

# Certification by TÜV NORD CERT MSC/ASC Marine Stewardship Council

Zertifizierung

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Do you have any questions about the description of the certification performance? We will be happy to help you.

You can reach us by email at [info.tncert@tuev-nord.de](mailto:info.tncert@tuev-nord.de) or personally from Monday to Friday between 07:30 and 18:00 at 0800 – 2457457.

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The rules and the performance descriptions regarding certification to the MSC Chain of Custody Standard form an integral part of the offer. They are an extension of the General Conditions for Certification.

The series of standards currently consists of:

- MSC Chain of Custody Standard, Basic Version V4.0
- MSC Chain of Custody Standard, Group Version V1.0
- MSC Chain of Custody Standard Consumer Facing Organisation V1.0 (CFO)

The MSC requirements can also be applied to ASC certifications.

The different standards and further applicable documents and regulations can be found on the MSC website ([www.msc.org](http://www.msc.org))

The auditors are selected by TÜV NORD CERT

## 1. CERTIFICATION PROCEDURE

### 1.1 Audit preparation

The client must have installed a system for product identification and batch traceability.

- The client must therefore be able to demonstrate that MSC/ASC fish are not mixed with certified fish. As a rule, clear product identification is needed in order to achieve this.
- The client must demonstrate the quantity of MSC/C fish that has been received, the species of fish received, the quantity per supplier and the storage area.
- In addition, the client must be able to present evidence of the quantities of MSC/ASC fish that have left his organization.
- With regard to fish processing, the client must be able to exactly demonstrate what MSC/ASC certified fish species were processed in what quantities at what time and in what products.

If the fish are to be promoted with the MSC/ASC logo or the words MSC or ASC, the client must conclude a separate agreement regarding logo use with the MSC.

Note: Without an agreement regarding logo use, the word MSC/ASC may only be used together with products in B2B business and only for product identification or training purposes, if appropriate.

Information regarding MSC/ASC and use of the logo can be found directly on the MSC website:

[https://www.msc.org/documents?set\\_language=en](https://www.msc.org/documents?set_language=en)

Further information and official documents can be found on the website in their current valid versions:

[https://www.msc.org/documents?set\\_language=en](https://www.msc.org/documents?set_language=en)

As Annex to this document, you will receive the following from us by email in a digital version:

- MSC Chain of Custody Standard Basic Version, Group Version, Consumer Facing Organisation
- Logo licensing – Licence fee structure
- Guidance for use of the MSC environment seal

Important MSC documents are publicised on the TÜV Nord website.

The client organization is established as an applicant in the MSC/ASC database when the order for the certification is placed. This provides MSC/ASC with the information that the organization has applied for MSC/ASC certification.

## **1.2 Preliminary audit**

The preliminary audit consists of the following steps:

- Review of the submitted QM-/MSC/ASC documentation and
- Performance of an introductory audit on site.

The aim of the preliminary audit is to determine certifiability based on the documentation or the implementation of the control system. The result of the introductory audit is explained to the applicant/client, or if preferred by the client, is recorded in a report. The duration of the preliminary report is fixed in advance together with the applicant, and the audit is carried out by an auditor.

A preliminary audit is voluntary and without obligation.

## **1.3 Certification audit**

Certification relates to fish from certified fisheries, in particular at the following stages within the supply chain:

- Purchase of certified fish;
- Processing of certified fish;
- Storage of certified fish;
- Sale of certified fish.

The certification of the MSC/ASC Chain of Custody (CoC) is based on the following principles:

- The client fulfils the MSC CoC standard and
- The certification company assesses the fulfilment of the standard by means of an on-site audit.

Therefore your systems are examined during the audit, in order to ensure that products from a certified fishery are strictly separated from other products.

Following completion of the individual visits to the site, the auditor informs the client company management or the MSC/ASC coordinator of points which can be the cause of future problems (Minors). The audit also states if nonconformities (Majors) were identified which can have a negative impact on the integrity of the Chain of Custody (this is described in more detail in Point 8)

The auditor creates a report regarding the results of the respective audit, with recommendations for certification of the corresponding part of the Chain of Custody.

MSC/ASC has the right to change the MSC Standard and certification rules. In order to maintain the certification, the organization undertakes to respect and implement these new aspects/changes.

