



# RULES FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF THE WATER FOOTPRINT

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Technical Rules

RULES FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF THE WATER FOOTPRINT

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## CHAPTER 1 – AIM

### 1.1

These Rules define the procedures applied by RINA for the issue of the water footprint certificate.

### 1.2

The terminology used in these Rules complies with the terminology contained in the ISO 14046:2014 standard.

For the definition of the terms used in these Rules, reference is to be made to the ISO 14046:2014 standard.

## CHAPTER 2 – GENERAL

### 2.1

The certification system foreseen by these Rules constitutes implementation of the ISO 14046:2014 Standard for the assessment of the water footprint.

Thanks to this assessment, an organisation can calculate the potential environmental impacts related to the water footprint regarding its products or services or the organisation itself, by implementing a life cycle approach.

### 2.2

Access to the RINA services covered by these Rules is open to all organisations and does not depend on whether or not they belong to an association or group.

For the certification activities, RINA will apply its current fees, guaranteeing fairness and uniform application to every type of product/process/activity.

### 2.3

With regard to the implementation of these Rules, RINA does not provide consultancy services to organisations for the calculation of the water footprint.

In order to start the water footprint certification process, an organisation is to:

- define the goal and scope of its water footprint;
- determine the system boundary and choose the indicators on the basis of the goal of the water footprint in compliance with the requirements of the above-mentioned Standard;
- calculate the potential environmental impacts related to the indicators chosen;
- accept what is required by the Standard and by these Rules and what is communicated by RINA.

At the request of the organisation, a preliminary on-site audit may be performed to check the general state of implementation of the reference standard.

Organisations can ask RINA for any further clarification concerning the content of these Rules.

## CHAPTER 3 – CERTIFICATION PROCESS OF THE WATER FOOTPRINT FOR PRODUCTS, SERVICES AND ORGANISATIONS

### 3.1

Organisations which intend to request water footprint certification for products, services or for the organisation itself, are to provide RINA with the main data of their organisation/production, the location of the site or sites where the product to be certified is produced, certification scope (product(s) subject to certification), the reference standard(s), by filling in the "Informative Questionnaire" (available on request), on the basis of which RINA will prepare a quotation, and in which the following information is to be given:

- applicant's name and address;
- type of company;
- number of employees;
- list of products/services to be assessed;
- reference standard(s);
- system boundary;
- complexity of the products/services (number of raw materials and components);
- type of water footprint (complete or for specific indicators);
- availability of the water footprint to interested third parties;
- accuracy of the procedures for data collection, filing and management;
- way the results are presented.

RINA performs an initial analysis during which it checks:

- any fields in the informative questionnaire which have not been filled in or which need to be clarified with the client;
- that the necessary resources exist to carry out the assessments in the time foreseen;
- that it has the qualified resources able to perform the audits, bearing in mind the organisation's sector and the language used by the applicant requesting certification (identifying the need for an interpreter if necessary).

### 3.2

Once the quotation has been prepared, an organisation formalises its request by sending RINA the "Water footprint assessment request" form (available on request), which is to contain the name of the organisation, the product(s), process(es), activities, system boundary and indicators to be checked.

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On receipt of the request form and having checked that it is complete, RINA will send a written confirmation to the organisation accepting the request and asking for the necessary documentation to be sent in order to perform the water footprint assessment.

The organisation's request and pertinent acceptance by RINA contractually formalise the activities undertaken by the latter in accordance with these Rules.

### 3.3 – GOAL OF THE ASSESSMENT

The purpose of the assessment is to check that:

- the methods used to determine the calculated water footprint comply with the requirements of the ISO 14046 standard;
- the methods and modelling of the inventory used to make the water footprint assessment are scientifically and technologically valid;
- the data and results of the model are appropriate and reasonable in relation to the goal and scope of the study;
- the interpretations reflect the limitations identified and the goal of the study;
- the water footprint report is transparent and in line with the goal and scope of the study.

