Notes for readers

- This document includes questions and notes for consultation, labelled “Consultation question” and “Consultation note” respectively. Rationales for changes are also given.
- Formatting and clause numbering in the Chain of Custody Default Standard will be finalised prior to release of the final version.
- Due to revisions, existing clauses may have been re-numbered.
- Insertions are displayed as blue text.
- Deletions are displayed in the right-hand margin.

MSC Chain of Custody Certification Requirements

Final consultation version, August 2018
MSC Chain of Custody Certification Requirements (Final consultation version August 2018)

Responsibility for these requirements

Responsibility for these requirements is held by the Marine Stewardship Council.
Readers should verify that they are using the latest copy of this and other related documents. The definitive version of the requirements is maintained on the MSC website (www.msc.org).

Versions published

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Version no.</th>
<th>Date of publication</th>
<th>Description of amendment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>15 August 2011</td>
<td>First version issued for application by conformity assessment bodies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>24 October 2011</td>
<td>Version issued incorporating revised Group CoC requirements and correcting typos, page numbering, wrong and missing referencing and unreadable flowcharts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>10 January 2012</td>
<td>Version issued incorporating TAB 20 agreed changes regarding reassessment, objections procedure, modifications to the default assessment tree to assess bivalves, implementation timeframes and ASC requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>14 January 2013</td>
<td>Minor edits, wrong and missing referencing, typos and unreadable Figures were corrected.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>31 January 2014</td>
<td>Version issued incorporating TAB 21 and BoT agreed changes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>20 February 2015</td>
<td>Minor edits and clarifications were also incorporated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X.X</td>
<td>XX X 2019</td>
<td>Version issued as a result of the Chain of Custody program review, including changes agreed by TAB meetings 25-27 and the BoT.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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

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

Mission

Our mission is to use our ecolabel 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.
General introduction

Chain of Custody certification

Chain of Custody (CoC) certification provides credible assurance that products sold with the MSC trademarks originated from a certified fishery and can be traced throughout the supply chain to a certified source.

Companies certified against the MSC CoC Standard are audited by a third-party accredited certification body and are subject to periodic surveillance audits over the three-year period of a CoC certificate.

Use of the MSC Chain of Custody Program by other standard setting organisations

The MSC CoC Standard is made available for use by selected organisations that operate certification schemes. At the time these requirements were issued, the Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC) has elected to use the MSC CoC Standard for all certified seafood products originating from ASC-certified farms. This allows supply chain companies to handle both MSC-certified and ASC-certified seafood with a single CoC audit, although separate CoC certificates are issued and each standard has distinct trademarks. If other certification schemes choose to also use the MSC CoC Standard in the future, this information will be published on the MSC website.

Chain of Custody Standard

The MSC has one Default Chain of Custody Standard and two variants: one version for Group organisations and one version for Consumer-Facing Organisations (CFOs). Further information on eligibility for each version of the CoC Standard can be found in the Chain of Custody Certification Requirements (CoCCR) section 6.2 and in the introduction to each document.

Five core principles form the MSC Chain of Custody Standard:

- Principle 1: Certified products are purchased from certified suppliers
- Principle 2: Certified products are identifiable
- Principle 3: Certified products are segregated
- Principle 4: Certified products are traceable and volumes are recorded
- Principle 5: The organisation has a management system

Effective date

The effective date for version X.X of the CoCCR is XX February 2019. All initial and surveillance CoC audits carried out on or after this date must use this version of the CoCCR.

The start date is the date that a contract is entered into for the audit.

Review date

Changes may be made to this document periodically following the MSC policy development process.

More information about the MSC policy development process and the MSC Standard Setting Procedure can be found on the MSC website.
About this document

The Chain of Custody Certification Requirements (CoCCR) contains mandatory requirements for all Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs) that carry out audits of fisheries or supply chain organisations who wish to make a claim that products they are selling are from well-managed and sustainable sources.

Requirements

The purposes of the CoCCR are:

- To establish consistent certification requirements that enable all CABs to operate in a consistent and controlled manner.
- To provide the transparency that is required of an international certification scheme for it to have credibility with potential stakeholders, including governments, international governmental bodies (e.g., regulatory bodies and fishery managers), CABs, suppliers of fish and fish products, non-governmental organisations, and consumers.
- To provide documentation designed to assure long-term continuity and consistency in the delivery of MSC certification.

Guidance

Guidance has been produced to:

- Help CABs interpret this document.
- Provide clarification on questions asked by CABs.
- Address areas of concern to the MSC.
- Act as a training aid for both MSC and CAB staff.
- Detail process that should be followed in special cases.

Guidance that relates to a section, or relates to the content of a specific clause, appears in a box at the beginning of the section or the end of the clause.

Auditability

The guidance is not directly auditable. It is, however, expected that the guidance included in this document will be applied by CABs, where applicable, unless there is a justification for not doing so.

Derogations

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.

Derogations are indicated by a footnote including:

- The authority who made the decision on the derogation.
- The date or meeting number of the decision.
- The date on which the derogation came into force or expires.
- A short description of the derogation.
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1 **Scope**

The scope of the MSC Chain of Custody Certification Requirements (CoC CR) includes activities that all CABs shall undertake in carrying out Chain of Custody (CoC) certification and audit activities for organisations in the supply chain. CoC certification is required for all organisations trading certified products that wish to make a claim that the seafood they are buying or selling comes from a well-managed and sustainable source that has been certified to the MSC Fisheries Standard, or to other standards as recognised by the MSC.

Once a certified product is placed into consumer-ready tamper-proof packaging, CoC certification is no longer required for organisations trading or handling these products.

Where the MSC has a formal agreement with other certification schemes (such as the Aquaculture Stewardship Council, or ASC) to share the MSC CoC Standards, products from sources certified against these standards can also utilise the MSC CoC system, provided each organisation has the appropriate products in their CoC scope.

2 **Normative documents**

The following documents contain provisions which, through reference in this text, become part of the CoCCR:

- MSC General Certification Requirements.
- MSC Single and Multi-site CoC Audit Checklist and Reporting Template.
- MSC Group CoC Audit Checklist and Reporting Template.
- MSC Consumer-Facing Organisation Audit Checklist and Reporting Template.
- MSC eCert database user manual for CABs: Chain of Custody.
- MSC Seafood Sampling Procedure.
- MSCI Certified Ingredient Percentage Rules.
- Supplementary Requirements for the ASC-MSC Seaweed Algae Program.
- Minimum Requirements for Recognition of a Labour Audit by the MSC.
- Country-Based Labour Risk Scoring Tree – Annual Scores.
- CoC Certificate Holder Statement of Understanding of Labour Requirements.

For documents that specify a date or version number, earlier amendments or revisions of that document do not apply as a normative requirement. Where more recent versions are available, CABs are encouraged to review the most recent editions and any guidance documents available to gain further insight into how the document has changed, and to consider whether or not to implement the latest changes.

For documents without dates or version numbers, the latest published edition of the document referred to applies unless otherwise stated in this document.

In addition, the normative documents listed in the MSC General Certification Requirements (GCR) Section 2 apply to the implementation of the CoCCR.

3 **Terms and definitions**

Concepts, terms and phrases used are defined in the MSC-MSCI Vocabulary.
MSC Chain of Custody Certification Requirements (Final consultation version August 2018)

Concepts, terms or phrases used in the CoCCCR that have more than one definition are defined within the text where such terms or phrases appear.

4 Structural requirements

No requirements additional to ISO 17065 and GCR.

5 Resource requirements

No requirements additional to ISO 17065 and GCR.

5.1 Personnel

Guidance 5.1

This section details the additional competency and qualification criteria for CoC auditors, Group CoC auditors and CAB lead CoC auditors as referred to in GCR section 6.1.

5.1.1 CABs shall ensure that:

a. All CoC auditors comply with Table 1.

b. CoC auditors audit an individual client for a maximum of 6 consecutive years and appoint an alternative auditor in the seventh year.

Guidance 5.1.1.b

After the sixth consecutive year of auditing a client, the auditor must wait at least 1 year before auditing the same client again.

5.1.2 Group CoC auditors who audit the central office’s operations shall, in addition to 5.1.1.a, comply with:

a. Group CoC central office auditor qualification and competency criteria as detailed in Table 2.

b. Where there is more than one auditor conducting a group central office CoC audit, at least one auditor shall meet each of the requirements in Rows 1, 2 and 3 in Table 2.

Table 1: CoC auditor qualification and competency criteria, including auditing to the CFO Standard

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. General</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Qualifications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. 5 years’ work experience, including 2 years in of any of the following: food industry; supply chain management; science; traceability; policy development, or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Degree or equivalent in business, economics, science or technical programme and 3 years’ work experience including 2 years food-related in supply chain management, science, traceability or policy development. Examples of technical qualifications include: supply chain and logistics management, food/seafood science and fisheries science.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. To demonstrate knowledge of food safety or quality systems management, product or supply chain risk assessment, traceability</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
systems and relevant national and international laws relating to product labelling and traceability.

b. An understanding of fish and fish products and their supply chains, and the type of supply chain operation to be audited.

c. The ability to manage relationships with colleagues and clients.

Verification mechanisms

- CV.
- Previous employer’s reference letter.
- CAB appraisal.
- Diploma or certificate.
- Confirmation of previous work experience.

2. Third-party product and management system conformity assessment auditing techniques

Qualifications

As defined in Table 1 in the General Certification Requirements.

Competencies

- The ability to apply appropriate audit principles, procedures and techniques to the planning and execution of different audits so that audits are conducted in a consistent and systematic manner.
- Be able to verify the accuracy of collected information and be aware of the significance and appropriateness of audit evidence to support audit findings and conclusions.
- Understand and assess those factors that can affect the reliability of the audit findings and conclusions.

Verification mechanisms

- CAB training records.
- Previous audit reports.
- Accreditation body witness or office audits.
- CAB on-site observations, review of audit reports and feedback from clients.

Guidance

As per ISO 17021, the documented monitoring procedures for auditors shall include a combination of on-site observation, review of audit reports and feedback from clients. This monitoring shall be designed in such a way as to minimise disturbance to the normal processes of certification.

3. Understanding of MSC CoC Standard and MSC CoC Certification Requirements

Qualifications

- Prior to conducting MSC CoC audits, pass the MSC’s CoC online training and re-take this course at least once every 3 years.
  - In addition for CFO auditors, prior to conducting a CFO audit pass the CFO online training module and re-take this course at least once every 3 years.

- Pass the MSC’s auditor training on updates to the CoC scheme documents prior to undertaking audits against the new requirements.
- Review any updates to the CoC requirements at least annually.
**Guidance 3.c**
This may take the form of a search of the MSC website for new updates issued during the preceding year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competencies</th>
<th>The ability to:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. Describe the eligibility, intent, and requirements of the different versions of the CoC Standard.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. Determine who needs Chain of Custody and demonstrate this practically.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. Describe the main steps in an MSC CoC audit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d. Demonstrate an understanding of how the scheme’s database can be used to extract relevant information and the information required for entry into this database.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>e. Identify and assess potential risks to traceability during food production, distribution, preparation, storage, trading and transportation throughout the chain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f. Demonstrate an understanding of the principles of the HACCP or other food management systems which are applicable to the MSC CoC Standard.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>g. Assess the effectiveness of traceability systems employed by organisations and their subcontractors, and describe where the latter is relevant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>h. Assess the adequacy of records verified as part of the audit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>i. Recognise the risks of compromising traceability associated with different seafood species and activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>j. Describe how to:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>i. Conduct an audit when certified product is not on-site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ii. Conduct a remote audit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>k. Demonstrate an understanding of how to grade non-conformities and the causes of a certificate suspension and withdrawal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>l. Describe:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>i. The main steps in the fisheries assessment process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ii. Where to find sources of information about which fish can enter chains of custody, fishery certificate sharing agreements and how this impacts the eligibility of certified products and which parties are eligible to handle under-assessment product.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verification mechanisms</th>
<th>a. Examination pass.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. Accreditation body witness or office audits.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Commented [A4]: Substantive change #CFO**
Rationale: Added because CFO Standard has additional central management audit criteria in addition to general Default Standard auditing.
c. CAB on-site observations, review of audit reports and feedback from clients.

**Guidance**
See guidance on Verification Mechanism in Row 2 Table 1.

### 4. Audit experience

**Qualifications**

- a. Have undertaken 4 initial or surveillance MSC CoC audits or audits for equivalent standards, of which 2 can be remote.
- b. For new CoC auditors:
  - i. Witness or participate in 2 MSC CoC audits or audits for equivalent standards, of which 1 can be remote.
  - ii. Conduct at least 2 satisfactory MSC CoC audits or audits for equivalent standards, of which 1 can be remote, under the direction and guidance of a lead auditor prior to undertaking solo audits.

**Guidance**
Equivalent standards are those which include a significant component of traceability including: GFSI-approved standards, GlobalGAP aquaculture standard and ISO 22000.

**Competencies**
For CoC auditors, the ability to:

- a. Identify and find the location of the information required for undertaking and completing each assessment/audit.
- b. Reconcile document discrepancies and investigate the causes of these.
- c. Detect commonly used methods of document manipulation, fraudulent actions and fraudulent practices.
- d. For CFO auditors, in addition to criteria 4a-b:
  - i. Demonstrate a detailed knowledge of management system related standards and auditing.
  - ii. Apply management system principles to different organisations and to understand the interaction between the central office and its sites.

**Guidance 4.d**
CFO auditors will be required to sample and test a wide variety of management systems that ensure product conformity. The knowledge of management systems standards may include requirements for internal audits, a management review and self-corrective action to address any problems identified in the audit and review, such as ISO 9001.

