



GICIA INDIA Pvt. Ltd.

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VRIKSH Shipment Certification Process

Step 1: Application for VRIKSH Shipment Certificate:

Turnaround time: Real-time submission of application as well as processing of application.

Process:

The applicant will download the VRIKSH Shipment Application Form from the VRIKSH website <https://vrikshindia.in/index.php/user/index>. The application form would be filled in and submitted along with the applicable fees to EPCH. On receipt of the completed application form, EPCH forwards the same to GICIA India Pvt. Ltd. for further processing.

Application for VRIKSH CITES Shipment Certificate will contain the following details:

1. Details of buyer's order for products manufactured from *Dalbergia spp.* (Appendix II) wood.
2. Batch codes of raw materials.
3. VRIKSH COC <https://gicia.org/> certificate number and status of VRIKSH COC certificate.
4. Anticipated date of shipment dispatch.

For the purpose of this assessment, the shipment is defined as the quantum of material that is accounted for in each invoice *i.e.*, each invoice corresponds to a shipment, which might be a part container or multiple containers.

Step 2: Scrutiny of VRIKSH CITES Shipment Certificate Application:

Turnaround time: 1 business day after completion of Step 1.

Process:

If client is not having an active VRIKSH COC certificate, an application for VRIKSH COC Certification will also have to be submitted by the client that will be followed by an evaluation audit by GIPL. If VRIKSH COC certificate is awarded, then the process for VRIKSH CITES Shipment Certificate may proceed. In the absence of an active VRIKSH COC Certificate, application for shipment will not be entertained.

If the client already has an active VRIKSH COC certificate, following steps will follow:

1. GIPL will check status of VRIKSH COC Certificate of client
2. If the client has any major non-conformances (especially related to Parts 3, 4 and 5) then client will be required to close those non-conformances before application can proceed.
3. If there are no open non-conformances, application will proceed.
4. To proceed with the document submission, clients must first register and receive the username and password to access the GIPL VRIKSH Shipment portal.
5. If the application is accepted and approved, and the client is already registered on the GIPL VRIKSH Shipment Portal, the client is emailed a confirmation containing the batch number, application ID, and the following documents for each invoice separately-

- I. Service agreement with GICIA India Pvt. Ltd.
- II. Form E format and guidelines

Step 3: Document review:

Turnaround time: Depending on the completeness of the documents. 1 business day in case the document is complete.

Process:

The client will submit the details of each invoice by submitting their application on the GIPL VRIKSH Shipment Portal. The client will need to submit copies of all applicable documents and fill in all the information requested on the portal, along with details of the product, including photographs and dimensions of the sample piece.

Step 4: Technical Review of documents

Turnaround time: Depending on the completeness of the documents. 1 business day in case the document is complete.

Process:

The documents will be reviewed by a GIPL Technical Reviewer for accuracy and completeness as well as conformance to the requirements of the CITES comparable document.

Criteria for certificate award (all require complete documents to qualify for the next stage):

1. Documents of harvest, processing, taxation and transport are valid, legal, authentic and complete.
2. Batch accounts of the raw materials
3. Material accounts of the products of the said shipment are complete and consistent.
4. Raw material of the said shipment is traceable throughout the processing manufacturing and there is no evidence to indicate that any mixing has taken place.
5. Conversion factors for the product groups included in the said shipment are consistent with the batch accounts, material accounts and product outputs as per the details of the shipment.
6. The contents and species of the shipment are the same as that has been claimed in the buyer's order and accompanying documents.

If the documents are incomplete, the Technical Reviewer will send a revert to the client on the portal itself where the client will make the requested changes in the application and submit again. If the documents are found insufficient or not in conformity with the requirements of CITES, then the application is rejected, and the client will need to apply again. If all the documents are in order, the Technical Reviewer clears the application and the coordinator schedules on-site/remote inspection.

Step 5: Scheduling of site audit and delegation of auditor for VRIKSH CITES Shipment Certificate.

Turnaround time: Commences along with confirmation of the technical review and approval of application and ends within 1 business day.

Audit will be scheduled by the coordinator and an auditor will be assigned, as per the roster, to visit the client and conduct the audit on a date before the anticipated date of dispatch of audit that needs to be certified. This confirmation will be immediately communicated to the client electronically. The audit date will be fixed based on adherence to the following criteria:

- i. Prior to expected date of dispatch
- ii. 100% of material is 'in line' - all material is within the premises and can be inspected
- iii. At least 40% of production is completed

If the above criteria are not fulfilled, the site inspection shall not be scheduled. In case the criteria are found unfulfilled at the time of site visit, the assessment is aborted and is rescheduled for the next suitable date.

Step 6: On-site VRIKSH Shipment Certification Audit:

Turnaround time: 1 business day (date of scheduled audit)

Auditor visits client's site on the scheduled date and conduct audit.

The on-site audit will consist of the following steps along with recording the same electronically in a checklist on a handheld device:

1. Verification and recording of documents of harvest, processing, taxation and transport.
2. Verification and recording batch accounts of the raw material used for manufacture of the shipment.
3. Verification and recording material account of the shipment.
4. Verification and recording of conversion factors for the product groups included in the said shipment.
5. Backward tracing of raw material processing.
6. Verification and recording of the shipment for the quantity claimed.

Photographs of the finished products to compare the size and dimensions with those provided in Step 4. If required, the auditor will require the company to maintain a sealed sample for a period of 6 months from the date of dispatch.

7. As soon as the audit is completed, the checklist will be electronically submitted by the Physical Verifier in real time for scrutiny of evidence and decision of certificate award.

Step 7: Technical Review of On-site Audit Checklist and Certification Decision

Turnaround time: Within 1 business day from Step 6

Process:

1. The VRIKSH program manager review the field assessment report and take the decision. If the report is approved, the recommendation for issuance of the certificate is made and sent to EPCH. EPCH shall issue the VRIKSH CITES Shipment Certificate and upload the same on the VRIKSH website.

The VRIKSH CITES Shipment Certificate will include the following information:

- a. Information required as per CITES Conf. 9.5 (Rev. CoP16) Trade with States not party to the Convention.
- b. Client information.
- c. VRIKSH COC certificate code of the client.
- d. The batch codes of the raw material
- e. The barcodes to be issued to the client for the products of the said shipment by EPCH.
- f. Any other reference numbers as required by the electronic system.

2. The above information is uploaded on the system will be accessible by other National CITES Management Authorities as well as any other authority at the CITES Secretariat.

EPCH will be the final authority to issue the certificate for export and the final arbiter in case of any disputes in this regard. To maintain the credibility of the program and ensure robustness in the assessments, all field level assessments would be undertaken only after a satisfactory desk review of the documents by the Technical Reviewer in GICIA India Pvt. Ltd.

At all times, the process integrity will be maintained and all information of the client, including shipment details, buyer details etc. would be kept in the strictest confidence by GICIA India Pvt. Ltd. as well as EPCH