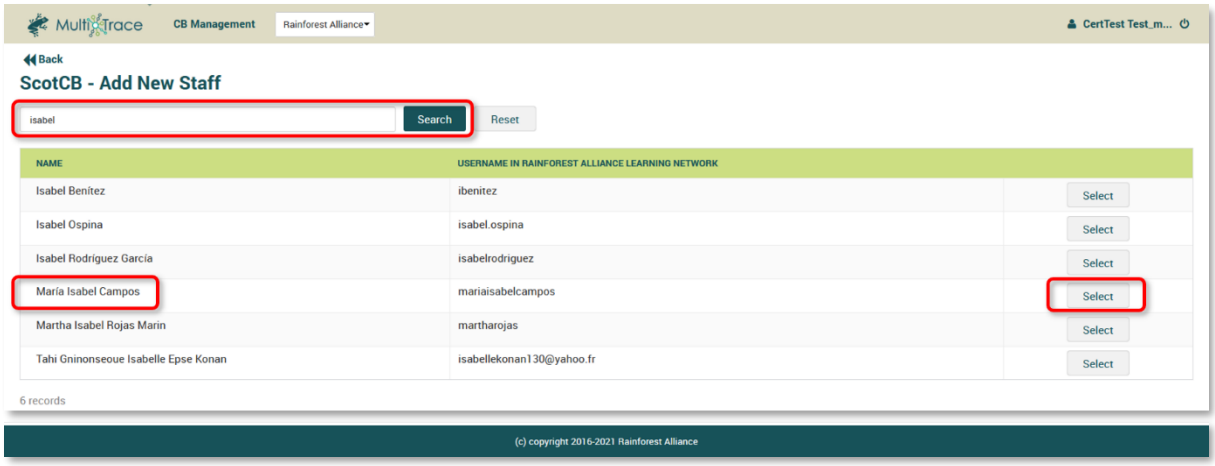
Adding a new staff member to your team takes a few more steps, as more information must be submitted about the person. As this is a critical process that must be followed, we have a Quick Start Guide available in several languages to lead you through these steps.

This manual leads you through the screens that will be used to complete this process.

The Quick Start Guide gives a detailed description of the four steps to add a new staff member

REQUESTING APPROVAL FOR A SINGLE ROLE

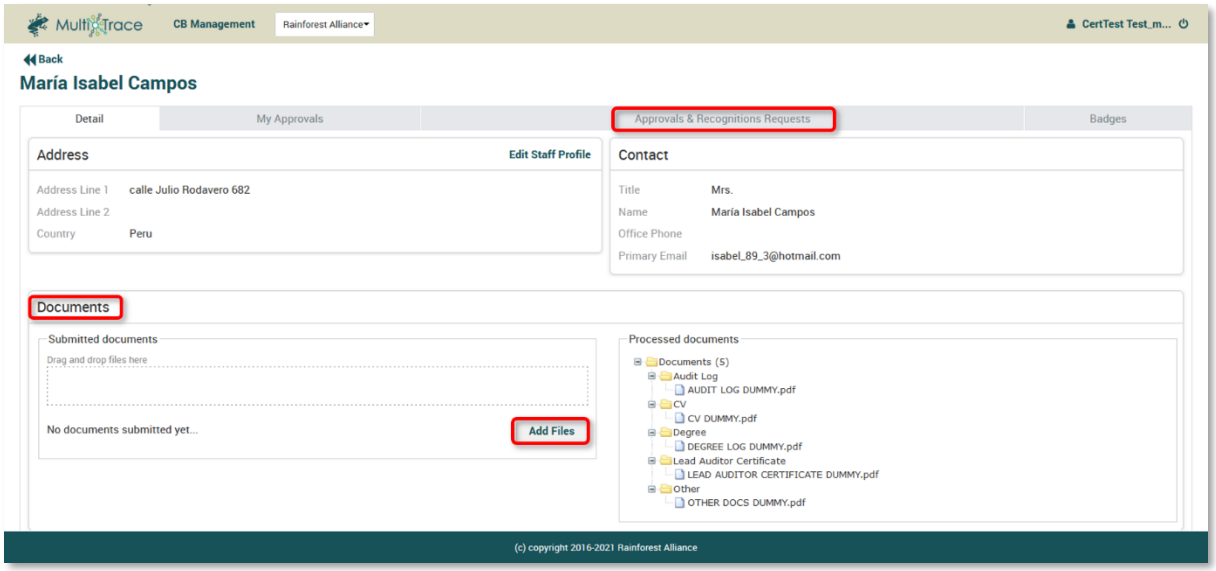
At the homepage, start at the tab 'Details' and click on the link 'Add New Staff'. A form will open where you must search the name of the person, who must already be registered in the Rainforest Alliance Learning Network. You can type the name or a part of the name and hit the Search button and one or more names will appear in the list.



