



RULES FOR THE CONCESSION AND MAINTENANCE OF CERTIFICATION OF SELF-DECLARED ENVIRONMENTAL CLAIMS IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE ISO 14021 STANDARD

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CHAPTER 1 – OVERVIEW

1.1 SCOPE

These Rules establish the procedures applied by RINA for the issue of certification of self-declared environmental claims and how to apply for, obtain, maintain and renew certification, as well as its possible suspension, withdrawal and renunciation.

RINA applies its current fees and guarantees fairness and uniformity of application.

RINA may legitimately refuse requests related to organisations and/or their products/activities that are subject to restriction, suspension or proscription by a public authority.

1.2 CRITERIA

The certification system covered by these Rules constitutes an application of the ISO 14021 Standard for the certification of an organisation's self-declared environmental claims.

Thanks to this certification, an organisation can get some information of an environmental nature certified, relevant to the compostability, degradability, energy saving, reduced energy consumption, design for disassembly, recyclability, etc. of its products.

Certification is applied at product level. An organisation can have one or more products to which one or more environmental claims apply.

Any organisation can access the RINA services described in these Rules and access is not conditional on whether the organisation belongs to an association or group, provided it comes under the scope of application of the certification scheme.

With reference to certification activities, RINA will verify applicability to the applicant organisation based on the Standard in force and it will apply its current fees, guaranteeing fairness and uniform application to each type of product.

In connection with the implementation of these Rules, RINA does not provide consultancy services to organisations, neither for the implementation of procedures to guarantee compliance with the requirements of the reference Standard.

Any additional requests for clarification concerning the contents of these Rules may be made to RINA

1.3 TERMINOLOGY

The terminology used in these Rules is the same as that used in the reference documents normally available on the websites of the supervisors' body of the schemes, of the accreditation bodies or of the competent authorities, except for:

- CA: Corrective Action;
- CAR: Corrective Action Request;
- CL: Clarification Request.

1.4 PRINCIPLES

RINA recognises key guiding principles of the validation, assessment and verification processes and conducts all the activities to ensure accuracy, conservatism, relevance, credibility, reliability, completeness, consistency, transparency, impartiality, independence, safeguarding against conflicts of interest and confidentiality.



CHAPTER 2 – CONTRACT REVIEW

2.1 REQUEST

Organisations which wish to obtain certification of their self-declared environmental claims are to provide RINA with the main data of their organisation/production, location of the site or sites where the product to be certified is produced, certification scope (product(s) to be certified, self-declared environmental claims to be verified) by filling in the “Informative Questionnaire” (available on request) as well as a document describing the production cycle which highlights the input and output of the production process, the production cycle time, calculations made (if relevant to the claim) and pertinent information in support of the claim. On the basis of this information, RINA will prepare a quotation containing the following data:

- name and address of the applicant;
- type of company;
- list of product(s);
- list and type of self-declared environmental claims.

2.2 CONTRACT

Organisations must formalise their order by sending RINA the request form or a contract duly signed by the Chief Executive Officer or authorised representative, by way of a power of attorney.

On receipt of the request form or the signed contract and the related documentation/annexes, and after a preliminary review to check their completeness, RINA appropriately informs the organisation of its acceptance of the order.

Only after RINA notifies to the organisation the acceptance of the order,

the contract between RINA and the organization is considered stipulated.

The contract stipulated between RINA and the organisation covers:

- Document/desk review of the organisation documents;
- Follow-up actions (on-site visit/assessment and telephone or email interviews)
- Any additional services stated in the offer.

CHAPTER 3 – SELECTION OF THE TEAM

3.1 TEAM ASSIGNMENT

RINA selects the team who performs the activity and the personnel who performs the independent technical review on the basis of the knowledge, skills and competency required, taking into consideration the verification criteria/requirements of the agreed scheme.

The team is fully independent of all aspects of the assertion and have not assisted in the design of any assertion components or of the GHG information system, according to the procedures stated by the Committee for the Safeguard of Impartiality.

