

Friend of the Earth Standard for Certification of Sustainable Jewels (Version 1)

1. Introduction and Objectives

The Friend of the Earth Standard for Sustainable Jewels defines the comprehensive environmental, ethical, social, and product stewardship criteria required for the certification of sustainable jewelry.

Objectives

- **Traceability and Transparency:** Ensure complete visibility across the jewelry supply chain, enforcing a strict maximum threshold on material discrepancies from raw input to finished product.
- **Environmental & Ecosystem Protection:** Minimize carbon emissions, water consumption, land degradation, air pollution, and hazardous chemical usage across all extraction, synthesis, refining, and manufacturing processes.
- **Ethical Sourcing & Human Rights:** Safeguard workers' rights, guarantee living wages, eliminate child and forced labor, promote gender equity, and support local community health and safety.
- **Circular Economy & Life Cycle Responsibility:** Promote sustainable packaging, verified recycled contents, long-term durability, repairability, and responsible end-of-life take-back mechanisms.

2. Basic Information & Audit Context

2.1 Jewel Identification & Composition

- Jewel Model / Line Name: _____
- Manufacturer Name & Location: _____
- Primary Material Composition (by weight %):
 - Precious Metals (Gold, Silver, Platinum, Palladium, etc.): _____%
 - Mined Gemstones / Organic Gems (Pearls, Amber, etc.): _____%
 - Lab-Grown / Synthetic Gems: _____%
 - Recycled / Upcycled Elements: _____%
- Countries of Origin (Sourcing Locations):

2.2 Existing Certifications & Equivalencies

- Current Company / Material Certifications (e.g., RJC COP/CoC, Fairmined, Fairtrade, IRMA, TSM, GRS, RCS, ISO 14001, SA8000, SCS-007, FSC): _____
- Equivalent Standard Scope (if applicable):

2.3 Organizational & Audit Context

- Company Legal Name: _____

- Operational Facilities Covered by Scope:

- Primary Contact Person & Role: _____

3. Standard Requirements

Audit Conclusions Key: Y = Compliant | N = Non-Compliant | NA = Not Applicable

Group I: Management System & Traceability

Req #	Requirement Description	Quantitative Parameters / Limits	Means of Verification / Evidence	Standard Equivalencies	Auditor Explanation & Findings	Audit Conclusion (Y/N/NA)
1.1	Legal Compliance: The company must hold all valid business licenses and permits.	Up-to-date tax, trade, and environmental permits; 0 unresolved legal sanctions.	Presentation of up-to-date tax, trade, and environmental permits.	General / RJC COP		
1.2	Traceability & Mass Balance: A Chain of Custody (CoC) must be maintained across all batches.	Weight discrepancy between certified raw material purchased and finished products (plus documented scrap) $\leq 2\%$.	Audit of purchase invoices, production logs, and inventory balances.	RJC CoC		
1.3	Sustainability Policy & Training: A formal sustainability policy must be active and communicated.	100% of relevant staff must receive annual training on these standards.	Signed policy document; training logs with employee signatures.	ISO 14001		

Group II: Mining Origin Impacts (Mined Precious Metals & Gemstones)

Req #	Requirement Description	Quantitative Parameters / Limits	Means of Verification / Evidence	Standard Equivalencies	Auditor Explanation & Findings	Audit Conclusion (Y/N/NA)
2.1	Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA): Mandatory third-party impact assessment.	Third-party EIA conducted for any site established or expanded after 2010.	Official EIA report, regulatory approval documentation.	IRMA / TSM / Fairmined		
2.2	Habitat & Species Protection: Protection of high-value ecosystems and biodiversity.	0 mining activity in IUCN Category I–IV protected areas. 'Net Neutral' impact on biodiversity.	GIS mapping, mine site coordinates, biodiversity baseline studies.	IRMA / Fairmined		

		for all other areas.				
2.3	Water Effluents: Strict limits on water discharged from mining and leaching operations.	pH: 6.0–9.0; Total Suspended Solids (TSS) < 50 mg/L; Cyanide < 0.1 mg/L.	Monthly lab reports from ISO 17025 accredited laboratories.	IRMA / TSM		
2.4	Air Emissions: Monitoring and control of airborne particulate matter at site perimeter.	Dust levels (PM10) ≤ 150 µg/m³ (24-hour average) at site perimeter.	Air quality monitoring sensor logs, station calibration records.	IRMA		
2.5	Waste & Site Restoration: Hazardous waste management and guaranteed financial closure fund.	100% hazardous waste handled by licensed contractors. Closure Fund covering 100% of estimated restoration costs secured.	Bank guarantees/financial surety documents; hazardous waste manifests.	IRMA / TSM		

