

Marine Stewardship Council

MSC Chain of Custody Program – Supplementary Requirements for the ASC-MSC Seaweed (Algae) Program



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Versions published

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1.0	22 March 2018	N/A – new document

About the Marine Stewardship Council

The Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) is an international non-profit organisation that sets standards for sustainable fisheries and supply chain traceability (Chain of Custody).

Vision

The MSC's vision is of the world's oceans teeming with life, and seafood supplies safeguarded for this and future generations.

Mission

The MSC's mission is to use our label and fishery certification program to contribute to the health of the world's oceans by recognising and rewarding sustainable fishing practices, influencing the choices people make when buying seafood, and working with our partners to transform the seafood market to a sustainable basis.

About this document

The supplementary requirements contained in this document are additions and modifications to the Default Chain of Custody Standard v4.0, the Group Chain of Custody Standard v1.0, the Chain of Custody Certification Requirements v2.0 and the General Certification Requirements v2.2. These additions and modifications are marked in the document using **bold**. Original clause references have been retained.

The supplementary requirements are normative for all Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs) carrying out seaweed chain of custody audits and certification, and will be incorporated into the MSC Chain of Custody Standards, the Chain of Custody Certification Requirements and the General Certification Requirements at their next releases.

Auditors should use this document when using the CoC Audit Checklist to assess conformity to the Chain of Custody Default and Group Standard.

Derogations

Derogations are indicated by a footnote including:

- a. The authority who made the decision on the derogation.
- b. The date or meeting number of the decision.
- c. The date on which the derogation came into force or expires.
- d. A short description of the derogation.

A derogation indicates a measure which allows for all or part of the requirement to be applied differently, or not at all, to certain applicants or certificate holders.

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MSC Chain of Custody Program – Supplementary requirements for the ASC-MSC Seaweed (Algae) Program

A. General

- A.1 The CAB shall apply these supplementary requirements in all seaweed Chain of Custody (CoC) audits.
- A.2 Unless specifically noted, all other requirements in the Default Chain of Custody Standard v4.0, the Group Chain of Custody Standard v1.0, the Chain of Custody Certification Requirements v2.0 and the General Certification Requirements v2.2 shall apply.
- A.2.1 The CAB shall read “Marine and Aquaculture Stewardship International (MASI)” where “MSCI” appears in any of the program documents referenced in A.2, except where “MSCI” is part of a document reference.
- A.2.2 The CAB shall read “partnership agreement” where “licence agreement” appears in any of the program documents referenced in A.2.
- A.2.3 The CAB shall read “seaweed” and/or “seaweed products” where “fish” and/or “fish products” appears in any of the program documents referenced in A.2.

B. Default Chain of Custody Standard v4.0 and Group Chain of Custody Standard v1.0

Principle 1 *Certified products are purchased from certified suppliers*

- 1.1 The organisation shall have a process in place to ensure that all certified products are purchased from certified suppliers.
- 1.1.1 **If receiving or purchasing directly from the production unit, the organisation should also verify the production category (A, Bi, Bii, Ci, Cii) in the certificate code or the Public Certification Report.**

Principle 2 *Certified products are identifiable*

- 2.1 Certified products shall be identified as certified **and include the product identification category to which they belong** at all stages of purchasing, receiving, storage, processing, packing, labelling, selling and delivery.

Guidance 2.1

It is recommended that certified products are identifiable as certified on the physical product as well as on the accompanying traceability records. This can be done by placing a sign or label on the package, **container, or pallet**.

Organisations can use a variety of methods to identify certified products, including acronyms (e.g. “MSC”, “**ASC**”), the CoC code, or another internal system of identification.

Where it is impossible or impractical to label physical products (**e.g. loose seaweed**) the organisation will need to demonstrate how the product can be linked with associated traceability or inventory records that specify the certified status.

Seaweed products can be identified according to three product identification categories: ASC, MSC, or ASC-MSC, depending on the production category assigned in the Public Certification Report, as shown below:

Product identification category	Production category
ASC-MSC	Bi and Ci (enhanced)
MSC	A (wild)
ASC	Bii and Cii (farmed)

- 2.2 If products are sold as certified, they shall be identifiable as certified **and include the product identification category to which they belong**, on the line item of the related invoice; unless all products on the invoice are certified to one scheme in which case the whole invoice shall be identified with the certified scheme.

Guidance 2.2

The seaweed product needs to be identifiable according to one of the product identification categories MSC, ASC, or ASC-MSC. This is normally on the line item of the invoice using these acronyms. This identification needs to correspond to the process in 1.1 and 2.1 above to verify whether the product is wild (MSC), farmed (ASC), enhanced (ASC-MSC), or mixed (ASC-MSC).