## **1.4 Special case of preliminary approval:**

In some exception cases, the normal audit cannot be conducted immediately, which, however, does not necessarily mean that the start of the certification process will be hindered. The MSC/ASC offers

approval for exceptional cases, known as “interim authorisation to allow fish or fish product(s) into the chain of custody and/ or to use the MSC/ASC trademark”. Authorisation is given if it can be demonstrated to the MSC/ASC, that visits to the site cannot be made before issue of the certification, and that the risks to the integrity of the MSC/AS logo are low.

The client receives official documents from MSC/ASC in the form of a questionnaire and application for provisional MSC/ASC-CoC certification, which have to be completed within a certain period of time.

If approval is granted by MSC/ASC, TÜV NORD CERT grants the client interim certification. The on-site audit must then take place within three months of the issue of this certification.

### **1.5 Special case: remote document audit:**

Organizations with only one site which only trade with MSC/ASC certified fishery products (buying and selling) and who do not commission subcontractors (with the exception of for storage and transport), can be audited by means of a remote document audit.

### **1.6 Issue of certificate**

The issue of the certificate follows positive review of the certification procedure by the certification body.

The certificate is generally valid for 3 years.

Following certification, the results of the audits are entered into the MSC/ASC database (e-cert). The client agrees that the certification body updates the database as appropriate.

## **2. SURVEILLANCE AUDIT**

Following issue of the MSC/ASC certification for a period of three years or a successful recertification, those sites are visited at intervals which can provide certainty with regard to the integrity of the Chain of Custody.

A surveillance audit takes place every 12 months.

For organizations with only one site, which only trade with MSC/ASC certified fishery products (buying and selling) and which do not commission any subcontractors (except for storage and transport), the surveillance audit takes place at intervals of 18 months.

The surveillance audit can take place within a time window of +/-3 months on each side of the calculated date of the audit.

Also in the case of surveillance audits, a report is written by the auditor, which is entered into the MSC/ASC database (e-cert) following a further review.

In the case of an audit according to the Group Version of the standard of for a Consumer Facing Organisation (CFO), the central office of the organization is integrated into the surveillance audit each year.

If the calculated audit date is exceeded by more than 3 months, the certificate is suspended and the certification body informs MSC/ASC. The suspension of the certificate is entered into the MSC database. This means that suspension of the certificate is made public. If a surveillance audit is not carried out, the certificate is withdrawn. The certification body informs MSC/ASC and publishes this fact in the MSC database.

### **3. RECERTIFICATION AUDIT**

A recertification audit takes place after 3 years. Following successful completion of the audit, the validity of the certificate is extended for a further 3 years. The date of this audit is based on the date of the certification audit. The recertification can be carried out within a time window of +/- 3 months. However, we recommend performance of the recertification on the due date. If major nonconformities are not closed in good time, the certificate has to be suspended (see Chapter 8).

### **4. EXTENSION AUDIT AND CHANGES TO THE SCOPE**

Additions to the certificate are charged at a fixed rate of 50 €. Other expenses, such as for example an onsite audit, are the subject of a separate offer.

#### 4.1 New activities and new suppliers:

The client must report changes to the certification body.

Change of the scope of the certificate or of another status	Notification to TÜV NORD CERT
a. Addition of a new activity b. First extension of the scope of the certificate by including ASC products c. Addition of a new subcontractor (except for companies which only provide storage or transport activities)	<p>The certification body must be notified before the change takes place. Please send the completed Form A29F234A1 to <a href="mailto:lebensmittel-tncert@tuev-nord.de">lebensmittel-tncert@tuev-nord.de</a></p> <p>The certification body must approve this change in writing and can require that an on-site audit or a document review is carried out before the approval is granted.</p>
d. Addition of a new certified supplier	<p>The certification must be notified within ten (10) days of receipt of the first delivery of the new species or from the new supplier. In the case of a new supplier, the Certification No. of the supplier must be stated.</p> <p>Please send the completed Form A29F234A1 to <a href="mailto:lebensmittel-tncert@tuev-nord.de">lebensmittel-tncert@tuev-nord.de</a></p>
e. Group: new group members and organizations leaving the group	<p>Changes regarding group members must notified at the latest 10 days before they enter the group or 10 days after they leave the group.</p> <p>Please send your current location overview A29F004 to <a href="mailto:lebensmittel-tncert@tuev-nord.de">lebensmittel-tncert@tuev-nord.de</a></p>
f. Group: Changes to the total number of locations by more than +/- 10% g. CFO: Change to the total number of locations by more than +/- 50%	<p>Please send your current location overview A29F004 to <a href="mailto:lebensmittel-tncert@tuev-nord.de">lebensmittel-tncert@tuev-nord.de</a></p>

## 4.2 Subcontracting/Subcontractors:

Approval for subcontractors must be applied for from the certification body before the subcontractors are commissioned with orders (this requirement does not apply to commissioned storage facilities or haulage/transport companies).

