

# OCEAN BOUND PLASTIC

## CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

### REMOTE AND SUPERVISED/SHADOW AUDITS GUIDELINES



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## **Revisions and Updates**

This document shall be revised as required in particular to adapt to the evolutions of some of the Exceptional Conditions mentioned in this document.

Please send any comment you have regarding this document to [contact\(at\)obpcert.org](mailto:contact(at)obpcert.org).

## **Revision history**

| <b>Date</b>                 | <b>Version</b> | <b>Changes</b>  |
|-----------------------------|----------------|---|
| 15 <sup>th</sup> March 2021 | V1             | Initial Release   |
| 8 <sup>th</sup> Sept. 2021  | V1.1           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Addition of extension of scope condition in 6.2.</li><li>• Definitions have been removed from the document and are now available in document OBP-DEF-GUI.</li><li>• Precision added regarding Subcontractors' visit in 5.2.3.</li></ul> |
| 6 <sup>th</sup> Feb. 2023   | V1.2           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Revision of the rule regarding low risk audits (5.2.3)</li><li>• Clarification of Annex I 6.1</li><li>• Removal of the deadline for Supervised/Shadow Audits in 5.3.2</li></ul>   |



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# 1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of Zero Plastic Oceans is to protect oceans from the continuous leakage of Plastic waste from land-based activity by developing incentives and models that promote the collection of Ocean Bound Plastic<sup>1</sup> (OBP).

The **OBP Certification Program** was designed to encourage the removal of OBP from the environment by adding value in effectively collecting and treating it before it reaches oceans. The scheme is composed of two subprograms; the **OBP Recycling Subprogram**, and the **OBP Neutrality Subprogram**.

When OBP is commercially recyclable<sup>2</sup>, its collection and Recycling can be encouraged by certifying its origin and traceability, giving it a higher market value. This model is certified using the OBP Collection Organization Standard and the OBP Recycling Organization Standard, for the OBP Recycling Subprogram.

When OBP is not commercially recyclable<sup>3</sup>, its collection and final treatment can be encouraged by certifying this process through the Ocean Bound Plastic Neutrality model. In this model, Plastic producers or users can offset their Plastic consumption or production, by removing a determined volume from the environment through the acquisition of OBP Credits. This model is certified using the OBP Neutralization Services Provider Standard and the OBP Plastic Producers & Users Standard, for the OBP Neutrality Subprogram.

Organizations may certify themselves for one, or both subprograms as they are complementary solutions. Working with both subprograms makes sense in terms of economic efficiency, given all OBP is collected and marketed at once. It also makes sense from the environmental perspective, since it is only by addressing both, Commercially and Non-Commercially Recyclable OBP, that we will be able to make a real impact.

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<sup>1</sup> Ocean Bound Plastic, is, as defined in OBP-DEF-GUI, Plastic litter that will be carried away to oceans in particular by the effects of currents, winds, river flows or tides.

<sup>2</sup> Commercially recyclable OBP as defined in OBP-DEF-GUI, means that OBP is technically recyclable and that it can be sold locally to recyclers for a price that renders its collection attractive to waste pickers or collection organizations. Currently, especially in countries where OBP is leaking into the oceans, a significant portion of technically recyclable OBP is unfortunately not commercially recyclable.

<sup>3</sup> Not commercially recyclable OBP as defined in OBP-DEF-GUI, means that OBP cannot be sold for an attractive price but also includes products or packaging which are technically not recyclable (because of the resin used, the mix of different materials or because they are too damaged).



## 2. TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Capital letters are used throughout the document to signal the words that are included in the definitions available in OBP-DEF-GUI. Acronym's significance is also available in the same OBP-DEF-GUI document.

## 3. SCOPE

This document covers the circumstances in which Remote or Supervised/Shadow Audits may be carried out by ZPO Approved Certification Bodies in replacement of on-site Audits, if agreed between them and the certification applicant Organizations. It gives mandatory guidance to Approved Certification Bodies on whether Remote Audits or Supervised/Shadow Audits are permitted and under which circumstances and conditions.

## 4. APPLICABLE DATE

The dispositions in these guidelines are effective on the release date and shall become compulsory to use on the 6<sup>th</sup> of May 2023.



# 5. REQUIREMENTS

## 5.1. REMOTE AND SUPERVISED/SHADOW AUDIT PROCEDURES

For Certification Bodies to be able to carry Remote or Supervised/Shadow Audits, they need to have developed Audit procedures for such types of Audits, and these need to be previously revised and approved by ZPO. Remote Audits can take place based on levels of Audit risk and presence of Exceptional Conditions. Supervised/Shadow Audits can take place based on Certification Bodies' availability of local/national Auditors.

## 5.2. REMOTE AUDITS

### 5.2.1. PURPOSE

Remote Audits allow Organizations to get certified, or remain certified, when Exceptional Conditions prevent them from receiving on-site Audits. Remote Audits require however full compliance to the applicable OBP Standard and do not imply a lesser compliance or verification level. Remote Audits also allow Organizations whose Audits are classified as low risk per ANNEX I to benefit from reduced certification costs given there are no travel time and travel expenses associated when performing a Remote Audit.

