



# Quality Management Systems

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Version 2.2

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Last updated on November 2020 by EuCertPlast  
[info@eucertplast.eu](mailto:info@eucertplast.eu)

# Contents

1	Introduction.....	3
2	Scheme Managing Bodies .....	3
3	Accreditation Body.....	5
4	Removal of Accreditation .....	5
5	Quality Control .....	5
6	Certification Body.....	6
7	Eligibility to apply for Certification.....	6
8	Certification Procedure .....	6
9	Audit Correspondence.....	7
10	Register of Complaints and Appeals.....	8
11	Loss or Suspension of Certification & Changes in the Recycling Process.....	9
12	Renewal of Certification .....	10
13	Cost of the Audit.....	10
14	Communications.....	10
15	Use of logo.....	10
16	Annex 1: EuCertPlast Auditors Requirements.....	12
15	Annex 2: Example Letter for Change of Ownership .....	15

## 1 Introduction

This document describes quality management systems established to bring structure and transparency to the EuCertPlast Scheme. The chain of responsibilities as well as procedures related to governance; Certification Bodies; and accreditation of auditors can be found documented.

## 2 Scheme Managing Bodies

### 2.1 Steering Board

The Steering Board is the overarching decision-making body of EuCertPlast. It is entrusted with providing the general strategy and priorities of the Scheme. In addition, it shall consider and validate recommendations of the Technical Committee and manage the allocation of resources. The Steering Board is composed of founding members of the EuCertPlast Consortium.

The Steering Board is established to:

- Define priorities of the *EuCertPlast Consortium* (strategic level);
- Identify and monitor risks;
- Review and modify the EuCertPlast Consortium Agreement;
- Define and approve budgets;
- Review and validate the conclusions and recommendations of the Technical Committee;
- Monitor the quality of the EuCertPlast Certification Scheme and its management;
- Develop membership criteria;
- Promote EuCertPlast across Europe;
- Admit new members;
- Exclude members;
- Exclude auditors.

### 2.2 Technical Committee

The Technical Committee is established to develop and implement the technical aspects of the Scheme. The Technical Committee is composed of members designated representatives and guests.

The Technical Committee main responsibilities also address:

- Implement the decision of the Steering Board.
- Provide a secretariat support to the Steering Board.
- Review, develop and adapt the EuCertPlast Audit Scheme and other available documents
- Develop a methodology to revise the EuCertPlast Scheme;
- Develop methodologies;
- Sets up the accreditation procedure for auditors;
- Assess the fitness of auditors when a nonconformities dossier is presented;
- Develop the Certification Body requirements
- Bbenchmarks the scheme within the recycling industry.
- Organise a yearly workshop for the auditors to regularly improve the audit Scheme and keep the auditors informed.

### 2.3 Secretariat

EuCertPlast Secretariat offers support on management, organisation and communication tasks.

The Secretariat main responsibilities include:

- Act as a contact point between the Consortium, the Certification Body and recyclers;
- Act as a communication entry point for external stakeholders;
- Update the list of certified recyclers;
- Update the list of Certification Bodies;
- Update the EuCertPlast Audits database;
- Update all communication tools;
- Organise meetings.

### **3 Accreditation Body**

The Accreditation Body is an independent entity responsible for training and examination of candidates to become EuCertPlast Certification Bodies entitled to perform audits.

Candidates shall be selected by the Accreditation Body according to the eligibility criteria set by the EuCertPlast Auditors Requirements described in Annex 1.

### **4 Removal of Accreditation**

EuCertPlast reserves the right to remove a Certification Body's accreditation upon the filling of three nonconformities.

A dossier of nonconformities shall be presented to the Technical Committee for assessment and approval.

If the nonconformities are approved by the Technical Committee, it will result in an official proposal for removal of accreditation by the Steering Board.

On the other hand, an accredited auditor may terminate its collaboration with EuCertPlast by sending an email to [info@eucertplast.eu](mailto:info@eucertplast.eu). The name of the auditor shall be removed from the list of accredited auditors within five working days.