**Verification mechanisms**

- a. CAB records.
- b. Previous employer’s reference letter.
- c. Accreditation body witness or office audits.
- d. CAB on-site observations, review of audit reports and feedback from clients.
### 5. Ongoing audit participation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>a. Should participate in 3 MSC CoC audits every 18 months which can include the audits listed in section 4 above.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Competencies</td>
<td>The ability to:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. Identify the information required for undertaking and completing each assessment/audit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. Reconcile document discrepancies and investigate the causes of these.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. Detect commonly used methods of document manipulation, fraudulent actions and fraudulent practices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verification mechanisms</td>
<td>a. CAB records.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. Previous employer’s reference letter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. Accreditation body witness or office audits.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d. CAB on-site observations, review of audit reports and feedback from clients.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>e. Previous audit reports.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Guidance
See guidance on Verification Mechanism in Row 2, Table 1.

### 6. On-site observations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>a. Has been peer witnessed by a qualified CoC lead auditor during an MSC CoC audit or an audit for equivalent standards that include a significant component of traceability. This must be done at least once in each 3-year period where the peer witness may be part of the audit team.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Guidance</td>
<td>Equivalent standards are those which include a significant component of traceability including: GFSI-approved standards, GlobalGAP aquaculture standard and ISO 22000.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competencies</td>
<td>None applicable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verification mechanisms</td>
<td>a. CAB training records.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. CAB on-site observations, review of audit reports and feedback from clients.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Guidance
See guidance on Verification Mechanism in Row 2, Table 1.
7. Communication and stakeholder facilitation skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>a. Experience in applying different types of interviewing and facilitation techniques.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Competencies</td>
<td>a. The ability to effectively communicate with the client and other stakeholders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verification mechanisms</td>
<td>a. CV.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. CAB records.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. Accreditation body witness or office audits.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d. CAB on-site observations, review of audit reports and feedback from clients.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Guidance**
See guidance on Verification Mechanism in Row 2 Table 1.

---

**Table 2: Group CoC central office auditor qualification and competency criteria**

### 1. Group audit training

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>a. Prior to conducting MSC CoC group audits, pass the MSC’s Group CoC auditor training course and re-take this course at least once every 3 years;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. Pass the MSC’s online training on updates to Group CoC Standard and/or requirements prior to undertaking group audits against the new requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. Review any updates to the CoC requirements at least annually.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Guidance**
This may take the form of a search of the MSC website for new updates issued during the preceding year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competencies</th>
<th>Ability to:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. Demonstrate an understanding of the CoC Standard: Group version.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. Assess conformity against the Group requirements in section 10 of this document (Additional requirements for Group CoC Certification).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. Describe the key steps in an MSC Group CoC audit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d. Determine the appropriate sample size for group site audits at initial and surveillance audits.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verification mechanisms</th>
<th>a. Examination pass.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. Accreditation body witness or office audits.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. CAB on-site observations, review of audit reports and feedback from clients.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d. CAB training records.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Deleted:** within 90 days of the effective date of new versions of the requirements and
### Guidance
See guidance on Verification Mechanism in Row 2 Table 1.

#### 2. Management systems and reference documents

**Qualifications**

a. 50 days' auditing experience for MSC CoC audits or equivalent standards, of which at least 15 days are auditing experience as a team member for management system related standards, which may include MSC group CoC audits.

**Guidance**

Management system related standards in this context means standards where there is a high degree of reliance on management systems to ensure product conformity. These standards include requirements for internal audits, a management review and self-corrective action to address any problems identified in the audit and review, such as ISO 9001 and 14001.

Equivalent standards are those which include a significant component of traceability including: GFSI-approved standards, GlobalGAP aquaculture standard and ISO 22000.

**Competencies**

Ability to:

a. Show a detailed knowledge of management system standards, applicable procedures or other management system documents used as audit criteria.

b. Apply management system principles to different organisations and to understand the interaction between components of the management system.

c. Understand and act upon differences between and the priority of reference documents and understand the need to apply specific reference documents to different audit situations.

d. Demonstrate knowledge of information systems and technology for authorisation, security, distribution and control of documents, data and records.

**Verification mechanisms**

a. CV.

b. Previous employer’s reference letter.

c. Accreditation body witness or office audits.

d. CAB on-site observations, review of audit reports and feedback from clients.

**Guidance**

See guidance on Verification Mechanism in Row 2 Table 1.

#### 3. Audit experience

**Qualifications**

Prior to undertaking solo group CoC audits either:

a. Have led at least one group CoC audit for MSC or equivalent standards under the direction, guidance and supervision of an MSC group central office audit, or
b. Witness or participate in one MSC group CoC audit or group audit for equivalent standards under the direction and guidance of a group CoC central office auditor.

Competencies

a. None applicable.

Verification mechanisms

a. Accreditation body witness or office audits.
b. CAB on-site observations, review of audit reports and feedback from clients.
c. CAB training records.

Guidance

See guidance on Verification Mechanism in Row 2 Table 1.

6 Process requirements

6.1 Need for CoC certification

6.1.1 The CAB shall evaluate each applicant to determine the need for CoC certification using the criteria below:

a. Certification is a requirement for all organisations that take legal ownership of certified products except in the following circumstances:

i. Organisations that only purchase, handle, and sell certified products in consumer-ready tamper-proof packaging (CRTPP).

Guidance 6.1.1.a

Organisations are considered to be legal owners if they issue invoices related to the sale of certified products and collect payment for the sale of certified products, or are able to demonstrate their financial ownership of certified materials based on other documentation (such as internal transfer slips, contracts or deeds). Applicants that do not take ownership can choose to become certified if they wish, however, they would not be able to identify products as certified unless the legal owner of the products has CoC certification.

Organisations that are trading or handling products from certified fisheries or farms but do not ever identify or sell these products as ‘certified’ or with the certified claim will not require CoC certification.

Guidance 6.1.1.a.i

Organisations that do not need CoC certification according to clause 6.1.1.a.i could still be required to obtain certification if the CRTP product is re-opened further down in the supply chain.

For example, a wholesaler only trading CRTP products, not opening the product before selling it on to the final consumers would not need CoC certification. However, if a restaurant buys CRTP product from the wholesaler and re-opens the CRTP product to prepare meals served in their restaurant which they would like to advertise as MSC or ASC certified, both the wholesaler and restaurant would require CoC certification.

While companies may not always know how their products are used later in the chain, if the client or certifier are aware that the product will be opened later in the chain, they should not treat the product as CRTP and advise the relevant companies that CoC certification is required.
ii. Organisations that receive certified product in CRTPP and open the package only for the purpose of heating or placing on a plate before serving to a final consumer.

**Guidance 6.1.1.a.ii**

This clause is only applicable to consumer serving businesses that have limited food preparation areas/kitchens, and receive individually-portioned MSC or ASC identified CRTPP product which they may heat up before serving. These facilities do not alter the product form in any way, including portioning it on plates or other items. They also do not apply the MSC ecolabel or ASC logo to the items (the consumer facing claim on menu or on the consumer facing product is provided by their supplier). There are two known examples in the MSC and ASC supply chains where they could be considered eligible:

1. Airlines or trainlines receiving individually-portioned meals identified as certified from their CoC certified supplier. These meals are removed from the CRTP sealed container or unwrapped, then heated prior to serving. The menu (provided by their CoC certified supplier) displays the MSC Ecolabel or ASC logo next to the certified item.

2. Cafes/Petrol (gas) stations that receive individually-portioned, pre-packed, eco-labelled product from their CoC certified supplier. These items are displayed in the CRTP product form received from their supplier, but can be unwrapped, heated and served at each customer’s request without the need for CoC. For example, sandwiches in eco-labelled packaging.

iii. Entities that are identified by reference to or on a valid fishery or farm certificate.

**Guidance 6.1.1.a.iii**

Entities identified by reference to or on a fishery certificate could consist of agents, auctions, unloaders or others that handle certified fish in the proximity of the point of landing or first sale. The Public Certification Report for the fishery will clearly state that these entities are included in the fishery 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; please refer to clause 7.19.4 and subclauses in the FCR v2.0. Any similar entities not specifically referenced in the fishery certificate will require CoC certification.

In relation to ASC farms, the ‘entities’ relate only to the certified farm operations themselves. The audit report will name these and should also clearly state if CoC is required at this step.

b. Organisations receiving product prior to sale from the certified fishery’s client group or certified farm, shall have Chain of Custody certification from the point defined in the fishery assessment report or farm audit report.

**Guidance 6.1.1.b.**

In case the CoC applicant is the first buyer of certified product from certified farms or fisheries, the CAB can check the most recent farm audit report or fishery assessment report to determine the start of Chain of Custody. For example, this may be at transport from the farm, or transhipment from the fishery or at any other point of product handling prior to sale.
6.2 Certification options

6.2.1 There may be several certification options available to an applicant, as listed in Table 3.

6.2.1.1 The CAB shall evaluate each applicant to determine which certification option(s) the applicant is eligible for and which option will be best suited to their needs.
Table 3: Options for certification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Certification options</th>
<th>Applies to</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Single</td>
<td>Organisations operating out of one site (a single location with one physical address) who would typically opt for certification against the Default CoC Standard unless eligible for the CFO CoC Standard or included in a Group CoC certificate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Multi-site</td>
<td>Organisations handling or trading certified products at more than one location (physical address). All sites are individually audited against the Default CoC Standard, although not all requirements would necessarily apply to all sites. One CoC code and certificate are shared across all sites. For example, a company with 2 processing sites and one trading office might be certified as a multi-site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Group</td>
<td>Organisations with numerous locations – this could be a group of individual enterprises or one company with numerous sites. Under this option, the group designates a central office function that establishes internal controls and is responsible for site compliance. The CAB audits the central office and a sample of sites against the Group CoC Standard, instead of every site receiving an audit as in a multi-site certificate. One CoC code and certificate are shared across all sites. Specific eligibility for Group CoC certification is included in section 6.2.2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Consumer-Facing</td>
<td>Organisations that serve or sell seafood exclusively or primarily to the final consumer (typically in a retail or foodservice environment). CFOs can be a single site operation or have numerous locations. For an organisation with multiple locations, a designated central office function is established internally and is responsible for the compliance of all sites. The CAB audits the central office, operations sites (where relevant) and a sample of consumer-facing sites against the CFO CoC Standard. This might include restaurants, restaurant chains, fishmongers, retailers with fish counters and caterers. One CoC code and certificate are shared across all sites. Specific eligibility for CFO CoC certification is included in section 6.2.3.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Guidance 6.2.1

For some clients, multiple certification options will be applicable. For example, a small restaurant chain with 3 sites could be audited against the Default CoC Standard as a multi-site, the Group CoC Standard or the CFO CoC Standard. It is up to the CAB and client to decide which CoC Standard and certificate option is the best fit for the organisation.

For both single and multi-site certificates, the client is certified against the Default CoC Standard.

Eligibility for Group CoC certification

6.2.2 The CAB shall determine that an applicant is eligible for certification against the Group CoC Standard if all the following criteria are met:
MSC Chain of Custody Certification Requirements (Final consultation version August 2018)

a. The proposed group’s central office is a legal entity with whom a contract can be made.

b. All sites undertake substantially similar activities as defined by MSC Chain of Custody activities (see Table 4); or if they do not, the group can be stratified for sampling according to the requirements in section 8.2.

c. The entire group operation is within one geographic region; or if they are not, the group can be stratified for sampling.

d. The same written language is used at all sites and can be read by all site managers or, if translations are provided, adequate document control procedures are in place to ensure version consistency across different languages.

e. The proposed group’s central office is capable of objectivity in audit and decision making.

f. The proposed group’s central office can demonstrate through their application an understanding of the Group CoC Standard such that it is likely that they will be able to qualify for certification.

Eligibility for Consumer-Facing Organisation (CFO) certification

6.2.3 The CAB shall determine that an applicant is eligible for certification against the CFO CoC Standard if all the following applicable criteria are met:

a. The organisation sells and/or serves certified seafood exclusively or primarily to final consumers.

b. Any sites that carry out processing or repacking of certified seafood do so exclusively on behalf of the applicant organisation.

c. If the organisation uses contract processors or packers, these organisations have their own CoC certification.

d. If the applicant has more than one site handling certified seafood:
   i. All sites are under the control of a common management system, which determines the parameters for seafood supply, traceability infrastructure, and staff operation procedures, and is maintained by the organisation’s designated central office.
   ii. The central office has an ownership or franchise relationship with each site, or a temporary right to manage all sites and staff where certified seafood is handled to ensure conformity with the MSC Standard.
   iii. The central office has oversight of purchases conducted at site level, with controls to ensure that all sites can only order certified seafood from certified suppliers.

Guidance 6.2.3.a

In general, the CFO CoC Standard is designed for organisations selling to final consumers only. However, in some specific cases organisations that sell to both businesses and final consumers may be eligible to be certified against the CFO CoC Standard (this might include ‘cash and carry’ wholesalers or fish mongers that sell to a small number of restaurants as well as final consumers). In these cases, to be eligible the client needs to demonstrate that sales to final consumers (i.e. by volume or value) are greater than sales to other businesses.

Guidance 6.2.3.b-d

Applicants for consumer-facing certification may have sites that carry out processing or repacking activities; however, these sites must be dedicated to handling certified seafood on behalf of the applicant organisation only. Sites cannot process or repack certified seafood for other organisations or customers unless they are certified against the Default CoC Standard.
Eligibility for interim certification

6.2.4 The CAB shall determine if the applicant is seeking interim certification against any of the certification options.

Guidance 6.2.4
The interim certification option is available in cases where exceptional circumstances make it impossible or highly impractical to carry out an on-site audit.

Permission for interim certification may be granted by the MSC (on the basis of a recommendation from the CAB) for up to 90 days providing that the risk is low and adequate controls are in place.

6.2.5 If interim certification is being sought, the CAB shall verify that:

a. There are exceptional circumstances making it impossible to carry out an on-site audit.

b. A risk assessment has been completed considering all potential risks of substitution or mixing between certified and non-certified products and how these risks will be mitigated.

Guidance 6.2.5.b
The MSC intends that CABs use their own judgment to determine risk factors as they may vary significantly between cases where interim certification is requested.

c. Risks to the integrity of certified products have been determined to be minimal.