With the Search function you will easily find the name of the person you want to add to your staff

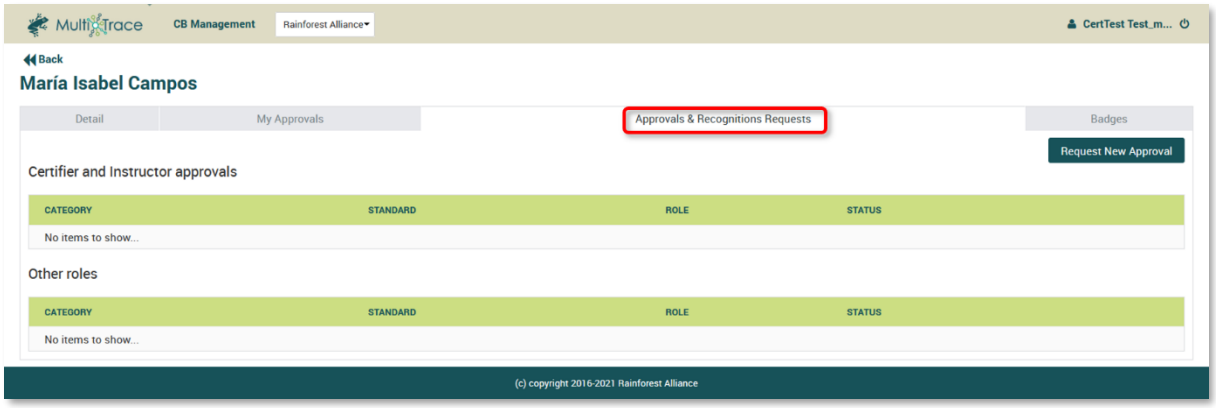
To add this new staff member, click the button 'Select'. Return to the main tab 'Staff' and find the new staff member in the list. As this person is not yet approved by the Rainforest Alliance, you need to use the tick-box 'Show staff without approvals'.

Click on the name to open the same form that is used to edit a staff member's information. You will have to add a number of documents about this new staff member. These can be added now, or later in the process at step 3 of the Quick Start Guide.



Required documents can be added at the tab 'Details', or later in the process

Whether or not you added the required documents at this step, open the tab 'Approvals & Recognitions Requests' to proceed. As this is a new staff member, no approvals are visible at this moment. Note that the approvals are divided into two groups of roles.