### **5 Quality Control**

The quality control is performed by an external Quality Controller. The Quality Controller is an independent figure established to ensure uniformity and coherence of the audit reports according to the EuCertPlast Scheme.

Initial audits must be reviewed anonymously by the Quality Controller to ensure uniformity and reliability of the Audit Report. In addition, spot checks reviews are selected at random on monitoring audits.

The Quality Controller may recommend the removal of an accredited auditor due to various nonconformities.

In case of reporting of non-conformities within a certified recycler, EuCertPlast will request a quality control of the audit. The Quality Controller may request records, statements and documentation as audit evidence to the certified recycler in order to verify the compliance of the certified recycler to the Audit Scheme. Both the auditor and certified recycler will be consulted and informed during this process. In case of a failed spot check audit, Certification will be revoked.

The Quality Controller is selected by the Steering Board. Its identity shall remain anonymous to ensure a quality procedure.

## **6 Certification Body**

A Certification Body is an external accredited auditor entitled to perform audits according to the EuCertPlast Scheme.

A Certification Body shall obtain its accreditation via an Accreditation Body. Additionally, Certification Bodies shall sign a code of conduct in order to perform EuCertPlast audits.

The list of accredited auditors may be found on the EuCertPlast website which is updated on a monthly basis.

Auditors shall inform EuCertPlast after a new request for Certification, monitoring audit or failure of certification from a recycler.

EuCertPlast organises a yearly Workshop to align views among the auditors and communicate new developments on the Scheme. The participation in these Workshops is highly recommended and mandatory at least once every 2 years.

## **7 Eligibility to apply for Certification**

Certification may only be granted for recycling processes capable of recycling pre-consumer and post-consumer plastic waste.

## **8 Certification Procedure**

Recyclers may apply for a EuCertPlast Certification via a Certification Body.

The auditing process takes place in 3 steps: Correspondence with the auditor prior Certification audit; onsite audit; and preparation of Audit Report, Summary Sheet and Certificate.

In order to obtain an EuCertPlast Certification for a recycler, the next steps shall be followed.

1. The recycler selects an accredited EuCertPlast auditor or it is assigned to one by one of the compliance schemes.
2. The auditor requests a plant code to EuCertPlast ([info@eucertplast.eu](mailto:info@eucertplast.eu))
3. The recycling plant is inspected on-site by the chosen auditor. The duration of the on-site visit should be of 1 day in case of an initial audit, or half a day if it is a monitoring audit (more information in the Auditor's Guidance.

4. Information is exchanged between the recycler and the auditor prior to and after the audit. In case of Monitoring Audit go to point 7.
5. In case of an Initial Audit, a third-party auditor checks anonymously all the reports from companies audited for the first time to ensure uniformity and reliability. In addition, spot checks will be done randomly on monitoring audits. The identity of the third party auditor shall remain anonymous to ensure a quality procedure.
6. According to point 5, the auditor shall request a third-party code to EuCertPlast ([info@eucertplast.eu](mailto:info@eucertplast.eu)). The code has to be placed in the anonymised report before sending it to the third party auditor ([audits@eucertplast.eu](mailto:audits@eucertplast.eu)). After the validation of the third party auditor go to point 7.
7. The auditor has to send a copy of the Summary Sheet (see annex 1) together with the contact details of the recycler to [info@eucertplast.eu](mailto:info@eucertplast.eu).
8. EuCertPlast will issue a Certificate (see annex 2) and send it to the auditor to be signed.
9. The auditor will scan and send back to EuCertPlast the signed Certificate.
10. EuCertPlast will send the Certificate to the company and inform them of the Certification approval officially. The Certification is valid for 1 year. The company will be published on the EuCertPlast website ([www.eucertplast.eu](http://www.eucertplast.eu)).

Certification has a validity of one year. After this time, it shall be renewed once every 12 months in order to be maintained.

Certified companies may be found online in the list of “Certified Recyclers” available in [www.eucertplast.eu](http://www.eucertplast.eu). Companies with expired certificates may also be found listed during a period of 3 months after expiration. The list is updated on a weekly basis under the condition that there is more than one update. This procedure ensures the anonymity of the reports.

