



## Assurance and Sustainability Training Academy - A S T R A

### *For immediate release*

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During the last decade, AB Training has offered its services to the FSC community and also to the RSB community and to other sustainability standards, relating mainly to auditor training and consulting on standards development and implementation. Time has come for AB Training to evolve, in order to respond in a better way to the growing needs for quality and to the expanding demand for auditor/internal auditor training, consulting and other related areas.

We learned a lot from the experience we accumulated on training during the last decade. To summarize, in the end all that counts is **competence**, and competence is a fine balance between knowledge, skills and attitude:

- First of all we realized that we need to find a way to keep existing auditors both motivated and updated in terms of their knowledge and understanding of standard requirements, and to facilitate knowledge uptake and the development of practical skills and a positive attitude in the case of new auditors coming on board.
- We developed and implemented courses that addressed all, or most, certification requirements, and understood that it is impossible to present all these requirements in a traditional course setting. Since we are dealing with accreditation and certification professionals, given the complexity of the standard requirements, and the difficulty to transmit standard content in a face-to-face setting, using traditional training methods, we learned that in order to gain a profound knowledge of requirements, probably the best solution would be for professionals to take more responsibility for learning the contents of the standards. We developed our online courses this spirit: to offer online support to professionals taking responsibility for learning the theoretical content of the standards, and to coach them through the myriad of requirements, allowing them at the same time to check their progress in terms of assimilating standards content.
- Simultaneously, we designed our face-to-face courses as space and time for sharing professional experiences, for learning together how to apply standards in a practical setting. No Power Point presentations, no "one way" communication, just interaction between course participants and also with the trainer, who can share her/his experience

to illustrate the application of standards in a wide range of situations, and coach the group towards a better understanding of the practicalities of standard implementation. We also learned that, based on the personal auditing experience, having "a story to tell", and being able to illustrate how requirements are applied in the field has enormous value in FSC or RSB auditor training. Time confirmed that this is a winning strategy. It allows trainees to maximize learning and minimize efforts and costs relating to their path towards becoming FSC auditors.

ASTRA Academy was set up to continue the work performed by AB Training in the last decade - more than 700 auditors and consultants trained-, aiming at creating synergies on training and improving quality in auditing and consulting work, especially in the context of sustainability standards implementation. We would like to collaborate closer with all trainers in the FSC system, also with FSC and ASI, and explore together ways to make training more efficient and cost-effective. One way for achieving this might be by creating a common set of e-learning materials, available to all CB auditors. There might be many other aspects where working together could prove beneficial. We will start exploring this avenue during the coming months.

Our new website is [www.astracademy.net](http://www.astracademy.net) . Here you can find information about our training offer, and register for courses, similar to the way this used to work on the AB Training website. The e-learning platform has been operating from the new domain for a while, and the AB Training website has been switched off.

There are a few important news to share with you about our course offer. First of all, a new course is now available on our e-learning platform: the online course on the new [FSC COC Multi Site standard, FSC STD-40-003](#), allowing auditors to FSC standards to update their knowledge on the latest version of this standard.

To conclude, we would like to invite you or auditors you collaborate with to one of our upcoming courses:

- ✓ [FSC COC Lead Auditor course: Munich, 23-24 March](#)
- ✓ [ISO 19011 course for Auditors to FSC Standards: Munich 25-26 March](#)
- ✓ [FSC COC Lead Auditor course: Bucharest, 22-23 April](#)
- ✓ [RSB Lead Auditor course: Geneva, 27-29 May](#)

More courses will take place during the second half of this year, on the RSB standard in South America and Europe, and on the FSC Standard in Malaysia and Europe, possibly also in South America. Dates will be announced via our website and periodic newsletters. Interested auditors can register for any of these courses via our [website](#).

ASTRAcademy looks forward to welcoming you on one of our courses, and to collaborating with other professionals in the FSC and RSB system on training in the near future.

**Best regards**

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### **Astra Academy Online Certification Training**

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