Group III: Recycling & Reuse Origin (Recycled Metals & Stones)

Req #	Requirement Description	Quantitative Parameters / Limits	Means of Verification / Evidence	Standard Equivalencies	Auditor Explanation & Findings	Audit Conclusion (Y/N/NA)
3.1	Definition of Recycled Content: Minimum weight threshold for post-consumer/pre-consumer scrap.	≥ 70% of total metal/stone weight verified as recycled (excludes internal 'run-around' scrap).	Material Disclosure Forms (MDF), supplier declarations, GRS/RCS certificates.	GRS / RCS / SCS		
3.2	Energy Efficiency in Refining: Energy reduction in material refining compared to primary mining.	Refining process consumes ≥ 15% less energy than global average for primary mining of that specific material.	Energy bills (kWh) divided by total kg of refined output.	ISO 50001		
3.3	Chemical Management: Total containment and neutralization	0% untreated acid or cyanide discharge from refining processes.	Waste disposal manifests, chemical neutralizing tank logs.	ISO 14001		

	of refining acids/cyanides.					
3.4	Water Recovery: Water efficiency and recycling in the refining circuit.	Water recycling rate $\geq 50\%$ in the refining circuit.	Flow meter logs, water recycling system circuit diagrams.	ISO 14001		

Group IV: Laboratory Origin (Synthetics & Lab-Grown Materials)

Req #	Requirement Description	Quantitative Parameters / Limits	Means of Verification / Evidence	Standard Equivalencies	Auditor Explanation & Findings	Audit Conclusion (Y/N/NA)
4.1	Renewable Energy Usage: Renewable power sourcing for high-energy growth processes (CVD/HPHT).	$\geq 80\%$ electricity used in growth process sourced from renewables (on-site or verified RECs).	Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs), green energy utility bills, Guarantees of Origin (GOs).	SCS-007		
4.2	Carbon Footprint: GHG emission limit per unit of output.	Total emissions < 100 kg CO ₂ e per polished carat.	Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) report compliant with ISO 14067.	SCS-007 / ISO 14067		
4.3	Water Footprint: Closed-loop cooling system and recovery threshold.	Mandatory closed-loop cooling systems with $\geq 70\%$ water recovery rate.	Flow meter readings (Inflow vs. Recycled volume).	ISO 14046		
4.4	Waste Management: Responsible handling of industrial gases and hazardous growth byproducts.	100% of industrial gases and spent crucibles recycled or disposed of via specialized hazardous channels.	Hazardous waste disposal manifests, vendor certificates.	ISO 14001		

Group V: Manufacturing, Refining, and Finishing Impacts

Req #	Requirement Description	Quantitative Parameters / Limits	Means of Verification / Evidence	Standard Equivalencies	Auditor Explanation & Findings	Audit Conclusion (Y/N/NA)
5.1	Metal Refining Efficiency & Chemical Safety: Scrubbing systems for toxic acid	100% of NO _x and Chlorine emissions processed through wet scrubbers with $\geq 95\%$	Scrubber maintenance logs, air quality sensor data at stack.	BAT (Best Available Techniques)		

	digestion gases (NO _x , Cl ₂).	removal efficiency.				
5.2	Electroplating & Surface Treatment: Cyanide bath control or replacement in plating lines.	Cyanide concentration in post-treatment rinse water < 0.2 mg/L prior to discharge.	Daily wastewater testing logs, Discharge Monitoring Reports (DMR).	REACH / Local Permit		
5.3	Abrasive & Polishing Waste: Collection of precious metal sweeps and neutralization of cleaning solutions.	100% collection of polishing sweeps/filters; ultrasonic solutions neutralized to pH 6.5–8.5 before disposal.	Hazardous waste disposal manifests, sediment trap cleaning records.	RJC COP		
5.4	Gemstone Cutting & Polishing (Lapidary): Recirculating water systems and silica dust exposure control.	Recirculating water systems with ≥ 90% settling tank efficiency; respirable silica dust < 0.05 mg/m ³ .	Shop floor air quality tests, water recycling circuit diagrams.	OSHA / ISO 45001		
5.5	Casting & Investment Waste: Recycling of plaster investment molds and energy control of burnout kilns.	≥ 30% investment material diverted from landfills; burnout furnaces equipped with programmable controllers (10% energy reduction).	Waste diversion weight tickets, kiln energy-rating certificates.	Circular Economy Criteria		
5.6	GHG Intensity of Manufacturing: Limits on overall energy consumption during assembly and finishing.	Total manufacturing energy intensity ≤ 50 kWh per 100 g of finished gold jewel (or metal equivalent).	Sub-metering logs of production floor, production output volume records.	ISO 50001		