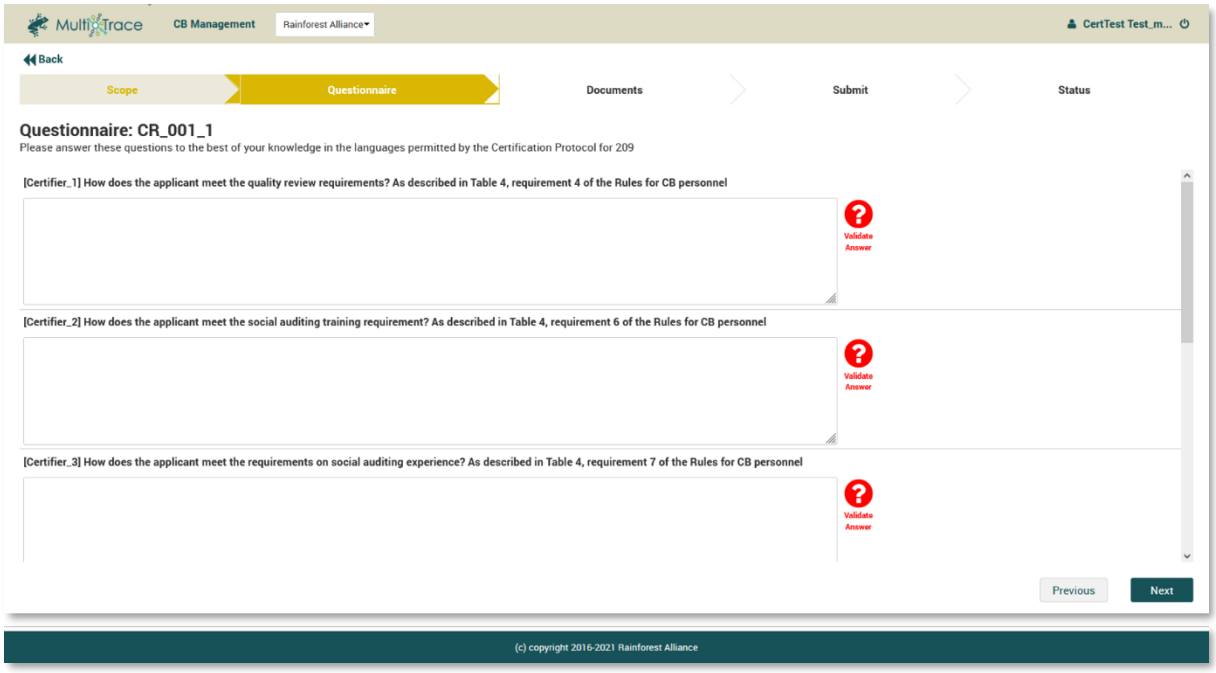
Certifier and Instructor require RA approval, while the other roles are automatically approved

To assign a role to this new staff member, click the button 'Request New Approval'. The following page contains four tabs, viz. Scope, Questionnaire, Documents and Submit.

At the tab 'Scope', select the category definition (multiple crops are possible), the Standard and the role of the new staff member. To proceed, click the 'Next' button. You can add multiple roles for one person by repeating the process.

This is where you define the responsibilities of the new staff member

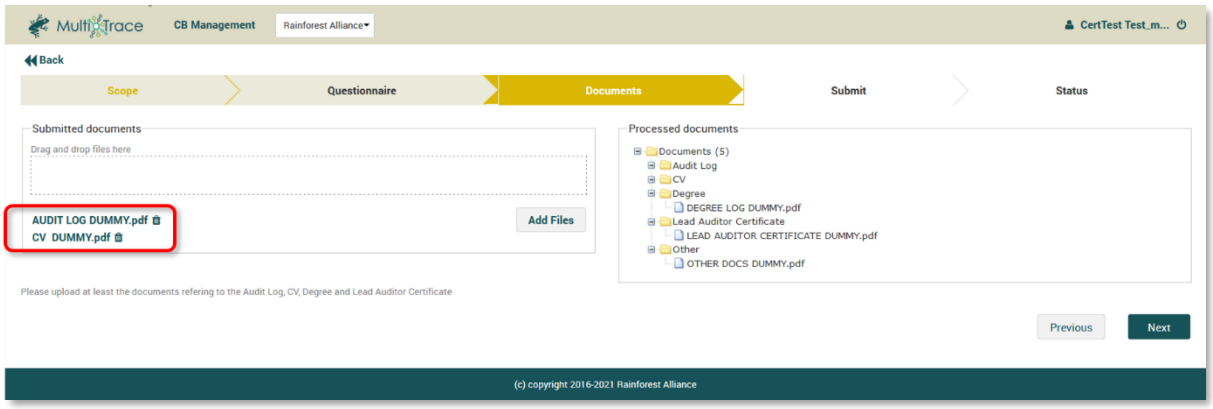
Depending on the role that you assign to this staff member, a questionnaire will be presented that must be answered with relevant information. If no questionnaire is required, you can simply move on to the next page.



