

Marine Stewardship Council

MSC Chain of Custody Standard

Version 2 – August 2005

Committees responsible for this Standard

This standard is intended to be used on a global basis by MSC accredited third party certifiers to undertake the certification of chain of custody verification for fish and fish products originating from fisheries certified to the MSC Principles and Criteria for well managed fisheries.

This standard is intended to be a living document and will be reviewed from time to time.

This standard was prepared by the MSC Executive and first published as a draft document in December 1999. The MSC Technical Advisory Board is the committee with the overall authority for the issuing and amendment of this manual.

Amendments Issued Since Publication		
Version	Date	Description Of Amendment
Draft placed in public domain December 1999		
1	August 2000	Issue 1 - Formal issue
2	August 2005	Major review of requirements

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Definitions

For all definitions refer to ISO 9000:2000 and MSC Definitions

Abbreviations Used

CoC: Chain of Custody

References

MSC Principles and Criteria
MSC Fisheries Certification Methodology
MSC Chain of Custody Certification Methodology
MSC Definitions
ISO 9000:2000 Quality Management Systems – Fundamentals and Vocabulary
ISO9001:2000 Quality Management Systems – Requirements
Codex Alimentarius Recommended International Code of Practice General
Principles of Food Hygiene

Foreword

The objective of chain of custody certification is to provide an assurance for suppliers to demonstrate and claim that products originate from an MSC certified fishery and minimise the risk of public confusion between fish and fish products that have not.

To achieve this a full product traceability system is required so products can be traced from their suppliers and tracked to their buyers.

This standard is designed to provide a high level of confidence that products carrying the MSC Logo originate from an MSC Certified Fishery while not imposing unreasonable compliance costs on the industry.

The scope of this standard is the requirement for maintaining the chain of custody for products from fisheries certified to the MSC Standard. It does not cover issues such as food safety or quality.

MSC encourages all organisations to implement and maintain the appropriate food safety and quality programmes based on international models such as the Codex Alimentarius Recommended International Code of Practice General Principles of Food Hygiene, including HACCP, and / or ISO 9001:2000, Quality Management Systems – Requirements.

Section 1: Control system

- 1.1 The organisation shall have a management system which addresses all the sections below.
- 1.2 Unless specifically required in later sections, the management system does not have to be documented, unless the absence of documentation will create a risk to determining the certified status of the product.
- 1.3 The organisation shall be responsible for any work conducted by its subcontractors and shall retain full control over work performed by them and be able to demonstrate that traceability has been maintained and the requirements of this standard are met

Note: A management system is defined as a set of interrelated or interacting elements to establish policy and objectives and achieve those objectives (from ISO 9000:2000).

Section 2: Confirmation of inputs

- 2.1 The organisation shall operate a system for assuring that where specified, received products are certified as coming from a fishery certified to the MSC Standard or a CoC certified supplier.
- 2.2 A record of all MSC certified inputs received shall be maintained, showing the name of the supplier, their MSC CoC certificate number, evidence of certificate validity and sufficient other details to allow the tracing of those inputs back to their supplier if required.

Section 3: Separation and/or demarcation of certified and non-certified fish inputs

- 3.1 The organisation shall operate a system to ensure that when certified fish inputs are received they are clearly identified at all stages of their storage, processing, packaging, labelling or handling.
- 3.2 Certified fish inputs shall be kept separate from non-certified fish inputs throughout processing or manufacturing. This may be achieved by:
 - 3.2.1 physical separation of certified and non-certified production lines;
 - 3.2.2 temporal separation of certified and non-certified production runs;

- 3.3** Certified and non-certified fish inputs shall not be mixed.
- 3.4** Flavourings¹ made of non-certified fish inputs may be used where flavourings made from certified fish inputs are not commercially available². Should non-certified fish flavourings be used, the maximum amount of fish flavouring that is allowed is 2% of the total fish content of the finished product. The method of calculating the percentages of ingredients is set out in Annex 1 of this Standard.
- 3.5** Where non-certified fish flavourings are used, the product name shall not refer to the name of the non-certified species.
- 3.6** Data shall be recorded to allow confirmation of the volumes and/or weights of certified and non-certified fish inputs and outputs over a specified production period.

Section 4: Secure product labelling

- 4.1** The organisation shall operate a secure system for the production, storage and application of product labels bearing a claim of MSC certified status or the MSC Logo, and will ensure that only MSC certified product is labelled as such.

Section 5: Identification of certified outputs

- 5.1** Certified fish and fish products shall be labelled or otherwise be identified (including the organisation's Chain of Custody Certificate number) in a manner that ensures traceability is maintained during packaging, storage, handling and delivery.
- 5.2** The organisation shall operate a system that allows any product or batch of products sold by the organisation as certified to be tracked to a sales invoice issued by the organisation.
- 5.3** The organisation shall operate a documented system to ensure that certified fish and fish products have information related to the product that allows full tracing and tracking of the product, including:
- 5.2.1 a description of the product(s) and, where appropriate, batch identifiers;

¹ flavouring: an input added to food primarily for the savour it imparts

² commercially available: the ability to obtain a production input in the required form, quality and quantity

- 5.2.2 a record of the volume/quantity of the product(s) and to whom it was sold or shipped and the date of shipment or sale.

Section 6: Record keeping

- 6.1** The organisation shall maintain appropriate records of all inputs, processing and outputs of certified fish and fish products.
- 6.2** The records shall be sufficient to trace back from any given certified output to the certified inputs.
- 6.3** The records shall be sufficient to allow the conversion rates for the manufacture of certified outputs from given certified inputs over any given period to be determined.
- 6.4** Records shall be maintained for a minimum of three years.

ANNEX 1: Calculation of percentage of certified and non-certified fish inputs (for flavouring purposes)

The percentage of non-certified fish flavouring ingredients in a product carrying the MSC label shall be calculated by:

- a) Dividing the total net weight (excluding water and salt) of non-certified fish flavouring ingredients by the total weight (excluding water and salt) of the combined certified fish and non-certified fish flavourings in the finished product; or
- b) Dividing the fluid volume of all non-certified fish flavouring ingredients (excluding water and salt) by the fluid volume of the combined certified fish and non-certified fish flavourings in the finished product (excluding water and salt) if the product and ingredients are liquid. If the liquid product is identified as being reconstituted from concentrates, the calculation should be made based on single-strength concentrations of the ingredients and finished product;
- c) For products containing non-certified fish flavouring ingredients in both solid and liquid form, dividing the combined weight of the non-certified fish flavouring's solid ingredients and the weight of the liquid ingredients (excluding water and salt) by the total weight (excluding water and salt) of the combined certified fish and non-certified fish flavourings in the finished product;
- d) The percentage of all non-certified flavouring ingredients in a seafood product shall be rounded up to the nearest whole number;
- e) The percentage shall be determined by the organisation who affixes the MSC label on the consumer package. The organisation may use information provided by other suppliers in determining the percentage.

Products with multiple ingredients shall not include certified and non-certified forms of the same flavouring ingredient. They shall not be produced using non-certified fish flavouring ingredients if certified fish flavouring ingredients are commercially available.