### 5.2.2. OBLIGATORY MENTION

Scope Certificates issued by Certification Bodies after Remote Audits need to include the specification that the Audit was done remotely.

### 5.2.3. LOW RISK LEVEL AUDITS

Remote Audits are authorized for low risk level Audits (as per ANNEX I), subject to a risk evaluation by the Certification Body. The risk evaluation shall consider as a minimum the following elements to decide if a remote audit is applicable or not:

- Behavior of the Certified Organization in previous certification cycle if applicable.
- Existence of other onsite audits for other certification schemes.
- Risk of potential non-compliance with the requirements of the Standard, considering the specificities of the Organization (exact activities, single site or multi-site, country of activities, legal local and international framework of operations).

The Certification Body's risk assessment results should be sent to ZPO for approval before the Certification Body makes a formal offer specifying the feasibility of a remote audit to the applicant Organization.



If Subcontractors are used by the Organization these will need to be visited even if the Organization's Audit is considered low risk.

#### **5.2.4. MEDIUM RISK LEVEL AUDITS**

Remote Audits are authorized for Organizations whose Audits are classified as medium risk level Audits (as per ANNEX I) in the presence of Exceptional Conditions, even for initial certification Audits. After a Remote Audit has taken place, a certification decision can be taken, and a yearly valid certificate can be issued. However, the certificate's annual validity will be conditioned to the fact that an on-site visit focusing on the requirements of the standard that are less easily assessed remotely, is carried out within a maximum time frame of 2 months from termination of the Exceptional Condition. If the site visit cannot be performed before the next certification cycle is due, the certification shall be suspended at the anniversary date, and will only be renewed after an on-site Audit is feasible and performed.

#### **5.2.5. HIGH RISK LEVEL AUDITS**

Remote Audits are not authorized for Organizations whose Audits are classified as high-risk level Audits (as per ANNEX I).

### **5.3. SUPERVISED/SHADOW AUDITS**

#### **5.3.1. PURPOSE**

Supervised/Shadow Audits allow organizations to get certified in countries where approved Certification Bodies do not yet have local/national qualified OBP Auditors due to the time required to roll out global Auditor trainings. This possibility is allowed to encourage the collection of OBP from the environment through the growth of the number of OBP certified Organizations.

#### **5.3.2. CONDITIONS**

Supervised/Shadow Audits can be carried out by Certification Bodies, in agreement with the applicant Organization, when they do not have a local/national OBP approved Auditor to carry out the on-site Audit. In that case, it is required that the local/national Auditor available is qualified to audit other environmental or social standards that follow ISO 17065 accreditation.

The local/national auditor shall prepare and perform the Audit under remote guidance and supervision of the approved OBP Auditor. Supervised/Shadow Audits are considered fully equivalent to an on-site Audit by a qualified Auditor.



## 6. ANNEX I – AUDIT RISK LEVEL ASSESSMENT FOR REMOTE AUDITS

The following criteria are to be used by Certification Bodies when assessing the risk level of Audits for Organizations applying to one or several Standards of the OBP Program.

### 6.1. LOW RISK LEVEL

Audits for Organizations in any of the following cases shall be considered as low risk.

| CONDITION   | APPLICABLE OBP STANDARD |
|---|-------------------------|
| Organizations corresponding to the Trader definition. | OBP-REC-STD             |
| None (applicable to all Organizations and audits)     | OBP-PRO-STD             |

### 6.2. MEDIUM RISK LEVEL

Audits for Organizations in any of the following cases shall be considered as medium risk.

| CONDITION  | DESCRIPTION OR THE CONDITION  | APPLICABLE OBP STANDARD    |
|--|---|----------------------------|
| <b>Audit is a renewal Audit</b>  | Organization already holds a valid OBP Certificate, and no issues were raised during the current certification cycle.   | All OBP Standards          |
| <b>Extension of scope</b>  | Organization already holds a Scope Certificate to the OBP-NEU-STD and is applying for the OBP-COL-STD.<br>When the Organization holds a Scope Certificate to the OBP-COL-STD and is applying for the OBP-NEU-STD only the part of the Audit related to the Approved Treatment section needs to be considered as high risk (requiring a site visit)  | OBP-COL-STD<br>OBP-NEU-STD |
| <b>Organization is certified to other social or environmental standard</b> | Organizations already certified through on-site audits for other environmental or social standards in a maximum previous period of one year by the same Certification Body.<br><br>The other considered standards should follow ISO 17065 accreditation.<br><br>In case the Organization has subcontractors, it can only be considered medium risk if, subcontractor operations can be visited on-site. | OBP-REC-STD<br>OBP-PRO-STD |





### 6.3. HIGH RISK LEVEL

Cases not included above shall be considered as high risk level Audits. Certification Bodies may decide to classify as high risk level Audits some of the cases included above, if the Organization's behavior in previous certification cycles, or experience with other standards demonstrates that it is reasonable to do so.