Please see the document 'Rules for CB personnel' to include only relevant information

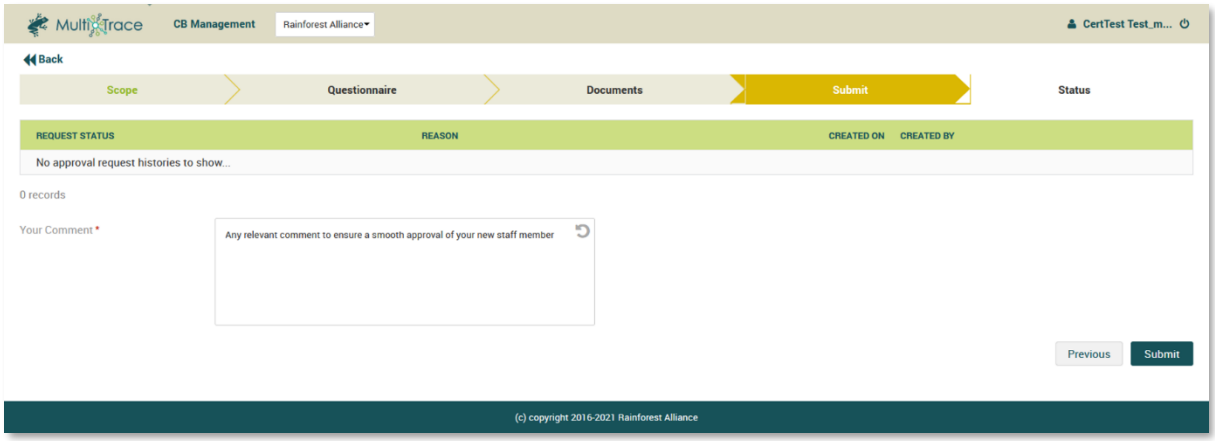
Click on 'Next' when you have completed this questionnaire. Make sure you provide only relevant and to the point information that can be assessed by the Rainforest Alliance.

On the next page, you can add the required documents, if you had not done so earlier. In below example, two missing documents are uploaded and are ready to be added to the folders at the right-hand side under the heading 'Processed documents'. To do so, click on the document's name and drag it to the corresponding folder.



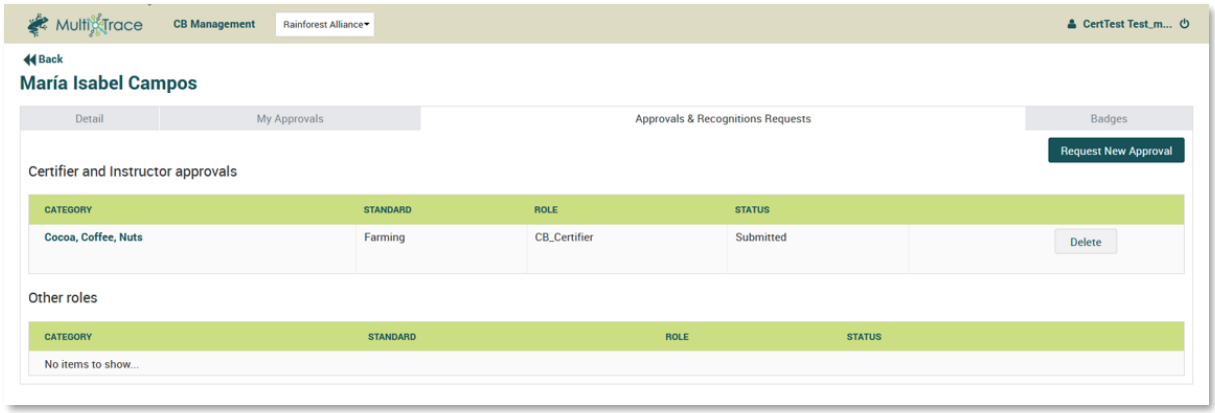
At this step you can add all required documents to be reviewed by the Rainforest Alliance

The final step is to submit this request. If relevant, you can add some information to facilitate a smooth approval of your new staff member. Click 'Next' to move to the Submit page.