### 3.4 – DOCUMENT REVIEW

RINA carries out a preliminary document review prior to assessment at the production site or at the location where the service subject to assessment is provided.

For this purpose, the organisation is to make available to RINA the product/service/organisation water footprint.

In general, the documents to be provided by the organisation include the following:

- product/service/organisation water footprint report in accordance with the reference standard;
- third party report, if appropriate.

As well as the above-mentioned documentation, RINA may, at its discretion, request to examine additional documentation it considers necessary for the assessment.

The team will re-examine the documents to ensure they meet the assessment criteria/requirements of the agreed scheme.

### 3.5 – ON-SITE AUDIT

Following the document review, the team will identify additional issues and aspects (objective evidence) to be discussed with the organisation.

The date of the on-site audit will be agreed, sufficiently in advance, with the organisation and will be officially confirmed at least one week before.

The organisation may object to the appointed audit team members, giving their reasons, within 3 working days of the communication of their appointment.

RINA appoints the audit team members and provides them with the information needed to carry out the assessment. On the basis of the information received, the audit plan will be prepared and sent to the organisation.

During the audit, the team will assess the consistency between the water footprint and the pertinent documentation, mainly concerning:

- functional unit;
- system boundary;
- data collection, inventory and data quality assessment;
- input/output flows and their modelling in the software for the analysis;
- calculation of water footprint indicators;
- characterisation factors;
- interpretation of the results.

### 3.6 – DRAFT ASSESSMENT REPORT

Following the on-site audit, the team will provide the organisation with a draft assessment report summarising the findings which need further processing, investigation or integration by the organisation in order to confirm that the assessment meets the criteria/requirements of the agreed scheme.

The organisation is to provide the additional clarifications or make the necessary improvements to the report and documentation to obtain a positive outcome of the assessment.

### 3.7 – FINAL ASSESSMENT REPORT

On receipt of the replies given by the organisation and documents amended following the findings, the Draft Assessment Report will be reviewed so as to reflect the replies given by the organisation and the team's comments in relation to each finding. The Final Assessment Report will be prepared and will include the final assessment opinion.

The final assessment report will be issued once all the findings in the draft assessment report have been resolved and accepted by RINA.

If the findings are not satisfactorily resolved and accepted:

- after 3 months from the first issue of the Draft Assessment Report or
- after more than 3 revisions

RINA reserves the right to terminate the contract or to issue the Final Assessment Report and a negative opinion, in agreement with the organisation, without prejudice to the right to receive the agreed fee.

### 3.8 – INDEPENDENT TECHNICAL REVIEW

The final assessment report prepared by the team will be subject to an independent technical review to ensure that the assertion meets all the requirements. Following this review, comments could be made which require the organisation to further revise its documentation.

The team will revise the report to take account of any comments arising from the independent technical review.

After the successful independent technical review, RINA will make a certification decision.

The result of the decision will be communicated to the applicant.

### 3.9 – STATEMENT

Once the assessment process has been successfully concluded, an assessment statement is issued in line with the assessment criteria/requirements of the agreed scheme.

### 3.10 –SUBSEQUENT ASSESSMENTS

The statement is valid for one year. If an organisation wishes to have its updated water footprint assessed again the following year, a new assessment process will be started. RINA will assess, on a case by case basis, in relation to the importance of the changes made, whether to perform another on-site audit or only a document audit.

### 3.11 – FINDINGS

In relation to both document review and on-site audit, the organisation will receive a report containing any findings. The organisation is required to fill in the appropriate field in the report relevant to action taken to resolve the findings highlighted.

There are 3 types of findings: CAR (Corrective Action Request), CL (Clarification), R (Recommendation).

A corrective action request (CAR) is issued if one of the following situations occurs:

- the requirements have not been met;
- errors have been made in the assumptions, data or calculations.