6.2.6 If the CAB is satisfied that interim certification is appropriate, it shall:

a. Inform the applicant that the MSC is not responsible for any costs associated with lapsing of an interim certificate prior to a CoC certificate being obtained.

b. Apply for interim certification on the scheme database, providing the following:

i. The proposed scope of certification.

ii. A written justification of the exceptional circumstances and risk assessment as per 6.2.5.

iii. A full timetable for further action, including timing of audit(s) to be held within 90 days.

6.2.7 Once the MSC has decided whether to allow the interim certificate, the CAB shall inform the client of this outcome.

Ineligibility for certification

6.2.8 The CAB shall check if applicants for CoC certification:

a. Have had their certificate withdrawn by a CAB within the last 2 years.

i. The CAB shall not issue a new certificate until at least 2 years from the date that the certificate was withdrawn following a suspension for the reasons defined in 9.2.1.c.ii.

b. Have had their certificate suspended within the last 6 months.
For intentional and/or systematic causes as determined by GCR 7.4.10, the CAB shall not issue a new certificate until at least 6 months from the date of suspension.

Where the certificate holder has cancelled their certificate during suspension, the CAB shall not issue a new certificate until at least 6 months from the date of suspension.

Guidance 6.2.8.a-b
The certificate statuses of "withdrawn" and "suspended" can be found on the MSC website Find-a-Supplier page.

GCR 4.11 details requirements to be followed for certificate transfers between CABs.

c. Have used the scheme trademarks without a license and/or sold products as certified prior to being certified.
   i. The CAB shall require the applicant to declare if they have previously used the MSC ecolabel or ASC logo or claims without certification.
   ii. The CAB shall inform the applicant they must stop using the trademarks and/or selling products as certified until certification is confirmed, and a licence has been signed in the case of using trademarks. The CAB shall raise a non-conformity and notify MSC within 7 calendar days.
   iii. If this is not declared by the applicant but the CAB is informed of it by MSC, ASC or MSCI

A. The CAB shall withhold or suspend the organisation's certification at the point they are informed even if the misuse is no longer occurring.

Guidance 6.2.8.c
Failing to sign a licence agreement or seek trademark approval where needed following certification may also result in a non-conformity or suspension per 2.4 of the CoC Standard, and 8.3.16 of the CoCCR.

6.2.9

If an applicant or an entity currently sub-contracted by the applicant is classified as low risk regarding specific requirements on forced and child labour in the CoC Standards and has been successfully prosecuted for violations of laws on forced or child labour in the last 2 years, the applicant shall not be allowed to continue in the CoC certification process until the prosecuted entity complies with the requirements for high-risk entities in specific requirements on forced and child labour in the CoC Standards.

Guidance 6.2.9

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) definition of forced labour comprises two key elements:

- Work or service is exacted under the menace of a penalty, which can imply monetary sanctions, physical punishment or the loss of rights and privileges or restriction of movement (e.g. refusing to allow free access to identity documents).
- Work is not voluntary.

Other unethical practices considered by the ILO to fall under the category of forced labour include debt bondage, human trafficking and other forms of modern slavery.

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) defines child labour as work that:

- Is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children, or
- Interferes with their schooling by depriving them of the opportunity to attend school, or
- Obliges them to leave school prematurely, or
6.2.9.1 Where an applicant no longer holds a valid contract for MSC activities with a subcontractor that has been successfully prosecuted for violations of laws on forced or child labour in the last 2 years, the applicant shall be allowed to continue in the CoC certification process without following the requirements for high-risk entities.

6.2.10 The CAB shall require the applicant to declare if their senior personnel (e.g. directors or controlling shareholders) have been involved in other organisations which have had their CoC certification withdrawn within the last 2 years or suspended within the last 6 months.

6.2.10.1 When there is evidence that a new legal entity was established in order to circumvent the withdrawal or suspension of CoC certification from a previous organisation, the new application shall be rejected by the CAB.

6.2.11 Enhanced fishery or farm operations that are out of scope of the MSC Fishery or ASC Farm standards are ineligible for CoC Certification.

Guidance 6.2.11
Ranching operations that receive MSC certified fish are ineligible for MSC CoC Certification.

6.3 Application and scope extension

6.3.1 Having established the recommended option for CoC certification and confirmed the applicant’s eligibility to proceed with certification, the CAB shall request information from the applicant to determine:

a. The proposed scope of certification.

b. The names of suppliers of certified products, if known.

c. Names of subcontractors that would handle certified product.

d. The proposed list of sites to be covered by the certificate, if relevant.

Scope of certification

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

a. The certified species that are to be purchased or handled.

b. The activities to be undertaken with respect to certified products, as per the definitions found in Table 4.

c. The main activity undertaken by the client with regards to certified products.

d. Whether the applicant intends to handle products certified under other recognised certification schemes that share the MSC Chain of Custody program.

Guidance 6.3.2.d
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...
Table 4: Activity scope definitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Trading fish (buying and/or selling)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.a</td>
<td>Trading fish meal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.b</td>
<td>Trading fish oil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Transportation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Storage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Distribution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Wholesale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>MSC Harvest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Definition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Packing or repacking</td>
<td>This shall be used when packaging is changed but the product remains the same. It is assumed that companies processing will also be packing, so it is not necessary to select packing as well as processing. If a company receives product from a processing company for the sole reason of packing it into a specific type of pack, this scope category applies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Processing</td>
<td>To include all examples of processing including primary processing, secondary processing, value-added processing, fish preparation or any other activity where the product is changed (excluding activities undertaken by ‘10’, ‘11’ and ‘12’ below).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Primary processing – the first-time seafood is changed from its original form as it was harvested. This includes heading and gutting, filleting, de-scaling, shelling, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Secondary processing – After primary processing, subsequent changes are made to the form of the seafood. This includes preparation of the seafood with other ingredients to manufacture products for foodservice or retail such as breading, adding sauces or breaking down the seafood into smaller components (e.g. loins, mince, oil, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Preservation – the long-term conservation of seafood. This includes smoking, drying, canning and freezing. This can be done at both primary and secondary processing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other processing – please specify.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Contract processing</td>
<td>This refers to any certificate holder that carries out processing on behalf of the product owner (does not take legal ownership of the product).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Use of contract processor</td>
<td>This refers to any certificate holder that uses a contract processor to process, repack or transform certified product on their behalf.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Retail to consumer</td>
<td>This includes fresh fish counters at retailers, fish mongers, markets selling direct to consumers, where the product will be taken away and prepared before being eaten by a consumer, or when sold in a traditional ‘retail’ environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Restaurant / take away to consumer</td>
<td>This includes any foodservice situation such as fish and chip shops, standard restaurants, quick service restaurants, where the product is prepared on-site and sold directly to consumers as ‘ready to eat’, or eaten on-site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Other</td>
<td>Must be clearly defined and explained how it does not fit into another category.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Aquaculture</td>
<td>This shall only be used for any entity involved in the farming of aquatic organisms certified to the ASC Standard.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Proposed suppliers**

6.3.3 The CAB shall identify whether the applicant’s proposed suppliers are certified.

   6.3.3.1 If the applicant has listed suppliers that are not certified, the CAB shall inform the client that suppliers need to be certified before the applicant can identify or label any products from the supplier as ‘certified’ or with trademarks.

**Use of subcontractors**

6.3.4 The CAB shall document the names of any proposed subcontractors (excluding transportation) that would be handling certified product and whether each subcontractor is certified.

6.3.5 If the applicant intends to use certified subcontractors, the CAB shall check that the proposed subcontractor’s scope includes the relevant activities.

**Site lists**

6.3.6 For all certificates that are to cover more than one site, the CAB shall ask the applicant for a current site list that provides both physical and postal addresses.

6.3.7 For CFO certificates the list shall classify sites as consumer-facing sites, operations sites or sites that do both and provide contact details for each site.

**Guidance 6.3.7**

A consumer-facing site is a discrete physical location (such as a restaurant location, fishmongers, fish counters, or catering site) that sells or serves certified seafood directly to a final consumer. These sites may also prepare and/or cook the food they sell/serve.

An operations site is any site that is involved in value-added processing, storage of business-to-business goods, distribution, packing or repacking of certified products (such as a central warehouse) and does not exclusively sell or serve certified seafood directly to final consumers.

In some cases, a site can be both consumer-facing and operations and should be listed as one site. An example of this could be a supermarket with a fresh fish counter and a warehouse function. Fish counters repacking product for retail sale, or a restaurant filleting a fish for sale as sashimi or sushii, will be considered as consumer-facing sites.

6.3.8 For group certificates the list shall include a name or position, and email or phone for a designated contact at each site who is responsible for ensuring the site conforms to Group CoC requirements.

**Guidance 6.3.8**

The CAB can begin to populate the CoC audit checklist with information on proposed scope, suppliers, subcontractors and site list at this stage.

6.4 **Contract**

6.4.1 The CAB shall provide the applicant with a contract as specified in GCR 4.8.
6.4.2 The CAB shall, within 10 days of receiving a signed contract for certification, record the applicant on the scheme database.

Guidance 6.4.2
The CAB may give the applicant their assigned MSC CoC certification code at this stage or later in the certification process.

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 ecolabel, logo, or other trademarks:
   a. Once a license agreement has been signed.
   b. Providing the client complies with the licensing agreement.

6.5.2 The CAB shall direct the client to MSCI (ecolabel@msc.org) for all enquiries regarding use of the ecolabel or trademarks.

Guidance 6.5.2
Trademarks include the MSC ecolabel or ASC logo 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 MSCI 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 MSC website.

7 Audit planning

Guidance Section 7
These requirements are in addition to those in the GCR section 7.2. They are relevant to all CoC certificate types and for the planning of every audit (initial, surveillance and recertification).

7.1 Requirements for all CoC clients

7.1.1 The CAB shall plan on-site and off-site audit activities and duration taking account of:
   a. The proposed or actual scope.
   b. The management system used by the client.
   c. The CoC Standard the client will be audited against.
   d. The need to allow sufficient time to verify the effectiveness of the client’s management system for the proposed scope.
   e. Visits to non-certified subcontractors as required in section 8.4.
   f. Any other certifications held.
   g. Opportunities to synchronise and combine CoC audits with other audits where possible and appropriate.

7.1.2 The CAB shall determine the number and type of sites to be audited as follows:
   a. For single and multi-site certificates, every site shall be audited.
   b. For CFO CoC certificates, sites shall be audited according to section 7.2.
   c. For Group CoC certificates, sites shall be audited according to section 10.4.

7.1.3 The CAB shall plan an audit duration of at least 1.5 days on-site for single and multi-site clients that:
MSC Chain of Custody Certification Requirements (Final consultation version August 2018)

a. Include processing or contract processing in their scope as per Table 4.
b. Are located in a country with a score below 41 in Transparency International’s latest Corruption Perception Index (cpi.transparency.org).
c. Handle both certified and non-certified seafood.
d. Purchase in excess of 5,000 MT of seafood or more than 20 seafood batches annually.

**Guidance 7.1.3**
The purpose of setting a minimum audit duration is to ensure there is sufficient time for the auditor to successfully evaluate all relevant activities described in section 8.2. The 1.5 days equates to 12 working hours for one auditor per site that meets the eligibility in 7.1.3. The minimum 1.5 days on-site audit duration does not include time taken to visit non-certified subcontractors or completing the audit checklist off-site. In cases where a multi-site also has a trading office this clause would not apply to the trading office. If, in specific cases where it is necessary to complete a part of the processing site audit at the trading office (i.e. to obtain input/output records as per Guidance 8.2), the time needed for this can be considered inclusive of the 1.5 days.

7.1.3.d still applies if an organisation handles only 100MT annually in 21 batches; or if the organisation handles 6,000MT in one batch. This total includes all seafood, not only certified products.

**Guidance 7.1.6.1**
A trading operation or site within a multi-site certificate which meets these criteria could also be audited remotely. Eligibility is not limited by the activities of subcontractors, as subcontractor auditing is covered within section 8.4. CABs may refer to the guidance in ISO 19011 to determine whether a remote audit is feasible in each case, considering for example: ability to interview, access relevant records, and other risk factors they are aware and/or evaluated in the application. This requirement also applies to re-certification audits.

**Guidance 7.1.6.2**
If the above criteria are met by the client but an on-site audit is planned, the CAB shall confirm their rationale in the audit checklist.

**Guidance 7.1.7**
The CAB shall verify if the client holds other accredited certifications issued by an accredited CAB to a relevant nationally or internationally recognised standard.

**Guidance 7.1.7.1**
If the client does hold accredited certifications, the CAB may use this as a substantive indication of conformity with relevant elements of the MSC CoC Standard by:

- Requesting the most recent audit report from the client.
b. Undertaking a gap analysis of the differences between the MSC CoC Standard and the other standard.

c. Using knowledge of conformity demonstrated by the other certification to support the CAB’s audit and certification decision.

Guidance 7.1.7.1
This allows CABs to use the results of assessments conducted for other certification schemes and/or to combine the MSC audit with another audit when elements of the MSC CoC Standard are covered in other standards/certification requirements.

7.1.8 The CAB shall verify the risk score of the client, each of their operation sites and subcontractors against the Labour Risk Country-Based Scoring tree on the MSC website in advance of each audit.