Before submitting your request, you may add other information that you deem relevant

Upon submitting this request, you will see the result.

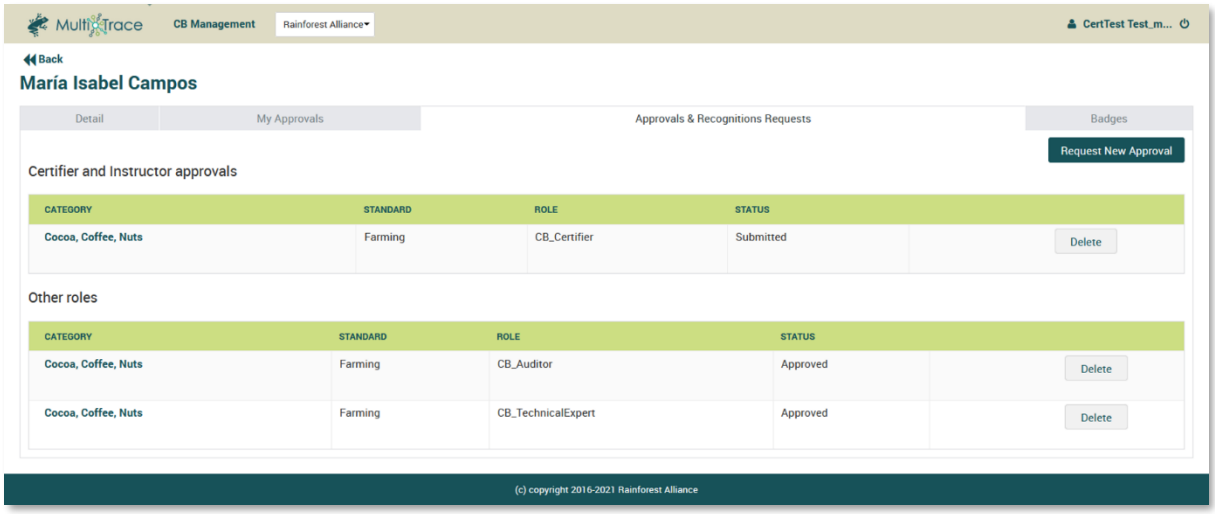


This first approval request is submitted, as visible at the status

REQUESTING APPROVAL FOR MULTIPLE ROLES

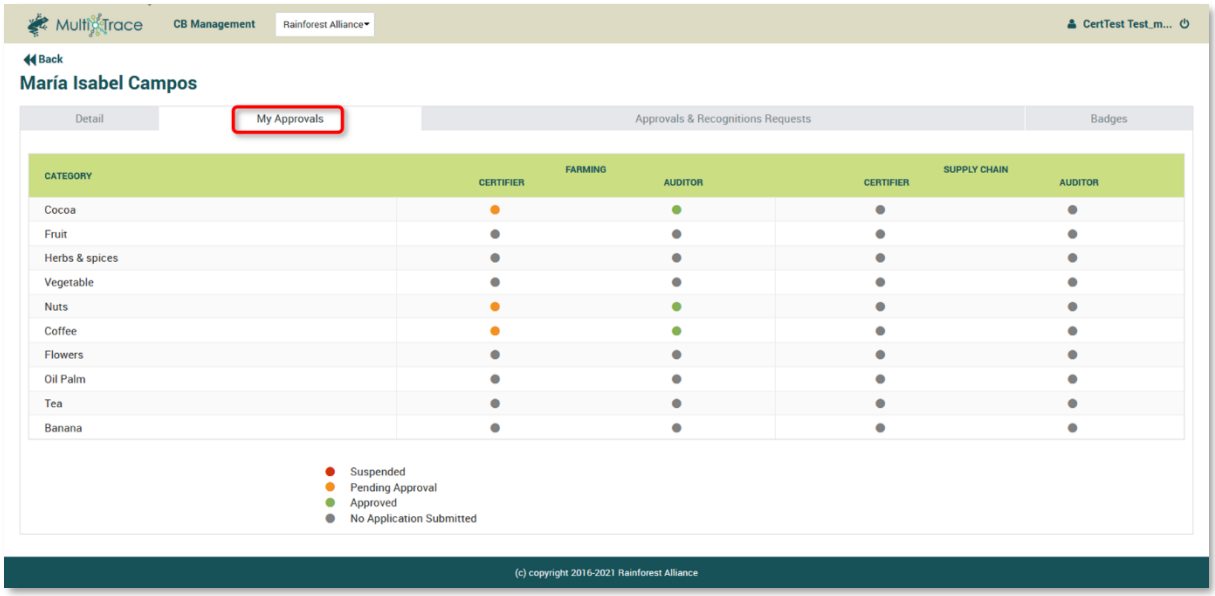
While you can include multiple crops in a single request for approval, you can only include one Standard (Farm or Supply Chain) and one role in a request at the time. If more roles are to be fulfilled by this new staff