The organization must make contractual agreements with all subcontractors (except for road haulage companies/carriers) which oblige the subcontractors to observe all the relevant requirements of the MSC traceability standard. The certification body and MSC accreditation body must be permitted access to the subcontractor's site and access to all relevant documents. In the same way, the subcontractor must follow up all appropriate requests for information (including inquiries from the certification body or MSC accreditation body). The certification body must be permitted to perform further audits if a subcontractor is itself not certified to the MSC CoC Standard.

The client and his subcontractor must keep at least the following lot/batch-related records regarding all MSC certified goods that are processed by subcontractors:

- Information regarding quantities and product details of the goods transferred to the subcontractor
- Information regarding quantities and product details of the goods processed by the subcontractor
- Dates of despatch and receipt of goods
- Delivery notes or invoices

The subcontractor must keep records regarding all his customers, including MSC certification numbers.

If the subcontractor is not MSC certified, the subcontractor has to be audited by TÜV NORD CERT before the start of the activity and at regular intervals of every 12 twelve months.

## 5. SAMPLING AND AUDITS ANNOUNCED AT SHORT NOTICE:

In order to guarantee constant quality of the MSC audits that are conducted by TÜV NORD CERT, the accreditation body ASI accompanies at least one MSC audit per year. ASI selects the organization to be audited. The client must basically agree to accompaniment of audits by ASI.

The ASI accreditation body is entitled to publish the associated audit reports, which could possibly also concern or impact the audit of the client, on its website.

The findings of these additional audits are evaluated in the same way as in a regular audit. It may be that the findings lead to blocking of the certificate.

It may be that ASI samples are taken by TÜV NORD CERT, MSC or the accreditation body. This sampling serves the purpose of product authentication. The costs for the analysis are not passed on to the organisation. The sampling can, like the additional audits, be carried out on an announced or unannounced basis.

The CFO Standard provides for a selection of operations/locations and also for sampling as from the first surveillance audit, as well as for audits at selected locations announced at short notice (48h). Whether this will affect you is newly determined before each audit and the information will be given to you by your auditor. The costs for the sampling are paid by MSC. However, additional time is needed for the sampling, which is invoiced to the client.

The analysis of the sample serves for product authentication. However, if during this product analysis a risk to food safety is established, the audited organization has the legal duty to report this to the official authority. In this case, evidence of the report has to be sent to TÜV NORD CERT.

The results of the product analysis are naturally only communicated between the parties involved, i.e. the client, TÜV NORD CERT, MSC and the accreditation body. Communication with other parties is performed anonymously.

TÜV NORD CERT has the duty to perform unannounced audits on a proportion of its clients. Clients are selected on a random basis. The unannounced audit takes place within a timeframe of 6 months. The timeframe is communicated to the client. The unannounced audit replaces a regular audit. No additional costs are invoiced to the client.

## **6. TAKEOVER OF CERTIFICATIONS OF OTHER CERTIFICATION BODIES**

If an MSC-certified organization wishes to change its certification body, the following framework conditions must be fulfilled:

- The changeover must take place within the period of validity of the certificate
- The certified company must inform MSC in writing of the changeover and provide the name of the new certification company. The certificate is valid for a maximum of 90 days after this date.
- The current certification company must be authorised by the certified company to provide reports, certificates and other relevant audit documents to the new certification company.
- A date for a transfer audit must be agreed with the new certification company. This date must be communicated to MC 10 days before the transfer audit.
- The validity of the new certificate continues from the validity of the previous certificate.
- Packages must be identified with the new registration number.

The certification company reviews the documents of the organization to be certified. If nothing unusual is found in the documents from previous audits or possibly correspondence with MSC/MSCI, the normal rhythm of surveillance and recertification audits can be retained.

