



**Inter American Accreditation Cooperation**

**IAAC MLA APPLICATIONS PROCEDURE FOR SIGNATORY BODIES OF  
INTERNATIONAL MLAs WITH SCOPES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL  
MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS AND/OR PRODUCT**

**CLASSIFICATION**

This document is classified as an IAAC Procedures and Mandatory Document.

**AUTHORIZATION**

Issue N°:	01
Prepared by:	MLA Committee
Date:	February 2007
Revision N°:	01
Approved by:	General Assembly
Issue Date:	August 17, 2007
Application Date:	Immediate
Document number:	IAAC MD 003/07

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**AVAILABILITY**

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Original: English

**IAAC MLA APPLICATIONS PROCEDURE FOR SIGNATORY BODIES OF INTERNATIONAL MLAs WITH SCOPES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS AND/OR PRODUCT**

**1. PURPOSE**

1.1 This document defines the procedure of the Inter American Accreditation Cooperation (IAAC) for accreditation bodies that are signatories to Multilateral Recognition Arrangements of other recognized Regional Cooperations, and who wish to apply and join the IAAC MLA as signatories. These accreditation bodies accredit certification/ registration bodies with a scope on Environmental Management Systems (EMS) and/or Product.

**2 DEFINITIONS AND ACCRONYMS**

2.1 **Arrangement:** The Multi-Lateral Recognition Arrangement (MLA).

2.2 **IAAC:** Inter American Accreditation Cooperation.

2.3 **Signatory:** A Member of IAAC who has signed one or more of the multi-lateral recognition Arrangements of IAAC or of another recognized Regional Cooperation.

2.4 **MLA Group:** All signatories to the IAAC Arrangement. This group decides on the status of membership of the Arrangement, and therefore consists only of signatory representatives.

2.5 **MLA Committee (MLA):** The group responsible for the management of the IAAC Arrangement process. This committee includes the MLA Group, and may also include non-signatory members.

2.6 **MLA Secretary:** Secretary for the IAAC MLA Committee.

**3 IAAC MLA application**

3.1 Application shall be submitted to the IAAC Executive Secretariat using the IAAC MLA application form within IAAC MD 002 procedure.

3.2 Application must state that the applying body accepts the requirements and procedures established in IAAC's *Policies and Procedures for a Multilateral Recognition Arrangement among Accreditation Bodies*.

3.3 The application must contain as attachments the following documents:

- Quality Manual;
  - Documents Master List;
  - All notifications on changes made after issuance of the evaluation report of the corresponding MLA;
  - Assessment report by the international body; and any additional information regarding its recognition follow up; and
  - Copy of the corresponding MLA.
- (These documents shall preferably be sent by electronic means.)

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- 3.4 The IAAC MLA Secretariat shall verify that provided information is complete; if the information is not complete, it shall request the missing information.
- 3.5 The MLA Secretariat shall send the information received to the IAAC MLA Committee Chair.
- 3.6 The MLA Committee Chair shall form an Ad-hoc Group in accordance with the criteria established in this procedure.
- 3.7 The appointed Ad-hoc Group shall analyze the applicant's information and issue a report for the MLA Committee Chair.
- 3.8 The MLA Committee Chair shall provide the report to the other members of the Committee.
- 3.9 The MLA Group shall make the decision regarding the acceptance of the applicant, and shall submit it to a ratification by the General Assembly, along with the time frame to proceed with a follow up evaluation or reevaluation, which shall be established according to the results and the date of the last evaluation performed by another regional body.
- 3.10 The follow up evaluations or reevaluations may be performed in coordination with other regional or international organizations.

### **4 CRITERIA FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF AD-HOC GROUPS**

- 4.1 The Ad-hoc group shall be formed by three individuals:
  - The Chair or Vice-Chair of the MLA Committee;
  - A representative of bodies signatories of a regional or international MLA with experience in the corresponding scope; and
  - A team leader evaluator or an evaluator of the IAAC peer evaluator list with experience in the corresponding scope. This person will be the group coordinator.

Note: With the intention of guaranteeing transparency, it is prohibited that two bodies who have signed an international MLA analyze the submitted information between themselves.