This requirement aims to make clear to a buyer which products on any given invoice are certified, and what claim can be made about each product (i.e. ASC, MSC, or co-labelled ASC-MSC).

- 2.4 The organisation shall only promote products as certified or use the **MSC** or **ASC** label, or other trademark(s), if it has been granted approval to do so under the terms of the **MASI Partnership Agreement** (ecolabel@msc.org).

Guidance 2.4

During an audit, the organisation may be asked to show evidence of approval to use trademarks. This can be done through showing the valid **MASI Partnership Agreement** and/or evidence of approval emails received from **MASI**.

Principle 3 *Certified products are segregated*

- 3.3 Products certified against different recognised certification schemes that share MSC CoC shall not be mixed if the organisation wishes to sell the product as certified, unless:
- 3.3.1 The organisation has specific permission from **MASI**, or
 - 3.3.3 The same product is certified against multiple recognised certification schemes that share MSC CoC.
- 3.4 **If products with different product-identification categories are mixed, they shall thereafter carry the product-identification category ASC-MSC.**

Principle 5 *The organisation has a management system*

5.2 Reporting changes

5.2.2 The organisation shall receive written approval from their CAB before making the following changes:

5.2.2.2 Extending the scope of CoC to sell or handle products certified against different recognised certification schemes that share MSC CoC.

Guidance 5.2.2.2

For example, if the current CoC certificate covers only MSC certified products, the organisation would need to receive approval from the CAB before selling ASC certified products as certified.

This requirement applies to all existing CoC holders selling or handling certified seaweed for the first time.

C. Chain of Custody Certification Requirements v2.0

6 Process Requirements

6.1 Need for CoC certification

Guidance 6.1.1.1.c

Entities identified by reference to or on a **seaweed production unit** certificate could consist of agents, auctions, unloaders or others that handle certified **seaweed** in the proximity of the point of landing or first sale. The Public Certification Report for the **seaweed production unit** will clearly state that these entities are included in the **production unit** certificate and either list the specific entities, the eligibility criteria, or where to find this information. The Public Certification Report will also clearly state the point in the supply chain from which CoC is required. Any similar entities not specifically referenced in the **seaweed production unit** certificate will require CoC certification.

6.3 Need for CoC certification

6.3.2 The CAB shall define the proposed scope of the certification with the applicant by identifying:

- 6.3.2.1 The certified species that are to be purchased or handled.
- 6.3.2.2 The activities to be undertaken with respect to certified products, as per the definitions found in [Table 5](#).
 - a. **Where the company is intending to handle seaweed, the CAB shall advise the applicant of the need to sign the MASI Partnership Agreement.**
- 6.3.2.3 Whether the applicant intends to handle products certified under other recognised certification schemes that share the MSC CoC program.

Guidance 6.3.2.3

The specific certified fisheries/farms from which the applicant is sourcing do not need to be included in the scope of certification. Species and activities can be recorded without association to each other in the certification scheme database and the CoC Audit Checklist.

Where applicants intend to handle products originating from fisheries or farms that are certified under schemes other than the MSC (but which share the CoC Standards) this will be treated as a scope extension. For example, if the applicant wants to handle ASC certified products, the CAB will need to issue a separate ASC certificate for the client but can complete a single CoC audit.

Similarly, if an applicant wants to handle seaweed, the CAB will need to issue a separate seaweed certificate for the client.

Table 5: Activity Scope Definitions

	Activity	Definition
6	Harvest	This shall be used when vessels, or collection of seaweed from the wild environment are being certified. If they are processing on-board, “processing” should also be selected.
14	Aquaculture	Shall be applied to any entity involved in the farming of aquatic organisms including seaweed (Seaweed Production Categories Bi, Bii, Ci, and Cii in Table 2 of the ASC-MSC Seaweed Standard). If there is processing at farm level, “processing” should also be selected.

6.5 Use of trademarks

6.5.1 Once entered as an applicant on the database, the CAB shall inform the client that it can use the MSC **and/or ASC** label, or other trademarks:

6.5.1.1 Once **the MASI Partnership Agreement** has been signed, and

6.5.1.2 Providing the client complies with the **MASI Partnership Agreement**.

6.5.2 The CAB shall direct the client to **MASI** (ecolabel@msc.org) for all enquiries regarding use of the **ASC or MSC** label or **other** trademarks.