member, or this shall apply to farms and Supply Chain Actors, you need to repeat the entire process, starting with the button 'Request New Approval'.

In below example a few roles are added, which are automatically approved.



By repeating the process, you can easily add other roles for this new staff member

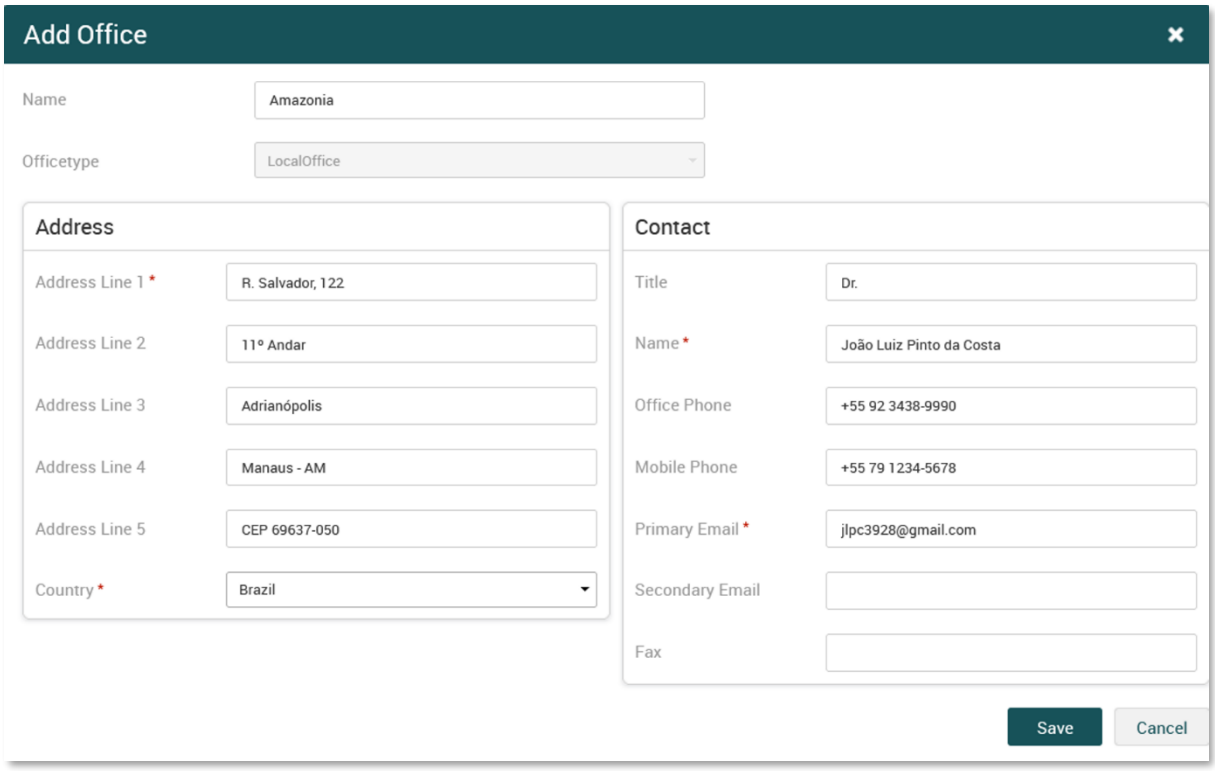
Once you have added a new staff member, you will also see the result at the tab 'Staff', in the overview of staff members, and with more details at the tab 'My Approvals' pertaining to this new staff member.