Note that an audit shall only be valid if the certified company is listed on the list of certified recyclers and they received the Certificate from EuCertPlast.

## 9 Audit Correspondence

### 9.1 Pre audit correspondence

A letter will be sent prior to the audit giving an introduction to the EuCertPlast Audit Scheme and purpose of the audit. The letter shall also include the date, place, time and cost of the audit. The auditor must request details of any documents, licenses and other paperwork which will need to be reviewed.

The letter shall stress that the *Recycling Process* must be in operation at the time of the audit. Should any issues arise that mean this is not the case, it must be communicated to the auditor

so that the date of the audit can be rescheduled. In case the auditor has been appointed by a third party, he/she will have to make this clear on the letter.

Recycler and the auditor will have to sign a Non-Disclosure Agreement in order to safeguard the confidentiality of the information provided by *Recycler*.

## 9.2 Post audit outputs

All the Audit Reports must comply with the EuCertPlast Layout and Auditor's Guidance.

### 9.2.1 Outputs and timescales (successful audit)

- **Draft Report (electronic copy):** Issued no later than 3 weeks after the audit date. *Recycler* has 2 weeks to make comments.
- **Audit draft Report:** Sent by the auditor as an anonymous report to the EuCertPlast independent Third-Party verification auditor for quality checking if applicable (see Quality Management Systems).
- **Audit Report (secured electronic copy and printed copy x2):** The Auditor will make two versions of the Report: One including the content of the annex 2 of the Audit Report: Detailed Mass Balance of the Recycling Process. Another, not displaying the content of this annex.
- **Summary Sheet:** Issued no later than 6 weeks after the audit date. This document provides key information to EuCertPlast to elaborate the final Certificate and update the company's details on the website.

### 9.2.2 Outputs and timescales (unsuccessful audit)

Where *Recycler* has been unsuccessful in their application for accreditation then a report will be sent giving an overview of why *Certification* was not granted. The report would include an annex with the full results of the audit by category.

## 10 Register of Complaints and Appeals

In line with ISO 17067:2013<sup>1</sup>, appeals against a Certification decision or complaints about a Certification Body should firstly be sent to the Certification Body. Certification Bodies must address all inquiries and maintain records of them. Records of appeals and complaints should be shared with EuCertPlast.

If these appeals and complaints are not, or cannot be, resolved by the Certification Body, the issuer can address them directly to EuCertPlast via official letter. EuCertPlast will forward all appeals and complaints to the EuCertPlast Technical Committee who will discuss and address the appeal or complaint. EuCertPlast will respond to the complaint or appeal via official letter.

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<sup>1</sup> [ISO - ISO/IEC 17067:2013 - Conformity assessment — Fundamentals of product certification and guidelines for product certification schemes](#)



Additionally, reports of non-conformity of a certified company with the Audit Scheme must be addressed to EuCertPlast. EuCertPlast will consider these reports for a quality control spot check as described in Section 5. In case of a failed spot check audit, Certification will be revoked.

Reports of misuse of logo and Certificate must also be addressed to EuCertPlast. EuCertPlast will consider and verify these allegations. In case of verified misuse, EuCertPlast will demand the certified recycler to implement corrective actions. In case of failure to comply, the EuCertPlast Certification will be revoked.

Any proposals to be included in the Audit Scheme will be considered and discussed. The EuCertPlast Technical Committee will prepare a response for the issuer or Certification Body with the approval of the EuCertPlast Steering Board.

EuCertPlast must maintain a record of all complaints and appeals received and responses procured.

## **11 Loss or Suspension of Certification & Changes in the Recycling Process**

Under the terms of the Certification, a Recycler must inform the Certification Body when:

- *Recycler* has an operating or environmental permit removed (that is required by law) or not renewed. Action: removal of *Certification*.
- *Recycler* goes into bankruptcy. Action: removal of *Certification*.
- The recycler intends to, or has, shut down the certified *recycling process* for the foreseeable future (>6months). Action: Suspension of *Certification*.
- There is a significant change to *Recycling Process*. Action: Arrange the Audit Report.
- *Recycler* or *Recycling Process* has been sold to a different and unrelated company. Action: *Recycler* must inform the auditor and sign a Change of Ownership document to confirm that they do not intend to make significant changes to *Recycling Process*, or its management, that would result in the likely removal of *Certification* (with a focus on category 1 topics). An example letter to be sent to *Recycler* and form for them to sign is shown in Annex 2.