Table 5: Country-Based Risk Scoring Tree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposed Indicators</th>
<th>Increased risk when</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>amfori BSCI’s Country Risk Classification list</td>
<td>Country listed as high or severe risk.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global Slavery Index compiled by Walk Free Foundation</td>
<td>More than 1 in 200 of country’s population in modern slavery.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country has ratified the Palermo Protocol</td>
<td>Not ratified</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work in Fishing Convention</td>
<td>Not ratified</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country has ratified ILO Forced Labour Convention 29</td>
<td>Not ratified</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country has ratified ILO Right to Organise Convention 98</td>
<td>Not ratified</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country has ratified FAO Port State Measures Agreement</td>
<td>Not ratified</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US Department of State Trafficking in Persons (TiP) report</td>
<td>Country listed on Tier 2 Watchlist or Tier 3.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scores from weights are added up. If the score is above a certain threshold (to be defined), the country and hence sites active in prioritised scope activities are deemed as ‘high risk’ and a third-party labour audit is required.</td>
<td>Final score</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Commented [A21]: Substantive change for #labour

Rationale: This is where the final version of the Risk Scoring Tree will sit; however, this is not the final version. MSC requests stakeholder feedback on the indicators and weighting to help determine the final outcome. Any changes to the draft Tree will be shared with all stakeholders who submit comment.
7.2 Additional audit planning for CFO clients

7.2.1 The CAB shall review the CFO’s proposed scope and, with input from the client and consideration of their preference, determine whether sample stratification is required.

7.2.1.1 Stratification may take place where the consumer-facing sites are not within one country or geographic region.

Guidance 7.2.1.1
Stratification should only be applicable to consumer-facing sites. For operations sites audit planning, refer to 7.2.8–9.

Stratification is provided as an option to dividing consumer-facing sites with common characteristics for sampling. This is especially useful for certificates covering sites in multiple countries or continents, where operation culture, language or location may be different from the central office.

Geographic region refers to a group of countries in close proximity or with similar characteristics, or a region within a country with a similar characteristic such as sharing a language. For example, a sushi chain with stores in France, the UK, Belgium and China, the client and CAB may wish to stratify European and the Chinese sites separately, where a sample of sites from both strata gets audited for CFO conformance.

7.2.2 If stratification is required, the CAB shall undertake the risk assessment (Table 6) and plan the audit activities for each stratum independently.

7.2.3 The CAB shall keep a record of the sample stratification process and rationale in the CoC audit checklist.

7.2.4 The CAB shall complete a risk assessment against the entire CFO or stratum prior to each audit against the CFO CoC Standard, to determine the audit activities to be carried out.

7.2.4.1 Where the client handles exclusively certified seafood at all sites, the CAB shall score the client as Low Risk and plan audit activities in accordance with Table 8.

7.2.4.2 In all other cases, the CAB shall:

a. Score every risk factor for all “consumer-facing” sites using Table 6 and sum the total.

b. Use the total score from Table 6 to determine in Table 7 whether the client is Low Risk or Standard Risk.

c. Plan audit activities in accordance with Table 8, taking into account all the activities listed in Table 8.

Guidance 7.2.4.2
The CAB shall determine “consumer-facing” sites for sampling based on definition in Guidance 6.3.7. Where a site is considered both a consumer-facing and operations site, this site should be calculated as one site, and the CAB may determine if it should be sampled or if the operations involved processing or packing/repackaging follow 7.2.8.

7.2.5 The CAB shall inform the client that for organisations with multiple sites, the central office, operations sites (where relevant) and a sample of consumer-facing sites will be audited.
7.2.6 Prior to each audit, the CAB shall use Table 9 and the site list provided by the client to determine the number of sites to be visited.

7.2.7 The CAB shall select the sites based on the factors below, in decreasing order of importance:
   a. Site determined for sample by the accreditation body or MSC.
   b. Likelihood that certified seafood will be handled on-site.
   c. Same site not to be selected for consecutive visits where possible.
   d. Logistical considerations: combination of trips, availability of auditors, geographic proximity.
   e. Any additional criteria or constraints that would prevent sites from having short notice audits.

7.2.8 Operations sites that carry out business-to-business processing or packing/repacking activities of certified products shall be visited in addition to the sample size determined by Table 9.

Table 6: Risk assessment scoring for Consumer-Facing Sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>How many certified species could be handled, displayed, sold or served at any one site at the same time?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More than 1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Is there a possibility that certified and non-certified products of the same species, or similar-looking species, could be handled at any site at the same time?</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Will the label or identifier for certified products be applied by staff at each consumer-facing site (rather than at a central office or operations site)?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Have there been one or more major non-conformities issued during the most recent audit?</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>How many sites will be handling certified seafood?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### MSC Chain of Custody Certification Requirements (Final consultation version August 2018)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 or more</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1–2</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Does the organisation carry out annual (or more frequent) internal audits at all consumer-facing sites, which include testing the traceability of certified seafood?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Does the organisation have an electronic system that allows all volumes of certified seafood sold/served to final consumers to be reconciled against the volume of certified seafood purchased?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Does the organisation have other accredited certifications?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Country of site score on Transparency International’s latest corruption perception index (for latest scopes see cpi.transparency.org). Please refer to the latest year’s CPI score.</td>
<td>Under 32</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Between 32 and 62 inclusive</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Above 62</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Guidance Table 6**

Fulfilling the Risk Factors in questions 6 and 7 are not mandatory for CFO clients but will affect their risk scoring and the audit activities that will be carried out.

**Table 7: Risk scoring for Consumer-Facing Sites**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total score from Table 6</th>
<th>Risk level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1–14</td>
<td>Low Risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15–21</td>
<td>Standard Risk</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Commented [A27]: Substantive change #CFO

Rationale: Updated to reflect Table 4 proposed scoring changes

Deleted: 12

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7.2.10 Where site visits are carried out at short notice as dictated by Table 8, the CAB shall notify the client not more than 48 hours in advance of the specific sites to be visited.

Guidance 7.2.10
The CAB can inform the client of the day(s) when the short notice visits will take place, but can only communicate the names or addresses of the specific sites within 48 hours of the start of the site visits.

The 48 hours refers to 2 working days; this means that over a weekend the CAB should notify the client on a Thursday at the latest for sites to be visited on a Monday.

If short-notice visits are not practicable at some sites (e.g. closed catering sites without public access), then the CAB can select sites for short-notice visits from the remaining sites if possible.

7.2.10.1 If there are exceptional circumstances preventing sites being visited at short notice, such as access constraints, the CAB may reduce the number of short-notice site visits but shall provide a full justification in the audit checklist.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Audit factor</th>
<th>Low Risk</th>
<th>Standard Risk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traceability test completed to trace certified products on-site from the point of sale/serving back to a certified delivery or supplier</td>
<td>One traceability test per consumer-facing site visited (where certified products are available)</td>
<td>2 traceability tests per consumer-facing site visited. Additional traceability tests can be carried out based on the auditor's judgement and depending on availability of certified products.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of total site visits to be carried out at short notice</td>
<td>10% or at minimum one site if the sample is less than 10</td>
<td>100% (unless short notice access is impossible)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of total number of sites to be visited in addition to the sample table (Table 9)</td>
<td>Not required</td>
<td>1% or at minimum one site, whichever is greater</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8: Risk-based audit activities for Consumer-Facing Sites
### Table 9: Consumer-facing site sampling

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total number of sites</th>
<th>Number of sites to be visited during an audit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Initial audit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 to 6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 to 9</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 to 16</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 to 25</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 to 36</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37 to 49</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 to 64</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 to 84</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85 to 100</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101 to 121</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>122 to 144</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>145 to 169</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>170 to 196</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>197 to 225</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>226 to 256</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>257 to 289</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>290 to 324</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>325 to 361</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>362 to 400</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>401 to 441</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>442 to 484</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>485 to 529</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>530 to 576</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>577 to 625</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>626 to 676</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>677 to 729</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>730 to 784</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>785 to 841</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>842 to 900</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>901 to 961</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>962 to 1024</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 1024</td>
<td>Square root multiplied by 0.5, rounded up</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Commented [A29]: Substantive change #CFO**

**Rationale:** A number of stakeholders commented that CFO sampling is too low, especially given that the auditing aims to determine from a proportion of sites whether they are all conforming. The overall concern is with diluting credibility and ensuring sufficient checks.

- Deleted: 6
- Deleted: 2
- Deleted: 3
- Deleted: 4
- Deleted: 2
- Deleted: 3
- Deleted: 3
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- Deleted: 2
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- Deleted: 3
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- Deleted: 4
- Deleted: 4
- Deleted: 5
- Deleted: 5
- Deleted: 5
- Deleted: 5
- Deleted: 0.2
- Deleted: 0.15
8 Evaluation

8.1 Requirements for all CoC audits

8.1.1 The auditor shall use the relevant CoC audit checklist to evaluate the client at initial, surveillance and recertification audits.

8.1.1.1 Auditors shall evaluate the client against the same requirements for initial, surveillance and recertification audits.

8.2 Evaluation for single, multi-site, and group CoC audits

Guidance 8.1.1
All CoC audit checklists can be found on the MSC website.

In general, one CoC audit checklist can be prepared for audits of companies that seek both MSC-certified and ASC-certified products within their scope. There is no need to complete a separate checklist.

Guidance 8.2
One CoC audit checklist can be completed for a multi-site certificate by verifying only the relevant requirements at each site. For example, the auditor can assess segregation of certified and non-certified seafood at sites taking physical possession of certified products, but may not be able to conduct a full input/output reconciliation at this site if all records are held at the trading office.

Opening meeting, gathering information, and procedures

8.2.1 Remote audits shall assess applicants against the same criteria and requirements as an on-site audit.

8.2.2 All audits shall begin with an opening meeting, at which auditors shall confirm with the client all of the following as a minimum:

   a. Continued eligibility for CoC certification as per 6.2.9.
   b. Continued eligibility for group certification against 6.2.2, where relevant.
   c. Participant introductions and roles.
   d. The purpose of the audit.
   e. The audit plan, including how the audit activities will be undertaken and any visits to other sites and/or subcontractors.
   f. The access required and the type of information needed.
   g. Confidentiality of the information shared during the audit.
   h. The proposed scope of certification.
   i. The list of certified suppliers.
j. The list of any subcontractors that are or will be handling certified products and which ones are independently certified.
   i. If applicable, the list of certified companies for which the client conducts contract processing of certified products.

k. Whether the client completes any social or labour on-site audit.
   i. If so, the scheme shall be noted in the audit checklist.
   ii. If it is an MSC recognised third-party labour scheme the CAB shall record whether the audit meets the Minimum Requirements for Recognition of a Labour Audit by MSC.

Guidance 8.2.2
There may be other points to be covered at the opening meeting as relevant, such as vocabulary and definitions. The opening meeting is also an opportunity for the auditee to ask any questions about the MSC CoC Standard or the audit process.

If the audit is remote, this may be carried out either on a call, video conference or through an initial email exchange.

Clients are not required to have identified all suppliers and are not required to be handling all of the products listed in the potential scope at the initial audit.

8.2.3 For each of the activities listed in the proposed scope, the CAB shall collect and review evidence that the client’s management system and procedures, as recorded and implemented, meet the requirements of the relevant version of the MSC CoC Standard.

Guidance 8.2.3
If the client is not handling products listed in the proposed scope at the time of the audit, the CAB can collect evidence that the system in operation conforms to the MSC CoC Standard for one or more sample products similar to those in the proposed scope. For example, if a client has certified pollock and hake in scope but is processing non-certified cod and prawns during the audit, the CAB would probably want to focus on the handling of cod during the audit as it is most similar to the certified species in scope.

8.2.4 Auditors shall review the content and implementation of procedures relevant to CoC.
   8.2.4.1 If the client is carrying out contract processing activities for certified products, the auditor shall review the relevant procedures to ensure that contract processing is undertaken in conformity with CoC requirements.

Guidance 8.2.4
Examples of procedures could include written protocols for maintaining segregation, procedures of purchasing of certified products, employee training manuals, etc.

8.2.5 During the audit, auditors shall review records relating to the receipt, sale and any applicable physical handling of the products listed in the proposed scope.

Interviews
8.2.6 Auditors shall interview responsible personnel to verify their competency in understanding and applying the relevant MSC CoC Standard.
   8.2.6.1 The number of interviews carried out shall reflect the size of the organisation, the complexity of operations, and the range of staff who could affect the integrity of certified products.
   8.2.6.2 Interviews shall be used to determine if personnel understand the relevant process or procedure which ensures conformity with the CoC Standard.
   8.2.6.3 Interview questions shall not be leading.

Commented [A30]: Substantive change for #Labour
Rationale: Asking all CoC holders this question allows MSC to collect information on labour audits in its supply chain to help inform future policy development; it also reduces the perception that MSC is only targeting ‘high risk’ organisations.
Segregation

8.2.7 Auditors shall establish that appropriate measures are taken by the client to segregate, identify and prevent mixing between:
   a. Certified and non-certified seafood.
   b. Where relevant, between seafood certified to other recognised schemes sharing MSC CoC.

8.2.8 If subcontractors are used, auditors shall verify that appropriate systems are in place to ensure identification and traceability of certified products at point of dispatch and receipt.

Record-verification exercises

8.2.9 Auditors shall conduct the following record-verification exercises while on site, relating to certified products (or similar non-certified product):
   a. Traceability tests on a batch or batches of product sold or ready for sale.
      i. The test shall link input to output or vice versa through unique lots or delivery numbers, internal traceability records, purchase records (that identify the supplier(s), the lots or batches of purchase), handling records and supply records.
   b. Cross-checks of a sample of purchase records with delivery records and where possible, against the actual product received.
      i. Include the following records where relevant: bills of lading, invoices, delivery notes, health certificates / veterinary checks, catch certificates, purchase orders and packing list / loading records.
   c. Input-output reconciliation based on a time-period and/or batch of product.
      i. This exercise shall include calculation of the yield if relevant, and consideration of whether this is justifiable
   d. For consumer-facing operations, traceability tests on any labelled product sold as certified at the point of sale or serving.
      i. The test shall link input to output or vice versa at the time of the audit through labelled product on the menu or fish counter, internal traceability records, delivery or transfer note that identifies the certified supplier.

8.2.10 Auditors shall determine the number of samples or products to use for record verification exercises, ensuring this sample is:
   a. Of the auditor’s choice and obtained whilst on-site, or during the same day as a remote audit.
   b. Of sufficient number to:
      i. Take into consideration the range of different handling processes, species in scope and responsible parties.
ii. Be confident that the system is effective for all the products listed in the potential scope.

iii. Include checking traceability and/or volume records for product sent to and received from subcontractors, if applicable.

iv. Include records of any contract processing where relevant.