Guidance 6.5.2

Trademarks include the MSC or ASC label and other trademarks. The CAB may inform the client that packaging can be printed ahead of certification with the trademarks, but that packaging must be approved by **MASI** and product cannot be sold as certified or with the trademarks until certification is complete and the certificate status is shown as valid on the **ASC-MSC** website.

11 Certificate management for all CoC clients

11.1 Certification decision

11.1.8 **If the client is handling seaweed products, the CAB shall first obtain confirmation from the client that it has signed the MASI Partnership Agreement¹.**

¹ Derogation, ASC-MSC March 2018: Clause 11.1.8 shall only become effective when ASC-MSC provide direct notification to CABs.

11.2 Changes to the certificate

- 11.2.5 On receiving a request for an extension to scope that includes new activities, or the first scope extension to handle products certified to recognised certification schemes that share MSC CoC, the CAB shall:
- 11.2.5.1 Review available information.
 - 11.2.5.2 Consider if the client's existing management system is suitable for the proposed new scope of operations.
 - 11.2.5.3 Consider if eligibility for the respective version of the MSC CoC Standard will be maintained.
 - a. If a client is no longer eligible to be certified under the same version of the CoC Standard, the CAB shall inform the client they must be re-certified against the appropriate CoC Standard within six months.
 - 11.2.5.4 Consider if the client is no longer eligible for remote audits and determine whether future audits will need to be on-site.
 - 11.2.5.5 Decide whether an on-site audit is required before the scope can be extended and record the rationale for this decision.
 - 11.2.5.6 **In the case of an extension to include seaweed in the scope of the certificate, the CAB shall obtain confirmation from the certificate holder that it has signed the MASI Partnership Agreement.²**

11.3 Surveillance frequency and additional audits

- 11.3.7 **During surveillance, the CAB shall verify that the client has signed and remains in compliance with the MASI Partnership Agreement.**

Guidance 11.3

Extending the scope of certification to include seaweed would not alter the audit frequency, and CABs should seek to align audits as far as possible.

² Derogation, ASC-MSC March 2018: Clause 11.2.5.6 shall only become effective when ASC-MSC provide direct notification to CABs.

D. General Certification Requirements v2.2

- D.1 Until notification from the ASC-MSC that the ASC-MSC seaweed database is operational, the CAB shall submit all information using the Excel (XLS/XLSX) templates on the MSC website (www.msc.org).

4.8 Contract

- 4.8.3 The CAB's contract shall specify a description of the steps that shall be taken by the client before it can be authorised by **MASI** to use the trademarks.

Guidance 4.8.3

The CAB may inform clients that if they have any questions concerning the **label(s)** or other trademarks they should contact **MASI**: ecolabel@msc.org.

- 4.8.6 The CAB's contract with CoC clients shall specify the following.

- 4.8.6.7 In the case of seaweed operations, the client shall sign the **MASI Partnership Agreement** before certification can be granted.³

7 Process Requirements

7.4 Suspension or withdrawal of certification

CoC Certificate suspension

- 7.4.9 A CAB shall suspend a CoC certificate if any of the following occur:

- 7.4.9.9 If **MASI** has suspended or withdrawn a certificate holder's **MASI Partnership Agreement** and/or the certificate holder does not comply with **MASI** instruction within stated timeframes.

Guidance 7.4.9.9

In the case of CoC operations with seaweed within scope, the CoC certificate holder should sign and follow the instructions in the MASI Partnership Agreement. The CAB will suspend or withdraw the certificate if the certificate holder fails to do so.

If the certificate is suspended for seaweed, the whole CoC certificate will be suspended.

³ Derogation, ASC-MSC March 2018: Clause 4.8.6.7 shall only become effective when ASC-MSC provide direct notification to CABs. Until clause 4.8.6.7 becomes effective, CAB contracts with CoC clients shall note that the client shall sign the **MASI Partnership Agreement** before the use of trademarks will be granted.

7.5 Information on certificates

7.5.1 The CAB shall issue an English language certificate, which as well as requirements in ISO 17065, 7.7, shall contain:

- 7.5.1.1 The latest published version of the MSC and/or **ASC** label, **which:**
- a. **Shall be no smaller than the logo of the CAB.**
 - b. **Should be selected based on the production category (i.e. MSC label for wild caught – category A, ASC for farmed – category Bii and Cii, and MSC and ASC for enhanced – category Bi and Ci).**

7.5.1.3 For CoC certificates, a unique CoC certificate code that is **manually** generated by the **certification scheme**.

Guidance 7.5.1.3

The seaweed CoC code will be SWD-C-xxxx

End of document