This tap shows all approvals complete with their status for this particular staff member

ADD A CB OFFICE

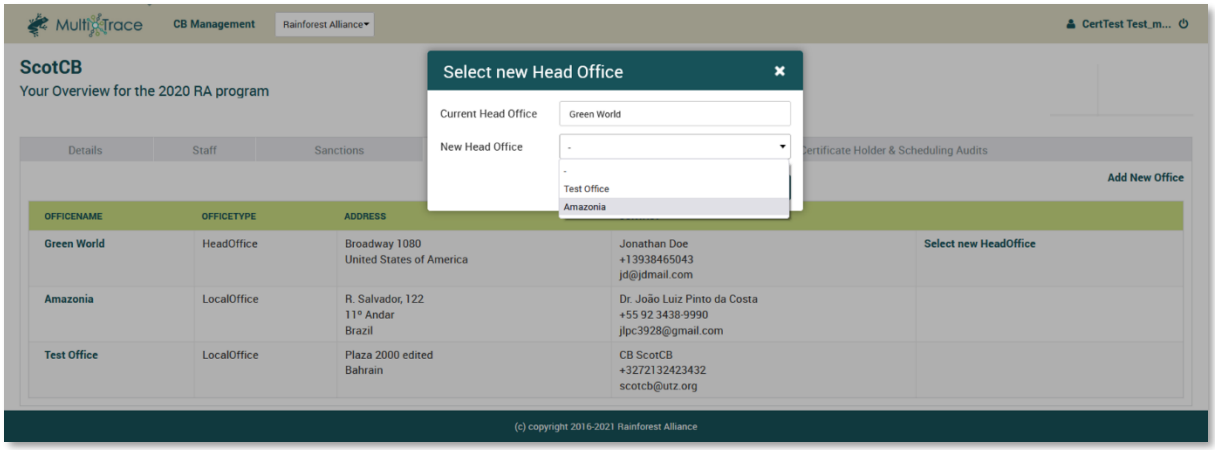
Adding another CB office in the RACP uses a very straightforward form, available via the link 'Add New Office' at the tab 'Offices'. By default, this office will become a local office.



Name, address and a contact person's details are all you need to add a new CB office

CHANGE THE HEAD OFFICE

If this new office is to be the new head office, this can be realized with a few clicks following the link 'Select new HeadOffice'.

