

# ECO PLATFORM

## Audit Requirements

Version 1.0 (June 2024)

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Version Number	Date	Summary of changes
V1.0	20.06.2024	First version of separated ECO Platform Audit Requirements

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## 1 SCOPE

This document is addressed to the ECO Platform auditors and refers to the latest released version of the following documents that are part of the ECO Platform Standards:

- the ECO Platform Verification Guidelines
- the ECO Platform LCA Calculation Rules and Specifications for EPDs
- the ECO Platform Tool Verification Guidelines (formerly known as “Verification Guidelines for automated software systems (tools) for generating and verifying EPDs”)
- the ECO Platform Quality Management Guidelines
- the ECO Platform Digital Data Requirements
- the ECO Platform Requirements for publishing digital data in ECO Portal

It covers the required auditors’ competencies, general audit requirements, related documents, and process descriptions to be audited as well as responsible contact persons at the audited PO.

The document moreover includes the latest version of the audit checklists that must be used in the audit procedure.

## 2 GENERAL AUDITORS' COMPETENCIES AND GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR AUDITORS

### 2.1 General Knowledge

The ECO Platform audits have the role to ensure compliance with the requirements defined in the ECO Platform Standards.

In general, the ECO Platform Audit Team shall have knowledge and skills in the areas of audit principles, procedures and methods, management systems and the ECO Platform Standards documents.

The minimum requirements on the Audit Teams' competences are continuously defined and documented in a job description through collaboration between the QM Manager, the TEWOG & TOOLWOG Convenors and the Board.

### 2.2 International Standards

The auditors must be familiar with the following international standards in their latest version:

**ISO 17021-1. Conformity assessment — Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems —Part 1: Requirements:**

ECO Platform refers to this standard and gives special attention to clause 4 which provides general principles, clause 9.4 as a general framework for audits, and definition 3.3 as a guide to the boundaries of consultancy.

**ISO 19011. Guidelines for auditing management systems:**

ECO Platform also refers to ISO 19011 which provides guidance on auditing management systems, including the principles of auditing, managing an audit programme and conducting management system audits, as well as guidance on the evaluation of competence of individuals involved in the audit process, including the person managing the audit programme, auditors and audit teams.

ISO 19011 is applicable to all organizations that need to conduct internal or external audits of management systems or manage an audit programme.

Special attention is given to clause 4 which provides general principles, clause 6 – especially sub-clauses 6.4 - as a general framework for conducting an audit and clause 7.2.3 in which generic knowledge and skills of auditors as well as audit team leaders are described.

### 3 “THE DOSSIER”

The following documents and/or details (“the dossier”) must be sent by the applicant to the Audit Team before the kick-off meeting in English language (as a PDF or via link to be downloaded).

The PO will be informed of this obligation and all details in the audit plan (see Annex 1) as part of the introductory email:

#### Audit Part GPI, Verification, LCA Calc. Rules, Tool Verification, Quality Management:

1. General Program Instructions (GPI)
2. PCR review procedure
3. Procedures for selection of verifiers and PCR review panel, including qualification criteria
4. Evidence that the latest released version of the ECO Platform verification checklist provided in the ECO Platform Verification Guidelines serves as basis for verification of ECO EPD → PO to provide an English version of its checklist and to show matching of this checklist with ECO Platform checklist
5. Evidence that the requirements for Tool Verification provided in the latest released version of the Tool Verification Guidelines are included → PO to provide English version of its Tool Verification Requirements and to show matching with ECO Platform requirements
6. Project report template if the PO uses one
7. EPD template if the PO uses one
8. A list of all EN15804 EPDs published within the last 6 months out of which the Audit Team chooses the example EPD (in coordination with the PO); for this EPD, the verification checklist and verification report have to be provided
9. List of currently valid, verified tools used to generate EPD for the programme. Verification reports and related EPDs will subsequently be requested by the Audit Team for selected tools.
10. Name and contact details of contact persons that have the responsibility to interface with the Audit Team