3.2 TEAM COMMUNICATION

Before the activity begins, RINA notifies to the organisation in writing of the names of the team members; the organisation may object to these appointments, within 5 working days of the notification, giving their reasons.

RINA reconstitutes the team in response to any valid objection.



CHAPTER 4 - SELF-DECLARED ENVIRONMENTAL CLAIMS CERTIFICATION PROCESS

4.1 – DOCUMENT REVIEW

The following documentation is to be sent to RINA together with the request or, at any rate, before the on-site audit:

- Environmental claim self-declared in accordance with the reference standard and explanatory statement (if relevant);
- Documentation describing the production methods of the products object of the claims (e.g. manual, technical specification, procedures, etc.);
- Calculation sheets to support the claim (if relevant to the claim);
- Any additional document requested by the audit team.

The Team examines the documents to ensure they meet the self-declared environmental claim verification criteria and check, if relevant, the calculations made in support of the claim.

At the discretion of the audit team, the calculation sheets in support of the claim may also be examined during the on-site audit.

Any findings are reported in a preliminary audit report which, at the discretion of the audit team, may be sent in advance to the organisation prior to the on-site audit.

4.2 – VERIFICATION OF PROCESS

The audit team prepares and sends the audit plan to the organisation.

The on-site audit is carried out by a qualified team which may also consist of just one person and aims to assess the accuracy of the contents of the self-declared environmental claim in relation

to the requirements of the ISO 14021 Standard. The assessment is made by interviewing the personnel responsible for preparing the claim, checking the production cycle and any other documentation in support of the claim and of the resolution of findings arising from the document review.

4.3 – CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUESTS, CLARIFICATION REQUESTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In the back office, the previously drawn up report is updated, integrating and closing findings, based on the outcome of the on-site audit.

Non-compliance with a requirement of the ISO 14021 Standard and/or errors in the assumptions, data or calculations is considered a Corrective Action Request (CAR).

A clarification request (CL) is issued if there is insufficient information or if the information is not sufficiently clear to decide whether the applicable requirements have been properly implemented.

A suggestion for improvement which may be taken into account for future updating of the self-declared environmental claim is considered a recommendation (R).

All CAR and CL are to be positively resolved to enable the certification process to continue.

4.4 INDEPENDENT TECHNICAL REVIEW

If the outcome of the audit is positive, the documentation produced by the audit team is submitted to independent technical review.

The technical expert responsible for the final review of the documentation prepared by the audit team may request additional clarifications or modify the classification of one or more findings identified by the verifiers.



If a decision not to issue the certificate is taken, RINA will inform the organisation in writing, giving its reasons.

The organisation is required to pay for the activities carried out as per the accepted quotation, even if the outcome of the certification process is negative.

RINA reserves the right to withhold or postpone its certification decision in order to take into due consideration new or additional information made available to it and which was not taken into account in its assessment report and which, in the opinion of RINA, could affect the outcome of its assessment.

4.5 ISSUE OF THE OPINION

On successful completion of the checks, RINA will issue a certificate of compliance with the ISO 14021 Standard.

The outcome of the decision is communicated to the applicant and the certificate is made available for downloading from the RINA client member area.

4.6 SUPPLEMENTARY AUDITS

Supplementary on-site audits may be carried out in the following cases:

- extension of the certification scope (in the case of new products and/or self-declared environmental claims);
- pre-audit request to assess whether the company is ready for the certification audit;
- any communications received by RINA concerning the organisation's non-compliance with one or more requirements of the standard.

In particular, for each change for which RINA requires a supplementary audit, the organisation is not to issue any certificates concerning certified products derived from such changes until RINA has informed the organisation that it may.

If the audit outcome is positive, RINA will modify the scope of the previously issued certificate, require the organisation to eliminate all copies of the existing certificate in its possession and will issue a new certificate.

CHAPTER 5 – CONTRACTUAL CONDITIONS

With reference to the contractual conditions, the provisions contained in the RINA document "General contract conditions governing system, product and personnel certification" apply, in the edition in force available from the site www.rina.org.



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Technical rules