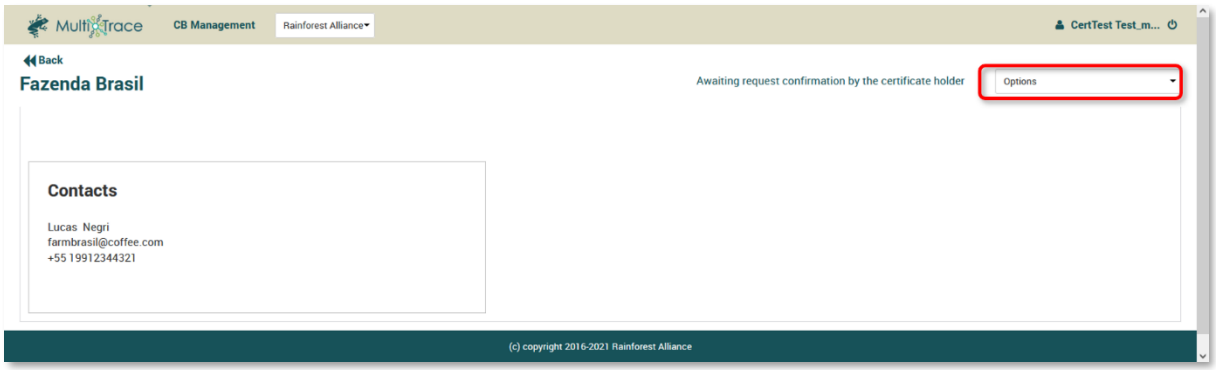


Changing the Head Office only takes a few clicks

CANCEL (A REQUEST FOR) COLLABORATION WITH A CB

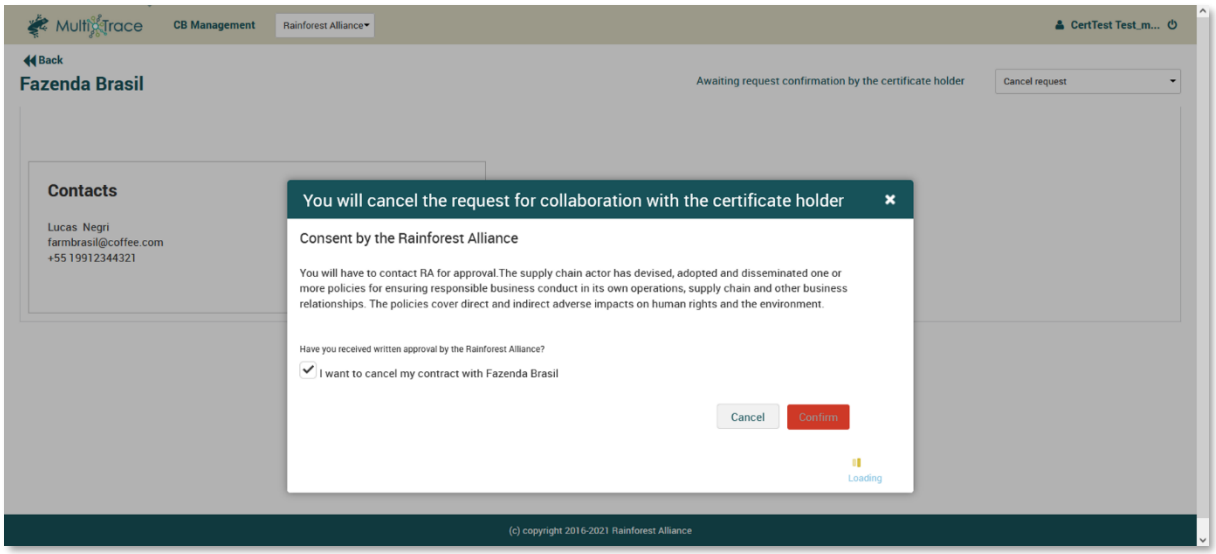
You can cancel a collaboration or reject a request for collaboration in case there is a mistake (for example you have selected an incorrect CH in the platform). In case you want to cancel a collaboration after both parties have signed the certification agreement, please make sure you comply with all the requirements for doing so as specified in the 2020 Rainforest Alliance Certification and Auditing Rules.

You can cancel this collaboration even before it is formalized with a contract. In both cases, open the list of Certificate Holders and click on name of the applicable Certificate Holder.



From the options pull-down list, select 'Cancel Request'

To cancel, tick the box and hit the red button 'Confirm'.



Once you have approval by the Rainforest Alliance, you can cancel this request with a few clicks

Upon cancelling, the Certificate Holder will be removed from the list of Certificate Holders.

<end>

You will be informed of future updates of this manual.