8.2.11 For records requested in 8.2.9, the auditor should set a time limit for receipt during the audit and raise a non-conformity if this is not met.

Guidance 8.2.9–11
A traceability test is a record-based trace of a batch sold / ready for sale back to its related purchase(s). The traceability test shall test that these records are available and link the batch through each step where it is handled, including handling at any subcontractors or off-site facilities.

An input-output reconciliation may be carried out between 2 time periods, in relation to one batch, or in relation to one batch within a defined time period. The purpose of the input-output reconciliation is to demonstrate that certified outputs are not greater than the inputs, except as related to added ingredients, and that where product is transformed the yield (conversion rate) is accurate and justifiable. In verifying justifiable yields, it is recommended to cross check the product specification with the factory records and with yields reported at previous audits.

Wherever possible, it is recommended that samples for record checks are selected from product the auditor views on-site, and physical product identification and quantities can then be cross-checked with traceability and volume records. It is recommended to look at traceability records and input-output reconciliation records in situ, i.e. on the factory floor, wherever possible.

In selecting the sample size, an example of different processes would be a primary processor that is filleting both pollock and salmon in different workshops. In this case, a traceability test and input-output reconciliation would typically be carried out for both a salmon and whitefish product.

The time limit set by the auditor for records may for example be aligned with the client’s product recall timeframe. The time to produce input-output reconciliation documents may require longer but would still need to be obtained and reviewed whilst on-site. The auditor can alert the client to the expected time limits for gathering records at the time of sending the audit plan.

8.2.12 At an unannounced audit, records for the traceability test and input-output reconciliation shall be verified on-site, but other management system records may be requested after the audit.

Guidance 8.2.12
This is intended to address situations where management personnel are not present and so certain records (e.g. contracts with subcontractors, licensing agreement, etc.) cannot be obtained. It is important that records relating to traceability, identification and input-output reconciliation are verified on-site, as this is where an unannounced audit may better identify product integrity risks.

8.2.13 At the MSC’s written request, the auditor shall also verify records available at the audit with information that was supplied by the client to the MSC previously.

Guidance 8.2.13
This could be used to verify that information provided to the MSC for the purposes of tracebacks or supply chain reconciliations is consistent with records checked during the audit.

Verifying compliance with Specific Requirements on forced and child labour

8.2.14 If the client, all operation sites and subcontractors are classified as low risk, then no action is needed.

8.2.15 If the client, any operation site or subcontractor is classified as high risk the CAB shall verify that the client:

Commented [A32]: Substantive Change #Labour
Rationale: A risk-based approach was agreed to following stakeholder feedback during the First public consultation in 2017. A risk-based approach targets efforts and reduces the burden where risk of forced and child labour is low. For more information on the rationale, please see the Labour Practices in Supply Chain 2018 Consultation paper.
MSC Chain of Custody Certification Requirements (Final consultation version August 2018)

### Guidance 8.2.15
Please refer to the MSC website for the Statement of Understanding and the Minimum Requirements for recognition of a third-party audit by MSC.

### Verifying use of the ecolabel, logo or other trademarks

8.2.16 If the client uses the ecolabel, logo or other trademarks on their own products or for a customer, the auditor shall verify that the client is permitted to use the trademarks by confirming that the client can show proof of product approval from MSCI for packaging designs for a sample of products.

### Guidance 8.2.16
In the absence of proof, the auditor may contact MSCI via ecolabel@msc.org for information.

8.2.17 Where the client includes non-certified seafood ingredients in products sold as certified, the auditor shall verify the client’s calculation for all or a sample of products to which this applies, as specified in the non-MSC/ASC certified seafood ingredients rules.

### Guidance 8.2.17
This document can be found on the MSC website and contains information on how to calculate the percentage of non-certified ingredients allowed in a product with the ecolabel or logo.

### Closing meeting

8.2.18 Auditors shall conduct a closing meeting at the conclusion of each audit with the client’s representative(s) to verify that the client understands:

a. That until its certification status and information, including scope of certification, is displayed on the MSC website, the client is not certified and cannot make any claims concerning certification.

b. Any actions the client may have to complete and their timeframes before certification can be awarded.

c. Any findings or non-conformities that have been identified during the audit and their likely categorisation (subject to approval by the CAB’s decision-making entity), timeframes to address these findings and the process for verifying their completion.

d. That the client must inform the CAB of any significant future changes that affect certification, as specified in the contract.

e. That the scope, subcontractor and supplier list is correct and agreed.

f. The reporting timeframes for changes as detailed in the MSC CoC Standard.

### Guidance 8.2.18
Any diverging opinions regarding the audit findings and/or conclusions between the auditor and the auditee can be discussed and if possible resolved at this stage. If not resolved it is recommended to record all opinions in the audit checklist.
8.3 Evaluation for CFO audits

Opening meeting, gathering information and procedures

8.3.1 All audits shall begin with an opening meeting, at which auditors shall confirm with the client as a minimum:

a. Continued eligibility for CoC certification as per 6.2.9.

b. Continued eligibility for certification against the CFO CoC Standard as per 6.2.3.

c. Participant introductions and roles.

d. The purpose of the audit.

e. The audit plan, including how the audit activities will be undertaken and any visits to sites and/or subcontractors.

f. The access required and the type of information needed at central office and site level, where applicable.

g. Confidentiality of the information shared during the audit.

h. The proposed scope of certification.

i. The list of certified suppliers.

j. The list of any subcontractors that are or will be handling certified products and which ones are independently certified.

k. The accuracy of information provided during the audit planning stage to complete Table 6 (Risk Assessment Scoring for CFOs).

l. If the client completes any social or labour on-site audit. If so, the scheme shall be noted in the audit checklist.

8.3.2 For each of the activities listed in the proposed scope, the CAB shall collect and review evidence that the client’s management system and procedures as recorded and implemented, meet the requirements of the CFO CoC Standard.

8.3.3 For clients with multiple sites, the auditor shall cross-check evidence seen at the central office with procedures and activities observed at consumer-facing and operations sites.

8.3.4 During the audit, auditors shall review records relating to the receipt, sale or serving and any applicable physical handling of the products listed in the proposed scope.

8.3.4.1 The auditor should set a time limit for when these records are expected during the audit and raise a non-conformity if this is not met.

8.3.5 At the MSC’s written request, the auditor shall also verify records available at the audit with information that was supplied by the client to the MSC previously.

Guidance 8.3.5

This could be used to verify that information provided to the MSC for the purposes of tracebacks or supply chain reconciliations is consistent with records checked during audit.

8.3.6 If subcontractors are used, auditors shall verify that appropriate systems are in place to ensure identification of certified products at point of dispatch and receipt.

8.3.7 Auditors shall establish that appropriate measures are taken by the client to segregate, identify, and prevent mixing between:

a. Certified and non-certified seafood, and

b. Where relevant, between seafood certified to other recognised certification schemes sharing MSC CoC.
Interviews
8.3.8 Auditors shall interview responsible personnel to verify their competency in understanding and applying the CFO CoC Standard:

8.3.8.1 Auditors shall interview at least one individual per site visited and shall record their name or role and an assessment of their level of competency in the audit checklist.

a. Additional interviews should be carried out as necessary based on the size of the organisation, the complexity of operations and the range of staff who could affect the integrity of certified products.

8.3.8.2 Interviews shall be used to determine if personnel understand the relevant process or procedure which ensures conformity with the CoC Standard.

8.3.8.3 Interview questions shall not be leading.

Guidance 8.3.8.3
Refer to ISO 19011 for guidance on interviewing. Interviews will include (but are not limited to) management staff and employees who are responsible for buying and selling certified products, conducting goods-in checks at point of receipt, applying product identification or labels, selecting certified products for cooking, and managing traceability records.

Verifying traceability
8.3.9 During the audit, auditors shall carry out traceability tests on products that are identified or labelled as certified to verify these products are traceable back to a certified source.

8.3.9.1 At consumer-facing sites, the traceability test shall verify that any products sold, served, or labelled as certified at the time of the audit can be traced back to either a certified supplier or deliveries.

8.3.9.2 For single-site CFO clients, the traceability test shall verify that any products sold, served, or labelled as certified can be traced back to a certified supplier.

Guidance 8.3.9.1
At a single site CFO client, the traceability test at site level will need to trace products from the point of selling/serving back to purchase from a certified source (e.g., supplier invoice/delivery note). However, at a consumer-facing site that is part of a larger organisation, the site may only be able to demonstrate traceability back to a delivery received from a central operations site. In this case, the remainder of the traceability test (back to point of purchase) must be completed from the operations site or central office.

At a consumer-facing site, it may be possible to determine how the product can be linked to a certified delivery by interviewing the responsible person. The staff might explain how they selected the product that day, for example using a first-in-first-out policy, which allows the delivery to be confirmed as coming from a certified receipt note. If no certified product is on-site during the audit, the auditor can run a traceability test on a product similar to the certified products in the client’s scope.

8.3.10 Where the organisation includes operations sites, the auditor shall also trace certified products received at a consumer-facing site from the point of receipt back to the point of purchase, including any internal transfers, processing, transport, subcontractor or storage steps.

8.3.10.1 The auditor shall carry out at least one traceability test involving an operations site during each audit.

8.3.10.2 Additional traceability tests can be carried out based on the auditor’s judgement.

8.3.11 The total number of traceability tests and sites visited shall:

a. Be determined in accordance with the guidelines in Table 7.
b. Be sufficient to verify the traceability systems are effectively implemented by the central office and at all sites under the CFO certificate.

c. Ensure that a traceability test is always carried out back to point of purchase for any products selected for product sampling.

8.3.12 Auditors shall use the template in the CFO audit checklist to complete all information for the traceability test, and shall clearly detail how the product can be linked across different traceability records.

Guidance 8.3.12
For example, if the client's traceability system uses unique lot codes to trace products back from receipt at a kitchen (consumer-facing site) to the central processing facility (operations site), this system and the specific lot codes would need to be included in the traceability test description.

Verifying compliance with Specific Requirements on forced and child labour

8.3.14 If the client's operation site(s) are classified as low risk, then no action is needed.

8.3.15 If the client's operation site(s) is classified as high risk the CAB shall verify that the client:
   a. Provides a signed copy of the Statement of Understanding.
   b. Provides evidence that the labour audit complies with the Minimum Requirements for recognition of a third-party labour audit by the MSC, within 12 months of the first audit and at each subsequent audit.

Guidance 8.3.14
Please refer to the MSC website for the Statement of Understanding and the Minimum Requirements for recognition of a third-party audit by the MSC.

Verifying use of the ecolabel, logo and other trademarks

8.3.16 If the client uses the ecolabel, logo or other trademarks, the auditor shall verify that the client is permitted to use trademarks by confirming that:
   a. The client can show proof of approval from MSCI for packaging or menu designs for a sample of products.

Guidance 8.3.15
In the absence of proof, the auditor may contact MSCI via ecolabel@msc.org for information.

8.3.17 Where the client has used non-certified seafood ingredients in a product, the auditor shall verify the client's calculation for all or a sample of products to which this applies, as specified in MSCI's non-MSC/ASC certified seafood ingredients rules.

Guidance 8.3.14
This document can be found on the MSC website and contains information on how to calculate the percentage of non-certified ingredients allowed in a product with the ecolabel or logo.

Closing meeting

8.3.18 Auditors shall conduct a closing meeting at the conclusion of each audit with the client’s representative(s) to verify that the client understands:
a. That until its certification status and information, including scope of certification, is displayed on the MSC website, the client is not certified and cannot make any claims concerning certification.
b. Any actions that the client may have to complete and their timeframes before certification can be awarded.
c. Any findings or non-conformities that have been identified during the audit and their likely categorisation (subject to approval by the CAB’s decision-making entity), timeframes to address these findings and the process for verifying their completion.

d. That the client must inform the CAB of any significant future changes that affect the certification, as specified in the contract.
e. That the scope, subcontractor and supplier list is correct and agreed.
f. The reporting timeframes for changes as detailed in 5.8–10 of the CFO CoC Standard.

8.4 Evaluation of subcontractors

Guidance 8.4
This section sets out information on how to audit subcontractors used by all CoC clients.

8.4.1 The CAB shall require the client to provide details of how the client will retain full control of each subcontractor.

8.4.2 Non-certified contract processors or repackers shall be visited on-site prior to being used by the client for certified product, and thereafter at least annually.

8.4.3 During the on-site visit the auditor shall:
a. Verify that Principles 2, 3, and 4 in the CoC Standard have been met, covering traceability, identification and segregation.
b. Carry out an on-site traceability test and input-output reconciliation.
c. If the subcontractor is already handling product for the client, cross-check a sample of dispatch and receipt records, product details and volumes from the client and subcontractor.
d. Verify the agreement between client and subcontractor meets 5.8 of the Default/Group CoC Standards.

8.4.4 The auditor shall verify the product stock records of each non-certified storage facility at least once during the client’s 3-year certificate.

Guidance 8.4.4
This may be through an on-site audit, remote audit or as a minimum a remote record verification by a traceability test, input-output reconciliation and review of product identification systems.
8.4.5 The auditor shall conduct an on-site audit of non-certified storage subcontractors at least once during their client’s 3-year certificate validity if the subcontractor is:

   a. Located in a country with a Transparency International CPI score below 41 (cpi.transparency.org), and
   b. Handling product that is part-processed by the client, but not yet in the form in which it will be sold by the client.

Guidance 8.4.5
CFO clients are only eligible to use contract processors that are independently certified, as per the CFO CoC Standard clause 5.13.

8.4.6 During this audit, the auditor shall verify that a sample of certified products can be identified as certified.

8.4.7 In addition to requirements 8.4.2, 8.4.4, and 8.4.5, the auditor should visit non-certified subcontractors, when there is any concern relating to product integrity.