In case of non-compliance, due to any circumstance, with the current or past certificate, the certified recycler must immediately inform the related suppliers, customers and EuCertPlast by letter.

In case of a failed audit during a spot check quality control of the Audit Report, the Certification will be revoked.

All the provided data from *Recycler* must be provided in good faith, if not *Certification* will be revoked.

## 12 Renewal of Certification

A Monitoring Certification audit can be arranged 6 weeks prior to the expiry of the existing certificate. The date of the new certificate will be from the expiry date of the old one or the date of the audit (if this is after the expiry date).

## 13 Cost of the Audit

Certification is voluntary and paid for by the recycler.

## 14 Communications

The Certificate is a publicly available document.

The Summary Sheet and Audit Report should not disclose sensible commercial information such as customers, clients, detailed organigram and detailed plant layout. Any information detail of commercial sensibility of section 4.5 and section 5, will only be displayed in the annex 1 or 2 of the Audit Report: Detailed Audit Results and Detailed Mass Balance of the Recycling Process. The auditor will make two versions of the Audit Report: one including the content of these annex, and another not displaying it. *Recycler* will be free to disclose this information to any third party.

If not differently agreed with a third party, *Recycler* is the only one entitled to choose whether provide the report to their suppliers and customers.

*Recycler* and the auditor will have to sign a Non-Disclosure Agreement in order to safeguard the confidentiality of the information provided by *Recycler*.

Any data information disclosed in the Summary Sheet may be used for communication purposes on an aggregate basis in order to protect the confidentiality of the companies.

## 15 Use of logo

The use of the EuCertPlast logo and Certificate is reserved to certified recyclers during the validity of the Certificate. Companies that are NOT EuCertPlast certified are not allowed to use the EuCertPlast logo and Certificate for their products.

The EuCertPlast logo and Certificate can be used by certified companies in websites, presentations, brochures, and any other communication material. The EuCertPlast logo must be correctly legible when used.

The use of the EuCertPlast logo gives a visual identity to the recycling plastic sector and thus contributes to ensure a proper functioning of the recycling plants. Furthermore, it highlights the certified company engagement in sustainable waste management practices.

To protect the integrity of EuCertPlast, it is important that the logos and EuCertPlast Certificates are used correctly. If you think the logo is being misused, please report it immediately to [info@eucertplast.eu](mailto:info@eucertplast.eu)

## 16 Annex 1: EuCertPlast Auditors Requirements

### 16.1 Introduction

The goal of the EuCertPlast certification system is to recognize plastic recyclers operating according to high standards and to give confidence to suppliers that any input waste plastic they deliver to a certified recycler will be recycled according to the highest standards, with respect to the environment protection and national legislation.

One of the main components of the certification, according to the EuCertPlast certification scheme, is to evaluate the system in terms of suitability for processing of the specific material.

### 16.2 Requirements for auditors

To ensure a uniformly high standard of the EuCertPlast certification scheme, the auditors have to meet relevant personal and professional requirements. It is therefore indispensable that an auditor has the technical knowledge to assess the suitability of the plant regarding the specific input material. Specifically, the auditor must have above average knowledge on the below topics.

#### 16.2.1 Technical requirements

**1. Waste management basics:**

Knowledge about different possibilities of collecting waste (knowledge of all European collecting systems, as well as the common specifications with which the different types of plastic are traded) - such as recycling and disposal operations, recycling and sorting methods, recycling processes for different materials, waste logistics and materials science, treatment procedures.

**2. Basic knowledge of polymer chemistry:**

Chemical and physical properties of the most important polymers (PE, PP, PET, PVC...).