#### Audit Part Digital Data Requirements & Connection to ECO Portal:

1. The example EPD in ILCD + EPD format (on the PO node or via .zip-file)
2. Evidence that the PO is connected to the ECO Portal incl. reliable operations with proper monitoring (e.g. via configuration files, screenshots, other documents)

### 4 DETAILS ON RECURRING AUDITS

Recurring audits, as defined in the ECO Platform standards, refer to planned assessments that are carried out at a fixed interval after an initial audit. These audits are designed to uphold compliance with ECO Platform Standards and ensure the continued adherence of the PO to specified criteria.

Fundamentally, the process of recurring audits follows the same steps as the initial audit. The scope or areas to be examined are communicated to the PO as part of the preparatory measures.

The scope of recurring audits is defined by the ECO Platform Quality Manager and the Audit Team taking into account relevant changes in the ECO Platform standards since the last audit and the latest audit report. Provisions are made to prevent redundancy between ECO Platform audits and external certifications or accreditations held by the PO.

The time spent by the Audit Team on a recurring audit should not exceed two man-days. In case pre-defined timeframes are exceeded, potential extra costs may be invoiced with prior agreement.

## 5 AUDITORS CHECKLIST “PROCEDURES & QUALITY MANAGEMENT”

This checklist covers procedural aspects, including those listed in ISO14025. For each issue, the auditor must identify evidence that there is a mechanism (e.g. procedure) to deliver the requirement, evidence that it is applied, and that its functioning is checked by some form of review process. Note the sources of evidence in the “Comment” column along with any non-conformities and/or comments.

issue	Comment by auditor (include source of evidence)	Reply by PO	Result
<b>Verifier Independence</b> Verifiers shall not have been engaged in conducting the LCA or crafting the declaration and shall be devoid of conflicts of interest.			
<b>Verifier Approval</b> Do the programme rules include an appointment and registration procedure for verifiers?			
<b>Verifier Competence</b> - Have competence requirements been established?			
- Are these in line with ISO14025 8.2.2?			
- knowledge and experience of the verifier or verification team is available and up to date at the time of verification?			
<b>Communication of Updates</b> Does the PO have a process for communicating updates in its rules, including ECO Platform standards?			



<p><b>GPI</b>                  - Contains all items from ISO14025 6.4 (some may be in a “PCR Part A”) in particular:</p>			
- Are EPD programme owner and operator, type of institution described?			
- Are Scope, commitment to ISO 14025, EN 15804, responsible parties and intended audiences determined?			
- Procedure for definition of product categories available?			
- GPI review / revision process established?			
<p><b>PCR development &amp; review</b>                  - procedure exists for PCR development /adoption?</p>			
- procedure exists for PCR review, including provision for taking account of new developments?			
- procedure & criteria for assembling PCR review panel exists?			
<p><b>Involvement of interested parties</b>                  - consultation for programme development in line with ISO14025 5.5?</p>			
- consultation for PCR development in line with ISO14025 6.5?			
- names of organization participating in PCR developing?			
- complaint procedure exists? evidence of follow-up, resolution and management review of complaints to inform improvement			

<b>Documentation</b> - procedures exist for data confidentiality management			
- mechanism to safeguard the consistency of data within the programme			
<b>EPD &amp; verification</b> - Is the procedure of verification determined?			
- Are the requirements for tool verification available according to the scope of the programme?			
- Are handling of changes or revisions to EPD determined?			

## 6 AUDITORS CHECKLIST “FORMS AND TEMPLATES, VERIFICATION GUIDELINES & CALCULATION RULES”

<i>PART 1 Forms &amp; Templates</i>			
issue	Comment by auditor (include source of evidence)	Reply by PO	Result
Format of EPD, reporting and publication: Are the formatting rules available? Is there an EPD template? If so, does the content align with requirements on ECO EPDs?			
Does the EPD reference ISO 14025?			
Is the ECO Platform-compliant verification checklist available?			