## **7. CERTIFICATION OF ORGANIZATIONS WITH SEVERAL SITES**

- If several sites are operated, the following options can be agreed:
- An audit is carried out at each site and a separate certificate is issued for each site (multi-site certification according to the MSC CoC Standard, Basic Version 4.0)
- An audit is conducted at each site and a common certificate is issued for all sites (Multi-Site certification according to MSC CoC Standard, Basic Version 4.0)
- The requirements for group certification or Consumer Facing Organisation (CFO) are used.

### **7.1 Additional conditions for the certification of groups**

Group certifications are issued for organizations with several production sites or for organizations with branches that are only considered to be branch offices. In the case of group certification, the locations that are to be subjected to an audit are laid down based on a specified sampling procedure.



The basis of a group certification is fulfilment of all the provisions of the MSC standard, Group Version 1.0, and the requirements from the Certification Requirements V2.0. Some of the provisions with regard to administration and communication with the certification company can be collated together in the central office or the central organisation, which means that the duration of the surveillance and evaluation can be reduced, i.e. the central office provides the concept and the members of the group are responsible for the implementation.

## **8. MANAGEMENT OF NONCONFORMITIES**

Following completion of the individual site visits, the auditor informs the top management or the MSC/ASC coordinator of points which could be a source of future problems (Minors), or if nonconformities (Majors) are recognised, which could have a negative impact on the integrity of the chain of custody.

Minors: Points which can be the source of future problems, although they do not have a material impact on the chain of custody, are handled as small corrective actions (so-called minors), and the organization has to implement these actions before the first surveillance visit. If corrective actions from minors are not implemented, they can be handled as material corrective actions (majors) in the following surveillance audits. Correction of majors must be carried out within a month, in order not to place a certification at risk.

Majors: Nonconformities which could have a negative impact on the integrity of the chain of custody are designated as Majors. These Majors are handled as material corrective actions and your organization must implement these corrections within 3 months, before MSC CoC certification, including the certificate which has been approved by TÜV NORD CERT, can be issued for your organization. If no effective corrective actions are possible within 3 months, the certificate is withdrawn and a complete, new audit is necessary.

## **9. OTHER**

### **9.1 Traceability:**

MSC, MSC I or ASI can make direct inquiries from the certification service provider. The client is obliged to answer these inquiries within 15 days. The information and any documents that are required are submitted by TÜV NORD CERT in collaboration with the client. If the specified 15 day deadline is not adhered to, TÜV NORD CERT can issue a Major (addition to the previous audit report). After this, the client has a further period of 15 days in order to submit corresponding information or documents to the MSC, MSI or ASI via TÜV NORD CERT. If this second deadline is not fulfilled, the certificate can be suspended or withdrawn.

### **9.2 Requirements of MSC or MSC I:**

If contractual requirements between MSC, MSC I and the client of TÜV NORD CERT are not fulfilled, TÜV NORD CERT is entitled to withdraw or suspend the certificate.

### **9.3 Incorrect identification of MSC or ASC goods:**

If the client has sold products as MSC which are demonstrably not MSC or MSC certified, the client must inform TÜV NORD CERT GmbH within 2 days of identifying the mistake. The client must instigate effective corrections and corrective actions. This is audited by TÜV NORD CERT GmbH within 30 days. If no effective corrections or corrective actions have been implemented, the certificate can be suspended.

As a matter of principle, the client must introduce a procedure for handling non-conforming goods. This procedure must describe internal procedures as well as reporting to TÜV NORD CERT.

Products that are not correctly labelled shall not be sold, i.e. it is forbidden to sell them, until the certification status has been finally clarified. Incorrectly labelled goods must be repackaged and may absolutely not be associated with MSC/ASC or the corresponding logos. All affected customers and clients must be informed of the incorrectly labelled products within 4 days.

Meaningful records must be kept of such incidents and the correspondence with the client.

If there is evidence that non-MSC certified fish has been sold/labelled/traded as MSC goods without this fact being reported to TÜV NORD CERT and MSC, MSC shall be (i.e. must be) informed immediately and the certificate shall be suspended for at least 6 months. Following a review of the corrective actions and one announced and one unannounced on-site audit, the certificate can be reinstated.

### **9.4 Objection:**

If you are not in agreement with the result of the audit, you can register an objection with TÜV NORD CERT. It may be that the response of TÜV NORD CERT to your objection is not satisfactory. In this case, TÜV NORD CERT passes on your objection to the MSC. There, it is handled in accordance with the procedure for objections in association with the MSC traceability standard. The costs for this are charged directly by the MSC in accordance with the current valid fee schedule.