Group VI: Social Accountability & Labor Rights

Req #	Requirement Description	Quantitative Parameters / Limits	Means of Verification / Evidence	Standard Equivalencies	Auditor Explanation & Findings	Audit Conclusion (Y/N/NA)
6.1	Child & Forced Labor: Zero tolerance for forced, bonded, or underage employment.	0 workers under age 16 (or legal minimum); 0% retention of passports/IDs; zero worker recruitment fees.	HR employment records, age verification logs, worker interviews.	SA8000 / ILO Standards		

6.2	Wages & Hours: Compensation based on living wage standards and premium overtime rates.	100% employees paid Living Wage (Anker index/equivalent); overtime capped at 12 hrs/week paid at $\geq 125\%$ premium.	Payroll records, timesheets, local living wage benchmark index.	SA8000 / Fairtrade		
6.3	Health & Safety: Protective equipment provision and workplace injury reduction.	100% free PPE provided and enforced; Lost Time Injury Frequency Rate (LTIFR) < 5.0 .	Safety incident registers, OSHA logs, PPE distribution records.	ISO 45001		
6.4	Gender Equity: Equal remuneration for work of equal value without gender disparity.	0% unadjusted gender pay gap for substantially similar roles across the facility.	Payroll audit by role category, gender pay reporting documentation.	SA8000 / UN WPs		

Group VII: Packaging Requirements

Req #	Requirement Description	Quantitative Parameters / Limits	Means of Verification / Evidence	Standard Equivalencies	Auditor Explanation & Findings	Audit Conclusion (Y/N/NA)
7.1	Single-Use Plastics Elimination: Prohibition of non-recyclable plastic packaging components.	0% single-use, non-recyclable plastic in retail, display, and shipping packaging.	Packaging bill of materials (BOM), supplier technical sheets.	FSC / GRS		
7.2	Sustainable Sourcing: Mandatory certification or recycled content for paper, wood, and textiles.	$\geq 80\%$ recycled content or FSC/PEFC certified wood, paper, and organic textiles (e.g., GOTS).	Material certificates (FSC, GOTS, GRS), purchase invoices.	FSC / PEFC / GOTS		

Group VIII: End of Life & Product Stewardship

Req #	Requirement Description	Quantitative Parameters / Limits	Means of Verification / Evidence	Standard Equivalencies	Auditor Explanation & Findings	Audit Conclusion (Y/N/NA)
8.1	Lifetime Maintenance & Repair: Commitment to extending product lifespan.	Formal, published repair and restoration policy available to 100% of customers.	Service policy terms on website/warranty card, repair job logs.	Internal Policy		

8.2	Take-Back & Circularity Scheme: Product recovery mechanism for end-of-life metals and gems.	Active customer take-back or trade-in program established with incentives (e.g., store credit).	Take-back program terms, processing records for returned/recycled items.	Circular Economy Criteria		
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4. Audit Summary, Non-Compliances & Final Conclusion

4.1 Audit Sign-off

- Auditor Name & Surname: _____
- Certification Body Name: _____
- Lead Auditor Signature: _____
- Audit Date: _____

4.2 Corrective Action Requests (CAR) & Non-Compliances

CAR #	Requirement Number	Description of Non-Compliance	Deadline for Corrective Action	Corrective Action Status (Open / Closed)
CAR 01				
CAR 02				
CAR 03				

4.3 Final Certification Decision

☐ COMPLIANT: The organization meets all mandatory criteria and has satisfactorily resolved all Corrective Action Requests. Certification is granted.

☐ NON-COMPLIANT: The organization fails to meet critical mandatory criteria or has unresolved Corrective Action Requests past the specified deadline. Certification is denied or suspended.

Auditor Signature: _____

Certification Body Approval: _____

Date: _____