**3. Above-average knowledge of treatment technologies:**

- Processing technique (including all finishing stages up to polycondensation) based on the processed polymer.
- Standard equipment configurations regarding the different types of plastic.
- Evaluation of the recycling process for different materials.
- Problems occurring when processing contaminated or mixed material.
- Evaluation of the capacity calculated by the system data with regard to the plausibility and with respect to the units used.
- Evaluation whether the plant is a final recipient or merely a conditioner.
- Definition of the specific input for the recycling process.
- Dealing with the discharge of specification components – calculation of the portion.

### 11.2.2. Personal requirements

According to the EuCertPlast audit scheme the auditors must meet the following personal requirements:

- Successful completion of studies at a recognized university in the field of engineering, science, law or economics.
- Or successfully completed vocational training in the field of waste management or technicians specializing in environmental, waste and mechanical engineering or supply and waste disposal and at least three years (with higher education qualification) or a minimum of 5 years of self-employed activity (with training education) in the waste industry.
- Demonstrated competence by submitting proper documentation (e.g. CV, copies of certificates of all relevant academic and professional qualifications, work experience and experience as an expert, references, reports, training).
- The applicant must be more than 30 years old at the time of the application for first time accreditation.
- No reservations regarding the qualification of the applicant should exist. This includes sufficient practical experience in the field of activity and the scope of expertise.
- The applicant shows above average theoretical knowledge, practical skills and the ability to carry out an expert opinion / study.
- The applicant must have access to the facilities necessary to fulfil his duties as a publicly sworn expert.
- The applicant must be in good financial standing.
- The applicant has to offer guarantee that he will remain impartial, independent and that he will fulfil his duties and obligations as a publicly sworn expert.
- An expert with a current work or service obligation can only be publicly sworn, if he fulfils these requirements and additionally can prove that:
  - His work contract does not collide with the requirements and that he can personally fulfil his duties as an expert personally.
  - His work as an expert is not bound by any instructions and that he can identify his services as individual, independent work.
  - His employer is willing to grant sufficient time to perform his expert duties.

## EuCertPlast – Quality Management Systems 2.2

- The applicant must provide a list of all certifications acquired in the past three years and the three latest certificates he has issued.
- The applicant has to have passed the training on the EuCertPlast certification scheme.

## 15 Annex 2: Example Letter for Change of Ownership

[Address of Auditor]

[Address of Recycler]

[Date]

Dear [Recycler],

Thank you for informing us [or it has come to our attention] that your recycling facility based at [address of *Certified* recycling site] has changed ownership. The EuCertPlast certification is granted based on the type of recycling operation and on the associated management systems. As such, please could you either contact us to discuss any planned changes to the recycling process or sign the attached form to confirm that the plant will continue to be operated in line with the terms of the certification. In particular, I would draw your attention to the following which may change your certification status:

- Changes to the output of the recycling process;
- Changes to the waste plastic type you are able to process;
- Changes to the input capacity of more than 50%;
- A planned shutdown of the recycling process of greater than 6 months;
- You believe the response or result of any 'category 1' item in the last audit (see the attached audit results) may have changed.

Changes to the recycling process may not necessarily affect the certification status; however, an additional audit may be required.

Where no changes have been made (or are planned) to the recycling process at the aforementioned site then please sign the attached document and return it to the address shown above within 30 days of the receipt of this letter. If you have any questions or wish to discuss this matter then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

[Auditor]

**EuCertPlast - Change of Ownership Form:**

Certificate Number:

Name of New Owners:

Name of Previous Owners:

Address to which the certification applies:

Waste plastic to which this certification applies:

End product(s) manufactured:

Date of expiry of current certificate:

As the new owners of the aforementioned plastic recycling site, I can confirm that no significant changes have been made (or will be made prior to the next EuCertPlast audit) to the recycling process or its management processes. I understand this includes changes to the type of waste plastics that can be accepted, the capacity (no changes > 50% of the previous certified input capacity) or to the output of the recycling process. I have reviewed the results of the last EuCertPlast audit and can confirm that no action has been taken or is planned that is likely to change the results of Category 1 items.

Signed on behalf of the new owners:

[Name and title]

[Date]

[Company Name]