Guidance 8.4.7
The auditor may perform other checks, such as cross-checking records from the certificate holder and subcontractor, reviewing dispatch and receipt records, or carrying out an input-output reconciliation of certified product handled by the subcontractor.

CABs may conduct just one visit to a subcontractor used by more than one of their clients, but will still need to cross check the records relating to each client and raise non-conformities with each client where appropriate. A CAB will still need to visit a subcontractor used by their client even if the subcontractor was recently visited by another CAB.

9 Audit finding

9.1 Audit findings at all CoC audits

Guidance 9.1
The CAB may raise non-conformities which are not related to an audit in the case of a request for action as defined in 4.8.6 of the GCR.

9.1.1 Auditors shall recommend a CAB to suspend a client where they find reason to do so in accordance with GCR 7.4.

9.1.2 The CAB shall raise any non-conformities found at a non-certified subcontractor with the client.

Guidance 9.1.2
If the CAB identifies a non-conformity relating to a subcontractor certified by a different CAB, the CAB is encouraged to notify the MSC. The MSC will then inform the relevant CAB.

9.2 Audit findings at single, multi-site and CFO audits

Guidance 9.2
Audit findings for group CoC audits are covered in section 9.4.

9.2.1 Auditors shall classify non-conformities as follows:
MSC Chain of Custody Certification Requirements (Final consultation version August 2018)

a. Minor non-conformity: where the client does not comply with the MSC CoC Standard, but those issues do not jeopardise the integrity of the CoC.

b. Major non-conformity: where the integrity of the CoC is potentially jeopardised, therefore certification cannot be granted.

c. Critical non-conformity: where the integrity of the CoC is jeopardised, therefore certification cannot be granted or maintained. The reasons for a critical non-conformity are specified below:

i. There has been a demonstrable breakdown in the Chain of Custody caused by the client’s actions or inaction.

### Guidance 9.2.1.c.i

Examples of a demonstrable breakdown in the Chain of Custody are:

- Significant discrepancies in records supplied at different points in time by the client.
- Significant omissions in the client’s traceability records for certified products.

ii. The client has sold products as certified (or under-assessment) which are shown not to be certified (or under-assessment), except for the following case:

A. The CAB shall not raise a critical non-conformity for a CFO CoC certificate if the conditions of CoCCR 9.2.2.a are met.

### Guidance 9.2.1.c.ii

The labelling or identification of fish products as “certified” which in fact did not originate from a certified fishery or farm is a serious breach of the Chain of Custody. Evidence suggesting mislabelling of certified products can come from the CAB, the MSC or the accreditation body but will need to be substantiated by the CAB. The MSC requires positive evidence of compliance in cases where mislabelling is suspected; the absence of evidence is not sufficient to maintain certification.

The only instances where a certificate would not be automatically suspended due to a case of non-certification.

iii. The client has not demonstrably demonstrated that products labelled or sold as certified are in fact certified.

iv. The client has not satisfactorily addressed any major non-conformity within the specified timeframe.

v. The CFO client ‘reject number of sites with a major non-conformity’ is reached, see 9.3.1.

vi. The CFO client has an additional major non-conformity raised against the same clause in the CFO CoC Standard during the follow-up visits, see 9.3.2.3.

### 9.2.2

For clients certified against the CFO CoC standard, an incident of selling or identifying non-certified product as certified or with the trademarks at the point of sale or serving to the final consumer shall be considered:

a. As a major non-conformity only if the auditor determines that the cause of the mislabelling was due to an individual not following established internal procedures.

b. As a critical non-conformity in all other cases.

### Guidance 9.2.2

Selling non-certified product as certified is a cause for a critical non-conformity to be raised which leads to suspension according to 9.2.1 and GCR 7.4.1.a. For CFO clients, however, clause 9.2.2.a refers specifically to incidents where adequate procedures are in place to ensure compliance with the CoC Standard, but employees at site level make a mistake, for example in setting out labels on...
2.3 For CFO clients, the auditors shall raise all non-conformities only against the central office, even if detected at site level.

2.3.1 The site name, address and date of detection shall be recorded in the CoC audit checklist.

Guidance 2.3.1
For multiple site CFO clients, non-conformities found at different sites are all raised against the central office or certified entity (the organisation which holds the CoC certificate).

4. The CAB may close out or downgrade non-conformities found during the audit.

4.1 Where the CAB’s decision-making entity disagrees with auditor classification of non-conformities the CAB shall record the rationale for those changes in the checklist.

Minor non-conformities

5. For minor non-conformities raised during initial and recertification audits, the CAB shall not grant certification until the applicant has submitted an effective action plan to address all minor non-conformities.

6. The action plan shall include a description of:
   a. The corrective actions intended to address the non-conformity.
   b. An appropriate timeframe to implement corrective action.

7. The CAB shall require that minor non-conformities raised during surveillance audits are satisfactorily addressed no later than the next scheduled audit.

7.1 If not corrected within this timeframe, the non-conformity shall be re-graded as a major non-conformity, and there shall be 30 days given to correct it.

Major non-conformities

8. The CAB shall require that major non-conformities are closed according to the timeframes below.

8.1 Major non-conformities raised during initial certification shall be closed before the CAB can grant certification.
   a. If within 90 days of the date of the initial audit, the CAB cannot close the major non-conformity, a full re-audit shall be required.

8.2 Major non-conformities raised during surveillance or recertification audits (or any other time after initial certification) shall be closed within 30 days of detection.
   a. If the major non-conformity is not addressed within the 30 day maximum timeframe, a critical non-conformity shall be raised.

9. The CAB shall inform the client that an effective action plan is required in order to close out major non-conformities.

9.1 The action plan submitted by the client shall include a description of:
   a. The root cause of the non-conformity.
   b. The corrective actions intended to satisfactorily address the non-conformity.
   c. An appropriate timeframe to implement corrective action.

Deleted: GCR 7.4.9
Deleted: certification
Deleted: or downgrade
Deleted: or downgrade
Deleted: or downgrade
Deleted: suspension or withdrawal of the certificate and a full re-audit may be initiated
Deleted: address (close or downgrade)
Critical non-conformities

9.2.10 Critical non-conformities raised during surveillance audits shall result in suspension per GCR 7.4.11.

9.2.10.1 For a multiple site CFO certificate, a CAB may determine a critical non-conformity to be stratum specific and not impact other certified sites, and therefore suspend all sites in the stratum rather than all sites in the certificate.

9.2.10.2 For a multi-site default certificate, a CAB may determine a critical non-conformity to be site specific and not impact other certified sites and therefore suspend the site rather than the full certificate.

Guidance 9.2.10
Where corrective actions and/or evidence is not provided within the specified timeframes and/or not effectively implemented by the next audit, the CAB may escalate the non-conformity and/or determine a failing in the management system and raise a major, or even a critical non-conformity, against 5.1 of the CoC Standard.

9.3 Additional requirements for major and critical non-conformities at CFO audits

9.3.1 For CFO clients with multiple sites, where the number of sites in the certificate or stratum with major non-conformities detected at surveillance or recertification audits equals or exceeds the reject numbers in Table 9, the CAB shall raise a stratum or an entire CFO certificate specific critical non-conformity as per 8.2.10.

Table 10: Reject number of sites following major non-conformities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of sites visited by the CAB during audit</th>
<th>Reject number (number of sites with at least one major non-conformity detected during audit)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 – 5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6–10</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11–15</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16–20</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21–25</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26–30</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31–40</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41–50</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51–60</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61–70</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71–80</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80+</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Guidance 9.3.1

Commented [A49]: Substantive change #suspending
Rationale: To align with group requirements and define critical non-conformity process for default and CFO.

Commented [A50]: Substantive change #CFO
(From interpretation ID #2870)
Rationale: The proposal here is to allow suspension based on stratum or the entire certificate. The CAB will judge the issue if it impacts the entire CFO group control.

Consultation question: Since CFO rely heavily on a strong central management system, site specific suspension makes it too easy for clients to not effectively address site specific conformance inconsistent with centralised management, and can be seen as lowering the CFO bar further?

Commented [A51]: Substantive change #susensions
Rationale: To provide clarity that in scenarios where all sites are audited and not only sampled a suspension can be applied by the CAB at a site level.

Commented [A52]: Substantive change #CFO
Rationale: The introduction of stratification within CFO allows clients to opt for increased sampling with reduced risk of suspensions.

Deleted: suspend
Deleted: the certificate
Deleted: GCR
9.3.2 For CFO clients, where major non-conformities are detected at a surveillance or recertification audit, and the certificate is not suspended, the CAB shall carry out follow-up site visits within 90 days of the original audit.

9.3.2.1 Site visits should include at a minimum a review of the non-conformity, a traceability test and personnel interviews, but do not need to cover the full CFO CoC Standard.

9.3.2.2 The sites to be visited shall include at least each site where a major non-conformity was detected, as well as:
   a. For clients with 6 or more sites, 1 additional site should be visited.
   b. More sites may be visited where the CAB deems it necessary.

9.3.2.3 Where an additional major non-conformity is raised against the same clause in the CFO CoC Standard during the follow-up visits, the CAB shall raise a critical non-conformity.

9.3.2.4 Where a major non-conformity is raised against a different clause, or clauses, during the follow-up visits, the CAB shall follow the procedures in 9.3.2.

9.4 Audit findings at Group CoC audits

Grading of non-conformities found on sites by the CAB auditor

9.4.1 The CAB shall classify non-conformities detected during site audits into one of the following 3 categories:
   a. Site critical – where a product is found which is labelled or has been sold as certified but is shown not to be certified.
   b. Site major – where there is a system breakdown that could result in non-certified products being sold as certified.
   c. Site minor – where there is a system breakdown that is unlikely to result in non-certified product being sold as certified.

9.4.2 Where major and minor non-conformities are identified by CABs during site audits, the CAB shall only raise a further non-conformity (with the same grading) against the management system of the central office if the non-conformity is systemic and indicates a possible failure of group-level control or verification systems and/or has the potential to impact more than one site.
Critical non-conformities

9.4.3 If critical non-conformities are identified by CABs during site audits, the CAB shall determine if the non-conformity is either:
   a. A site-specific non-conformity, which is limited to the specific site impacted and does not indicate a failure of the group’s management or control systems, or
   b. A systemic non-conformity, which indicates a possible or likely failure of group-level control or verification systems, and/or has the potential to impact more than one site.

9.4.4 If the critical non-conformity is determined to be systemic, the CAB shall raise a critical non-conformity against the group’s central office.

9.4.5 If the critical non-conformity is determined to be site-specific, the CAB shall raise a major non-conformity against the group’s central office.

9.4.5.1 If site-specific critical non-conformities are detected at 2 or more sites during an audit, the CAB shall:
   a. For a stratified group, in addition to 9.4.5 above, suspend all sites in the stratum/sub-group where non-conformities are detected.
   b. For a non-stratified group, raise a group critical non-conformity.

Grading of non-conformities found against the group’s central office

9.4.6 The CAB shall classify non-conformities raised against the organisation’s central office into one of 3 categories.

9.4.6.1 Group critical – where:
   a. There is a complete breakdown of the management system such that the organisation’s assurances of site conformity with the Group CoC Standard cannot reasonably be relied upon, or
   b. Site critical non-conformities have also been raised against the central office as per 9.4.5.1.a, or
   c. More than 4 group major non-conformities are raised during any one audit.

9.4.6.2 Group major – where there is a breakdown of activities related to one element of the organisation’s internal management or auditing system.

9.4.6.3 Group minor – where there is a partial lapse or partial breakdown of activities related to one element of the organisation’s management or auditing system.
MSC Chain of Custody Certification Requirements (Final consultation version August 2018)

Actions following non-conformities
9.4.7 For initial certification, the CAB shall not grant certification until all major and minor non-conformities are closed out, as per 9.2.5 and 9.2.8.1.

Actions following site non-conformities
9.4.8 The CAB shall verify that the group has taken actions on non-conformities raised on individual sites according to their severity.

Guidance 9.4.8.1
The site shall be suspended on the scheme database per GCR 7.4.

9.4.8.2 Site major non-conformities shall be corrected within 30 days of their identification.
   a. If not corrected within this time frame, the site shall be immediately suspended from the group.

9.4.8.3 Site minor non-conformities shall be corrected within 12 months of their identification.
   a. If not corrected within this time frame, the non-conformity shall be immediately re-graded as site major, and there shall be 30 days given to correct it.

9.4.9 The CAB may adjust the timeframes for the site to address non-conformities if the site is not handling certified product during this timeframe.

Actions following central office non-conformities
9.4.10 The CAB shall address non-conformities raised against the group’s central office in the following manner according to their severity:

Guidance 9.4.10.1
The group shall be immediately suspended against the central office.

9.4.10.2 Group major non-conformities shall be corrected within 30 days of their identification.
   a. If not corrected within this timeframe, a group critical non-conformity shall be raised.

9.4.10.3 Group minor non-conformities shall be corrected within 90 days of their identification.
   a. If not corrected within this timeframe, the non-conformity shall be re-graded as a group major non-conformity, and there shall be 30 days given to correct it.

10 Additional certification requirements for Group CoC

Guidance Section 10
This section covers additional requirements that only apply for Group CoC clients, such as stratification of the group and determining the sample size of sites to be audited.
10.1 CAB eligibility to perform group certification

10.1.1 Prior to accepting an application for group certification, the CAB’s documented procedures for conducting group certification shall have been assessed by the accreditation body during a desk review or an on-site audit.

10.1.2 The CAB shall conform to any conditions the accreditation body may have imposed on the CAB’s audit of group certification schemes, which may include without limitation:
   a. Requirement for the accreditation body to witness the first group audit undertaken.
   b. Requirement for the accreditation body to review the CAB’s audit records of the first group certification undertaken.
   c. Limit on the number of group certifications that may be undertaken.
   d. Limit on the number of sites permitted within a group scheme for that CAB.