Are the ECO Platform-compliant guidelines for tool verification followed?			
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**PART 2: Verification checklist / documentation; example ECO EPD; if applicable: tool verification**

issue	Comment by auditor (include source of evidence)	Reply by PO	Result
Are all items of the ECO Platform verification checklist addressed?			
Is the EPD complete as in “content of the EPD”?			
Did the PO provide a “proof of matching” of its checklist with the ECO Platform checklists?			
Verification report available? Does the report refer to the ECO Platform verification checklist?			
Does the verification report include a statement on verification results (e.g. non-compliances, corrective actions)?			
Is the verification report for the tool available? Do they fulfil the ECO Platform requirements?			
Are the example EPDs for tool verification available to the auditor?			
Are there any non-compliances in the EPD that have not been addressed in the verification report?			

## 7 AUDITORS CHECKLIST “DIGITAL DATA REQUIREMENTS”

<i>Digital Data Requirements</i>			
issue	Comment by auditor (include source of evidence)	Reply by PO	Result
GPI or other relevant documentation includes details on digital data format of EPDs?			
Is the EPD published in a digital data format according to the ECO Platform Digital Data Requirements?			

## 8 AUDITORS CHECKLIST “PUBLISHING DIGITAL DATA IN ECO PORTAL”

The technical specifications for publishing data digitally via the ECO Portal are part of the ECO Platform Audit, however, they are verified by a third-party provider (“the ECO Platform Validator”). The findings of the validation process will be considered in the audit approval process.

The different steps of the process are listed below:

1. The candidate PO applies at ECO Platform (Head Office) for connection of their node to ECO Platform.
2. ECO Platform appoints a person or entity to verify the compliance of the node and the data thereon ("the ECO Platform Validator").
3. The candidate PO will grant access to their node to the ECO Platform Validator.
4. The ECO Platform Validator will perform
  - a. A compliance check on the node to verify compatibility with ECO Portal
  - b. A compliance check on the data
5. Any issues that are found will be reported to the candidate PO in order for them to be able to correct them.
6. The validation ends when one of the following conditions are met:
  - a. Both node and data are found to be fully compliant.
  - b. The allocated time period for the audit (including any possible extensions that have been granted) has elapsed.
  - c. The application is withdrawn by the candidate PO.
7. The ECO Platform Validator reports their findings to the ECO Platform Board along with a recommendation for either approval or rejection of the application.
8. If the Board approves the application, the candidate PO’s node will be connected to the ECO Portal.

## 9 ANNEX 1: DRAFT ECO PLATFORM AUDIT PLAN

**Programme Operator:** *Name of organization*

**Responsible contact person:** *Name, email address*

**Audit**

**Reference Standard:** ECO Platform Standards

**Audit Team:** *Name of lead auditor*

*Name of co-auditor*

Step	Start Date	Completion Date	Activities	Note
1			Preparatory Measures	
2			Payment of audit Fee by PO	
3			Submission of documents by PO	
4			Check of completeness of submission by Audit Team	
5			Kick-off meeting	
6			Document checks according to audit requirements and checklists by Audit Team	
7			Comments from Audit Team to PO	
8			Feed-back meeting	
9			Reply to comments and completion of tasks by PO	
10			Final audit report by Audit Team	
11			Approval or Rejection of Application by ECO Platform Board of Management	
12			Audit documentation	

The entire audit process is scheduled for a maximum period of 4 months from the date of submission of documents by the PO (step 3). A further delay caused by the PO during the audit process can lead to increased costs for the audit. In case of justified rejections, the costs will not be reimbursed to the applicant (refer to Audit Guidelines for details on requirements).

By signing this document, the PO agrees to the presented timelines and confirms that there are no conflicts of interest with the lead or co-auditor.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Signature Programme Operator*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Signature Lead Auditor ECO Platform*

Annex 1: Documents/details to be provided ("the dossier")

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