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Description of the certification/verification process of Catena-X Product Carbon Footprint Rulebook (CX-0029) and Catena-X and TFS PCF Verification Framework

The review process of product carbon footprint (PCF) programs and individual product carbon footprints, in accordance with **Catena-X Product Carbon Footprint Rulebook (CX-0029)** and **Catena-X and TFS PCF Verification Framework**, referred together as **Catena-X PCF guidelines**, consist mainly of the following phases:

- preliminary meeting and preparation of certification or verification;
- planning, including audit and sampling plan, strategic analysis and risk assessment;
- audit execution;
- reporting and, in case of a positive audit result, issuance of a review statement.

Catena-X guidelines define the “certification” of product carbon footprint (PCF) (automated) programs, and the “verification” of individual product carbon footprints. Therefore, the same terminology has been adopted herein.

1. PREPARATION

The pre-audit meeting and preparation stage are conducted in advance to the actual audit, to ensure the feasibility of the commissioned certification/verification. The applicant **must** define the product and the content of the certification/verification activity, such as: goal, intended use, targeted level of assurance for verifications, PCF elaboration criteria, objectives, timeline, scope of the certification/verification, and whether an onsite visit is intended or not. The achievable degree of trust is defined, as well as the admissible degree of insight to background data that can be given to the inspector.

The product carbon footprint **must** be calculated according to the requirements set in **Catena-X Product Carbon Footprint Rulebook (CX-0029)**.

2. PLANING

Before the certification/verification audit is started, the inspector will perform an assessment of the risk of material misstatement of the PCF. For the inspector to be able to understand the complexity involved in the review process, the applicant will provide within the deadlines set by the inspector, all necessary information, e.g. an overview of the product system, its system boundaries, and the relevant flows, an overview of the quantification methods, a screening analysis, and additional information in case further clarifications are needed. This information should be made available 4 weeks before the audit.

The inspector will use the results of the risk assessment to develop a certification/verification plan that describes the certification/verification activities and the audit schedule, as well as an evidence request list. Both documents will be made available to the applicant before the audit.

Before the audit, the inspector will analyze the documentation behind the system model in accordance with the current version of Catena-X guidelines.

3. EXECUTION

During the execution process, the inspector will follow the defined certification/verification plan and review the evidence according to the techniques described in the Catena-X guidelines. If the confidence level is downgraded during execution, the certification/verification plan shall be modified.

After the evidence is collected, the inspector will evaluate and document:

- Any material misstatement of the original content as well as of any changes made to the PCF program documentation during the certification/verification;
- whether the evidence is complete, consistent, accurate, comparable, and transparent, and assess any non-conformity with the defined criteria.

As indicated in Catena-X guidelines, after two unsuccessful feedback loops, the inspector will issue in principle a negative statement. A feedback loop is defined as asking formally via a request list for corrections of non-conformities within a deadline.

4. REPORTING AND CERTIFICATION / VERIFICATION STATEMENT

After a successful audit, or after two unsuccessful feedback loops, the inspector will draft the certification/verification report including an opinion, which serves as documented proof of the PCF program certification or PCF verification process. The inspector will document all performed certification/verification activities (e.g. sample selection, recalculation, sampling techniques, analytical procedures) and this documentation will be archived for at least 10 years.

Once the review process is finished, the certification/verification report is released, and **in case of a successful audit result**, a certification/verification statement will be issued. If the certification/verification is unsuccessful, no certification/verification statement will be issued, however re-application is possible after deviations have been corrected.