10.2 Scope of audits

10.2.1 All activities covered by the scope of the certificate shall be covered in the scope of the CAB’s site audits.

10.2.2 The CAB shall audit the central office and a sample of sites, as dictated by sections 10.3 and 10.4.

10.3 Sample stratification

Decision if sample stratification is needed

10.3.1 The CAB shall review the group’s proposed scope and sites to make a decision on whether sample stratification is required.

10.3.1.1 Stratification shall take place where the group’s sites can be classified into distinct sub-groups according to activities shown in Table 4.

10.3.1.2 Stratification shall take place where manufacturing and/or processing activities occur within a group but where not all sites perform these activities.

10.3.1.3 Stratification may take place where a group operation is not within one country or geographic region, in which case the CAB may consider the client’s input and preferences in taking their decision.

Guidance 10.3.1.3

This is especially useful for certificates covering sites in multiple countries or continents, where operation culture, language or location may be different from the central office.

Geographic region refers to a group of countries in close proximity or with similar characteristics, or a region within a country with a similar characteristic for example sharing a language.

10.3.1.4 If stratification is required, the CAB shall follow the sampling procedure for each sub-group independently.

10.3.1.5 The CAB shall keep a record of the sample stratification process and rationale in the CoC audit checklist.

10.4 CAB decides sample plan to be used

10.4.1 The CAB shall complete a risk assessment using Table 11.

10.4.1.1 The CAB shall allocate one score for each risk factor.
MSC Chain of Custody Certification Requirements (Final consultation version August 2018)

10.4.1.2 If it appears there are 2 scores within the same sub-group, the CAB shall allocate the higher score.

10.4.2 The CAB shall allocate the applicant group or sub-group to a sample table following Table 12.

Table 11: Sample plan allocation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk factor</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Score given</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Activity (refer to Table 4 Activity Scope Definitions)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Trading fish (buying and selling) (Activity 1)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Transportation (Activity 2)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Storage (Activity 3)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Wholesale and/or distribution of whole fresh fish in unsealed containers (Activities 4,5)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Wholesale and/or distribution of repacked products (Activities 4,5)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. MSC Harvest (Activity 6)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Packing or repacking (Activity 7)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. Processing, contract processing, or use of contract processors (Activities 8, 9, 10)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Retail / food service direct to consumers (Activities 11, 12)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j. Aquaculture (Activity 14)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Ownership</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. No common ownership of sites and central office</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Sites are franchisees of the central office</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Sites are owned by the central office</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Accredited certifications held</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. None</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. HACCP / ISO 9001 / ISO 22000 / GFSI-recognised standard</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Similar species handled at the same time in the same place</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. High - Certified and non-certified similar looking species on site at the same time</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Medium – Certified and non-certified species handled at the same time but look differently (e.g., white and pink flesh)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Low – Only certified species are handled</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Number of staff at largest site making ecolabel or logo application decisions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This means physically selecting a label, bag and carton or similar bearing the ecolabel or logo from amongst other labels or packaging materials. If labelling or packaging decisions are made by a supervisor or manager, the number of staff shall refer to the number of supervisor or manager-level staff involved.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Risk factor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk factor</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Score given</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. More than 11 employees</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Between 3-10 employees</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Fewer than 2 employees</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. No labels or trademarks are placed on products</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Country of operation score on Transparency International's latest corruption perception index (for latest scores see cpi.transparency.org)

For fisheries operating in multiple countries, consider the country of landing, country of vessel registration as well as all countries covering the catch area and use the highest CPI Score from the latest year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk factor</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Under 32</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Between 32 and 62 inclusive</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Above 62</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Seafood purchasing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk factor</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Purchasing from suppliers is managed by a combination of the central office and each site (central and local purchasing)</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Purchasing from suppliers is managed by each site (local purchasing)</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Purchasing from suppliers is managed by the central office (central buying list or a centrally approved list of products and suppliers for sites to use)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Total score

**Guidance:** Possible scores range from 21 to 100
MSC Chain of Custody Certification Requirements (Final consultation version August 2018)

Table 12: Allocation to sample table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score from Table 12</th>
<th>Sample table</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>80 or more</td>
<td>100% of sites audited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55 to 80</td>
<td>Sample Table 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 to 60</td>
<td>Sample Table 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 – 45</td>
<td>Sample Table 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 35</td>
<td>Sample Table 18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Guidance Table 12
The ranges in Table 12 intentionally overlap. Where this occurs (for example, a score of 30-35) CABs can make the decision on which table to use and record this decision in the checklist.

10.5 Site sample plan

10.5.1 The CAB shall perform the initial audit following the initial audit-sampling plan within the sample table selected (Tables 14 to 17).

10.5.2 Following an audit, the CAB shall decide whether sampling sizes for the next surveillance audit should be increased or decreased from the current sampling plan.

10.5.2.1 The CAB shall increase the sampling plan for the next surveillance audit by one level according to Table 12 if the group meets at least one of the criteria below:
   a. One critical non-conformity was raised against a site or more than 3 major non-conformities were raised against the central office at the last audit conducted by the CAB;
   b. Internal audits or internal control system not operational and corrective or preventive actions are inappropriate; or
   c. The group’s CoC certificate was suspended or withdrawn in the last 12 months.

10.5.2.2 Where the group is already in the High Risk sample plan and meets at least one of the criteria in 10.5.2.1, the sample size shall be multiplied by 1.5 and rounded up for the next surveillance audit.

10.5.2.3 If the group does not meet any of the criteria in 10.5.2.1, and meets at least one of the criteria below, the CAB may decrease by one level the sampling plan from Table 13 for the next surveillance audit:
   a. No major or critical non-conformities with the Group CoC Standard demonstrated at the last CAB audit of the central office and sample of sites.
   b. Internal audits or internal control system are operating well, identifying issues and applying appropriate corrective and preventive action.

10.5.2.4 Where the group is already in the Very Low Risk sample plan and meets at least one of the criteria in 10.5.2.3, the sample size may be multiplied by 0.5 and rounded up for the next surveillance audit.

10.5.3 The sampling plan shall not be reduced by more than one level during the lifetime of a certificate.
10.6 **Sample selection**

10.6.1 The CAB shall select the sample of sites to be audited following the hierarchy set out in Table 14.

10.6.1.1 The CAB shall select sites from criterion 1 before criterion 2, from criterion 2 before criterion 3 and so on.

10.6.2 The CAB shall not inform the client of the sample of sites selected until as close to the audit date as practicable, and in all cases not more than 20 days prior to the proposed audit date.

**Table 13: Sample selection hierarchy**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion 1</th>
<th>Site determined for sample by MSC or accreditation body</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Criterion 2</td>
<td>Site is part of any kind of internal or external investigation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criterion 3</td>
<td>Logistical considerations: combination of trips, availability of auditors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criterion 4</td>
<td>Where the sampling table dictates that 4 or more sites shall be audited, a minimum of 25% of the samples rounded up to the nearest whole number shall be selected at random.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** Criterion 3 refers to sites that may be geographically close to sites selected under Criteria 1 and 2 or geographically close to sites of other clients of the CAB.

10.7 **Adding new sites to the group**

Approval of sites with new activities or where new sites total more than 10% of previous number

10.7.1 The CAB shall inform the client that CAB approval is required prior to adding:

a. New sites totalling more than 10% of the number of sites included in the certificate at the most recent audit, or

b. Sites with new activities to the group not already covered in the group’s CoC scope.

10.7.2 The CAB shall approve the proposed new sites providing:

a. There is objective evidence (such as an internal audit report) that the new sites comply with relevant sections of the Group CoC Standard.

b. Details required for the site register have been provided.

c. The CAB is confident that the central office has the required resources to manage the increased workload.

10.7.3 If any of the elements in 10.7.2 are not met, the CAB shall not add the new sites to the group until the central office has satisfactorily demonstrated how it will address the requirement(s) of concern.

10.7.4 If the CAB requires an audit to be performed, the sample table and schedule plan currently used for the group shall be used to determine the number of new sites to be audited, unless the CAB justifies why a different sample size is appropriate.

**Guidance 10.7.4**
The CAB should plan to undertake extra auditing activities according to the existing audit schedule in an effort to avoid unnecessary costs to the client.
10.7.5 The central office shall also be audited to address 10.7.2.c if the CAB is not confident that the group has the required resources to manage the increased workload.

Approval of new sites totalling equal or less than 10% of the previous number

10.7.6 The CAB shall require the group to notify it in writing of the addition of up to or equal to 10% of the number of sites present at the most recent audit.

10.7.6.1 The CAB shall verify that the new sites do not add new activities to the scope of the certificate.

a. If new activities are added, the CAB may conduct an audit of the new activities if deemed necessary, following requirements in 10.7.2.

10.7.7 The CAB may at its discretion require additional audit work to be undertaken.

Table 14: Sample plan for Group CoC – High Risk

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initial audit</th>
<th>Normal</th>
<th>Annual audit</th>
<th>Normal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of sites</td>
<td>1 to 2</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>1 to 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 to 4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3 to 4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 to 9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5 to 9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 to 16</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10 to 16</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 to 25</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17 to 25</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 to 36</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>26 to 36</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37 to 49</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>37 to 49</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 to 64</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>50 to 64</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 to 84</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>65 to 84</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85 to 100</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>82 to 100</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101 to 121</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>101 to 121</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>122 to 144</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>122 to 144</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>145 to 169</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>145 to 169</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>170 to 196</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>170 to 196</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>197 to 225</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>197 to 225</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>226 to 256</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>226 to 256</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>257 to 289</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>257 to 289</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>290 to 324</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>290 to 324</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>325 to 361</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>325 to 361</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>362 to 400</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>362 to 400</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>401 to 441</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>400 to 441</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>442 to 484</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>442 to 484</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>485 to 529</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>485 to 529</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 15: Sample Plan for Group CoC – Medium Risk

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initial audit</th>
<th>Number of sites</th>
<th>Normal</th>
<th>Annual audit</th>
<th>Number of sites</th>
<th>Normal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 to 2</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>1 to 2</td>
<td>All</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 to 4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3 to 4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 to 9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5 to 9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 to 16</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10 to 16</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 to 25</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17 to 25</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 to 36</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>26 to 36</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37 to 49</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>37 to 49</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 to 64</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>50 to 64</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 to 84</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>65 to 84</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85 to 100</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>82 to 100</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101 to 121</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>101 to 121</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>122 to 144</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>122 to 144</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>145 to 169</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>145 to 169</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>170 to 196</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>170 to 196</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>197 to 225</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>197 to 225</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>226 to 256</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>226 to 256</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>257 to 289</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>257 to 289</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>290 to 324</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>290 to 324</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>325 to 361</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>325 to 361</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>362 to 400</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>362 to 400</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>401 to 441</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>400 to 441</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>442 to 484</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>442 to 484</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>485 to 529</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>485 to 529</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 1024</td>
<td>Square root rounded up</td>
<td>Over 1024</td>
<td>Initial sample multiplied by 0.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 16: Sample plan for Group CoC – Low Risk

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initial audit</th>
<th>Annual audit</th>
<th>Normal</th>
<th>Normal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of sites</td>
<td>Number of sites</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 2</td>
<td>1 to 2</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 to 4</td>
<td>3 to 4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 to 9</td>
<td>5 to 9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 to 16</td>
<td>10 to 16</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 to 25</td>
<td>17 to 25</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 to 36</td>
<td>26 to 36</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37 to 49</td>
<td>37 to 49</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 to 64</td>
<td>50 to 64</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 to 84</td>
<td>65 to 84</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85 to 100</td>
<td>82 to 100</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101 to 121</td>
<td>101 to 121</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>122 to 144</td>
<td>122 to 144</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>145 to 169</td>
<td>145 to 169</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>170 to 196</td>
<td>170 to 196</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>197 to 225</td>
<td>197 to 225</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>226 to 256</td>
<td>226 to 256</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>257 to 289</td>
<td>257 to 289</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>290 to 324</td>
<td>290 to 324</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>325 to 361</td>
<td>325 to 361</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>362 to 400</td>
<td>362 to 400</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>401 to 441</td>
<td>400 to 441</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>442 to 484</td>
<td>442 to 484</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>485 to 529</td>
<td>485 to 529</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:**
- **Over 1025:** (Square root x 0.7) rounded up
- **Over 1024:** Initial sample multiplied by 0.42
Table 17: Sample Plan for Group CoC – Very Low Risk

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initial audit</th>
<th>Normal</th>
<th>Annual audit</th>
<th>Normal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of sites</td>
<td></td>
<td>Number of sites</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 to 4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3 to 4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 to 9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5 to 9</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 to 16</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10 to 16</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 to 25</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17 to 25</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 to 36</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>26 to 36</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37 to 49</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>37 to 49</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 to 64</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>50 to 64</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 to 84</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>65 to 84</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85 to 100</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>82 to 100</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101 to 121</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>101 to 121</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>122 to 144</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>122 to 144</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>145 to 169</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>145 to 169</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>170 to 196</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>170 to 196</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>197 to 225</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>197 to 225</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>226 to 256</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>226 to 256</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>257 to 289</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>257 to 289</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>290 to 324</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>290 to 324</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>325 to 361</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>325 to 361</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>362 to 400</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>362 to 400</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>401 to 441</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>400 to 441</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>442 to 484</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>442 to 484</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
11 Certificate management for all CoC clients

Requirements in this section are applicable to all CoC certificate holders.

11.1 Certification decision

Guidance 11.1

This section is applicable following all audits (initial, surveillance and recertification) except for clause 11.1.1, which only applies to certification decision after initial audits. Minor and major non-conformities after surveillance and recertification audits must be addressed within the timeframes dictated by 9.2.7 and 9.2.8.2.

11.1.1 The CAB may recommend an applicant for certification:
   a. If no non-conformities are observed at an audit, or
   b. When an action plan satisfactorily addresses all minor and major non-conformities.

11.1.2 The CAB shall update the CoC audit checklist with details of activities undertaken by the client to accept the action plan and/or close out or downgrade major non-conformities.

Guidance 11.1.2

The finalised checklist that is uploaded onto the scheme database needs to detail the findings of the audit and include the CAB’s decision on the outcome, independent of the individual auditor’s.

11.1.3 The CAB’s decision-making entity shall:
   a. Review and confirm the grading of any non-conformity found during the audit.
   b. Make a decision on whether the scope of the certificate should include all categories listed in the potential scope, based on the confidence the CAB has in the client’s system.
c. Make a decision on certification and communicate this decision to the client within 30 days of the audit date, unless further evidence has been requested.
   i. If further evidence has been requested from the client to demonstrate that non-conformities were satisfactorily closed, the CAB shall make a decision on certification within 30 days of receiving this evidence.

11.1.4 For Group CoC clients and CFO clients with multiple sites, in addition to the above, the CAB’s decision-making entity shall not make a decision on certification or recertification until they are satisfied that:
   a. The sample table and sampling plan selected was appropriately selected for the client.
   b. All requirements of the Group or CFO CoC Standard have been audited, either at that site or, if centrally managed, at the central office.
   c. Evidence contained in audit reports demonstrates that the client is operating in a competent manner.
   d. Sites are in conformity with requirements, and that any major non-conformities have been addressed within the allotted timeframes.

Guidance 11.1.4.d
The CAB’s decision-making entity may seek and review relevant data not contained in reports, including, but not limited to, interviewing the client’s personnel.

11.1.5 For all CoC clients, the CAB shall, within 10 days of the certification decision:
   a. Submit the finalised CoC audit checklist to the client.
      i. The CAB shall ensure that the client has signed off on the accuracy of specific sections of the CoC audit checklist, including:
         A. The schedule of certified suppliers.
         B. Any statements made by the certificate holder indicating that the certificate holder was not handling any certified products at the time of the audit.
         C. Where collected, the complete list of the certificate holder’s purchases of certified products or the list of certified batches processed since the previous audit.

Guidance 11.1.5.a
The client’s sign-off can be electronic or provided, for example, via a record of email correspondence if a signature on the audit checklist is not practical.

   b. Record the following details onto the scheme database:
      i. The client’s confirmed and/or updated scope.
      ii. List of subcontractors.
      iii. List of suppliers.
      iv. List of sites (where applicable).
      v. The finalised CoC audit checklist in Excel format.
      vi. Audit date.
      vii. The CoC certificate for initial certification and recertification audits in PDF format.
   c. Issue the certificate(s) to the client for certification or recertification audits.
      i. For group and CFO CoC certificates, the CAB shall issue the certificate to the central office under the name of the group or organisation.
ii. When a client’s scope of certification includes products certified under other recognised certification schemes that share MSC CoC, the CAB shall issue a separate certificate for each scheme with the relevant scopes.

A. When one certificate is issued on a different date than the other, the second certificate shall be issued with the same expiration date as the first certificate.

Guidance 11.1.5.c.ii
For a client handling both MSC- and ASC-certified products, separate certificates and certificate codes are issued for MSC and ASC, even though only one CoC audit and checklist are needed. If the scope of the client’s certification is for ASC only, it is not necessary to issue a paper certificate for MSC.

Interim certification

11.1.6 The CAB shall inform the applicant that an interim certificate may be issued for up to 90 days, should the MSC approve the interim certification as per 6.2.4.

11.1.7 If after 90 days an on-site audit has not been completed and there has not been a CoC certificate issued, the CAB shall:
   a. Cancel the certificate in the database.
   b. Inform the applicant that the interim certificate has expired.
   c. Inform the applicant that any use of the trademarks and/or claim of CoC certification shall cease immediately.

11.2 Changes to the certificate

Guidance section 11.2
Changes to a certificate may come about due to:
- New sites being added.
- New subcontractors being used.
- Scope extension for a new species.
- Scope extension for a new activity.
- Purchasing certified products from a new supplier.
- Purchasing from a new under-assessment fishery.
- Scope extension to handle products certified against recognised certification schemes that share MSC CoC.

11.2.1 The CAB shall check continued eligibility against 6.2.9 where a change to the certificate adds a new entity.

11.2.2 The CAB shall inform the client that for any changes to scope, suppliers, subcontractors, product certified to another certification scheme or contact details the client should notify the CAB as detailed in the relevant CoC Standard.

11.2.3 In the event of the client adding a new subcontractor, the CAB shall visit the subcontractor if required according to section 8.4.

11.2.4 The CAB shall use its own judgement to determine if further on-site visits are required when notified that:
   a. The number of sites within a CFO certificate has increased by more than or equal to 25%.

Commented [A57]: Substantive change #CFO
Rationale: Feedback suggest new operations in higher risk activities and in new country without CAB approval are creating too much risk. See CFO Standard change

Commented [A58]: Substantive change #CFO
Rationale: Feedback that this level of growth without CAB approval is creating too much risk. See CFO Standard change

Deleted: over 50
b. The new operations site(s) is involved in processing, packing or repacking of certified product.

c. The new site(s) operates in a new country.

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:

a. Review available information.

b. Consider if the client’s existing management system is suitable for the proposed new scope of operations.

c. Consider if eligibility for the respective version of the MSC CoC Standard will be maintained.

i. 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 6 months.

d. Consider if the client is no longer eligible for remote audits and determine whether future audits will need to be on-site.

e. Decide whether an on-site audit is required before the scope can be extended and record the rationale for this decision.

f. Notify the client within 10 days of its decision.

11.2.6 Upon approval of the first scope extension for the client to buy product certified against recognised certification schemes that share MSC CoC, the CAB will need to issue a certificate against this scheme and update information in the relevant scheme’s database.

11.2.6.1 The CAB shall not process an extension of scope to add products certified under another scheme into the client’s CoC scope if the client has a valid CoC certificate issued by another CAB.

Guidance 11.2.6.1

Where an organisation is CoC certified with MSC products in scope, they must use the same CAB to process a scope extension to handle products certified by ASC (or other schemes that also share MSC CoC). A client cannot have one CAB for their ASC scope and another CAB for their MSC scope.

11.2.6.2 The CAB shall notify the client within 10 days of the certificate scope extension.

11.2.7 The CAB shall update the scheme database within 10 days of a reported change to:

a. Scope.

b. Subcontractors.

c. Suppliers.

d. New contact person.

e. Sites.

i. Where relevant, the CAB should update and document the risk assessment and the sample table and plan for the client.

11.2.8 The CAB shall score any new sites and subcontractors added to the certificate against the Labour Risk Scoring Table on the MSC website and follow 8.2.14-15.

11.2.9 The CAB shall notify the client within 10 days of a decision to add a new site, cancel a certificate or extend a certificate scope.

Commented [A59]: Substantive change: Addition #recertification

Rationale: Although withdrawal and suspension were covered leaving the scheme due to lapse of certification/ client cancelation was not covered.

Commented [A60]: Substantive Change for #labour project

Rationale: When consulting on options for a risk-based approach, feedback from auditors indicated that they did not have the expertise to do a company-level risk assessment. For this reason, the Scoring Tree was developed by an expert using publicly available indicators. It was later recommended that MSC would score countries annually and publish the scores on the MSC website, and CABs would refer to this list in advance of an audit. Country Scores will be published in MSC supporting documents: https://www.msc.org/for-business/certification-bodies/supporting-documents

Commented [A61]: Substantive change #Labour

Rationale: New sites and subcontractors may change the previous score, e.g. adding a site that engages in a prioritised scope activity when previously the certificate didn’t.
11.2.10 When adding a new site to a single or multi-site certificate, the CAB shall follow the same process as for a new applicant. This includes an on-site audit before adding the site to the existing certificate, unless the new site meets the requirements listed in 7.1.6.

11.3 Surveillance frequency, additional audits and non-conformities.

11.3.1 The CAB shall determine the surveillance frequency for certificate holders after each certification, surveillance and re-certification audit according to the following criteria:

a. A frequency of 18 months for single or multi-site CoC certificate holders that meet at least one of the following criteria:
   i. 100% of the seafood handled at all sites is certified seafood, or
   ii. Conduct only ‘trading’ activities directly as defined in Table 4 and do not use any contract processors to handle certified product (contract transport and storage is permitted), or
   iii. Only handle certified product in sealed boxes or containers and do not repack, repackage or alter sealed boxes in any way.

Guidance 11.3.1.a
This includes any business-to-business packed product, such as sealed boxes, pallets, sealed bags, etc. Pallet-level containers may be broken down provided that individual sealed boxes or containers are not altered. Companies that meet this criteria could include distributors, wholesalers or storage facilities.

b. A frequency of 12 months for all other certificate holders.

Guidance 11.3.1.b
All Group and CFO CoC certificate holders require annual surveillance audits.

i. For clients that are eligible for 18-month audit frequency, but the CAB judges an annual audit frequency is necessary, the CAB shall confirm their rationale within the audit checklist.
   A. This should be based on factors not identified in 11.3.1 which increase the clients risk profile.

   c. For Group CoC clients and CFO clients with multiple sites, the central office and a sample of sites shall be audited as dictated in sections 10.5 and 7.2 respectively.

   d. The surveillance audit's timing may be advanced or delayed by up to 60 days before or after the due date as necessary to coordinate a suitable date, where due date is determined by the initial audit date.

Guidance 11.3.1.d
The due date will remain the same for the length of a certificate holder’s continuous participation in the MSC program and this could be multiple certificate cycles.

11.3.2 The CAB shall carry out unannounced, on-site surveillance audits at a minimum of 1 or 2, whichever is greater, of all their clients each year.

11.3.2.1 The CAB shall prioritise clients that have been identified at high risk for product substitution by the MSC, the accreditation body or through receipt of a complaint.

11.3.2.2 If the CAB has not had any clients identified as high risk due to information received by the MSC or accreditation body, or a complaint, then the CAB may use their own risk assessment to select clients or may choose randomly.
11.3.2.3 At least on an annual basis, the CAB shall calculate the number of unannounced audits. This number is calculated as 5% of the current number of clients (rounded to the nearest whole number), or 1 in the case the CAB has fewer than 50 clients.

11.3.2.4 The CAB may inform the client of a 6-month surveillance window in which the audit can occur, but shall provide no notice of the actual date.

   a. Where a client carries out only seasonal production, the audit window should be reduced as appropriate to reflect this.

Guidance 11.3.2.4

Unannounced audits are intended to provide a more accurate picture of a client’s day-to-day conformity with MSC CoC Standard, as the client will not have any time to prepare specifically for the audit.

For unannounced audits, entry must be granted to the auditor within 30 minutes of their arrival. Entry cannot be refused on the basis of a responsible person not being available, or another audit being conducted on the same day, and time limits for document provision can still be set.

11.3.3 Surveillance audits can be remote for certificate holders that meet all of the following criteria:

   a. Conduct only ‘trading’ activities directly as defined in Table 4.

      i. With the exception of activities carried out by subcontractors, which are assessed under 8.4.

   b. Are located in a country with a Transparency International CPI score of 41 or above (http://cpi.transparency.org).

      i. If the above criteria are met by the client but the CAB proposed to audit on-site the CAB shall document their rationale within the audit checklist.

         A. This should be based on factors not identified in 11.3.3 which increase the clients risk profile.

Guidance 11.3.3

Eligibility is not limited by the activities of subcontractors, as subcontractor auditing is covered within the requirements of section 8.4. The CAB may refer to the guidance in ISO 19011 to determine whether a remote audit is feasible in each case, considering for example: ability to interview, access relevant records, and other risk factors they are aware and/or evaluated in the application.

11.3.4 The CAB shall have a documented procedure to determine when it should do any of the following:

   a. Conduct expedited audits, and/or

Guidance 11.3.4.a

For expedited audits entry cannot be refused on the basis of a responsible person not being available and time limits for document provision can still be set.

   b. Request and examine documentation related to a client’s operations.

11.3.5 The CAB’s procedure in 11.3.4 shall take account of information received including:

   a. Complaints.

   b. Notification of changes in personnel, site or management system procedures.

   c. Information from the MSC, the accreditation body and/or MSCI.

11.3.6 The MSC can require a CAB to conduct an expedited audit when information has been received indicating a potential risk to the Chain of Custody, but where responsibility is not clear. In this case:
a. The MSC will provide the CAB with a written request to conduct the audit which shall include any relevant information or evidence.

b. The MSC and the CAB shall agree on the full cost of the audit in writing in advance of the audit.

c. The MSC will reimburse the CAB for the full cost of the audit.

d. The MSC can require that these audits be attended by the accreditation body or a representative of the MSC.

Guidance 11.3.6

The MSC can send a request for action to a CAB when evidence has been received indicating a non-conformity of one of their clients. In this case:

a. The CAB shall risk assess the evidence and respond to the MSC within 5 calendar days detailing the action to be taken.

11.4 Recertification

11.4.1 All CoC certificates shall remain valid, subject to satisfactory performance, for a maximum of 3 years.

11.4.1.1

11.4.2 The CAB shall perform a complete recertification audit at the end of each certificate’s period of validity.

11.4.2.1 The timing of the recertification audit shall allow enough time for potential non-conformities raised at the recertification audit to be corrected and the reissuing of the certificate prior to the certificate expiry date to avoid a lapse in certification.

Guidance 11.4

The maximum validity of a CoC certificate is 3 years from the issue date on the scheme database. At the CAB’s and certificate holder’s discretion, the certificate validity can be shortened in order to align it with other certification periods and to enable combined audits.

11.4.3 The CAB shall follow all relevant sections of the MSC CoCCR as for an applicant.

11.4.3.1 Recertification audits may also be unannounced and 11.3.2 followed.

11.4.4 For Group CoC clients, the site sample plan shall be determined as for initial audits.

11.4.5 For CFO clients with multiple sites, the site sample plan shall be the same as for surveillance audits.