A clarification request (CL) is issued if there isn't enough information or the information isn't sufficiently clear to decide whether the applicable requirements have been correctly implemented. A CL could thus lead to a CAR, if the clarification were to bring to light non-compliance with a requirement of the Standard or

be positively resolved if the additional information provided were to demonstrate compliance with the reference standard.

A recommendation (R) is a starting point for improvement, which can be taken into consideration for future water footprint updating.

### 3.12 –SUPPLEMENTARY AUDITS

An organisation is to inform RINA of any changes or need to extend the scope of its statement.

Supplementary on-site audits can be performed in the following cases:

- extension of the assessment scope (in the case of new products/services subject to assessment);
- pre-audit request to determine whether the organisation is ready for assessment;
- any communications received by RINA concerning non-compliance by the assessed organisation with one or more requirements of the Standard.

In particular, for each change for which RINA is requested to carry out a supplementary audit, the organisation cannot issue any statement related to assessed products until RINA has notified the organisation that it can.

If the outcome of the audit is positive, RINA will amend the scope of the previously issued statement, request the organisation to eliminate the copies of its previous statement and issue a new statement.

## CHAPTER 4 - LIABILITY

The organisation undertakes to make all the documentation required for the assessment available to the RINA personnel.

RINA has sole responsibility for the decision on whether to issue conformity statements.

RINA is not liable for any incomplete or non dispatch of documentation or for any untruthful documentation.

RINA checks the soundness of the water footprint calculation but does not enter into the merits of the technological solutions adopted.

Certification does not encompass compliance with the legal requirements applicable to the products, processes or services provided and neither does it exempt them from being met.

Therefore, through this certification, RINA excludes all liability and obligation of guarantee concerning compliance with any law applicable to the product/process provided by the organisation.

RINA cannot be held liable for the supply of defective products to third parties nor for the organisation's sporadic or continuous behaviour, not in compliance with the law and/or the rules, or for any damage associated with them.

## **CHAPTER 5 – RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF A CERTIFIED ORGANISATION**

### **5.1**

An organisation has the right to publicise the fact that it has obtained the statement of compliance of the water footprint, provided this is done in accordance with the rules of the reference standard.

### **5.2**

An organisation is:

- not to use the statement of compliance for products/services/organisations which are not part of the assessment such that a similar doubt may be induced;
- not to use the statement of compliance of the product/service/organisation such as to discredit RINA and not to make any assertion concerning the statement of compliance of the product/service/organisation which RINA could consider misleading or unauthorised;
- only to use certification to indicate that the products/services/organisations have been certified in compliance with the specific standard;
- to endeavour to ensure that no certificate, report or part thereof is used in a misleading way;
- not to make any statement of compliance (or close compliance) with the requirements in the area included within the scope of assessment until and unless the certificate has been assigned;
- not to transfer the certificate acquired except in the case of transfer or transformation of the organisation. In this case, the organisation undertakes to promptly inform RINA, which will take note after having checked there are no changes to the water footprint calculation;
- to provide adequate assistance to the assessment team during the audit, also allowing them access to the premises and offices, data, software and production sites subject to assessment;
- to implement the CA proposed in relation to the findings highlighted during the audit;
- to comply with the contractual economic conditions even if the certificate is not assigned;
- to guarantee the safety of the RINA auditors during the on-site audit.

## **CHAPTER 6 – CONFIDENTIALITY**

The information acquired during the activities performed by RINA and related to assessment of the water footprint, is considered and treated as confidential.

## **CHAPTER 7 – APPEALS**

### **7.1**

An organisation may appeal against the decisions made by RINA, explaining their reasons within 30 days of notification of the decision.

RINA will examine the appeal within 2 months of its submission, consulting, if necessary, the organisation's representatives.

### **7.2**

All expenses related to the appeal will be charged to the organisation unless there are good grounds to the contrary.

## **CHAPTER 8 – CONTRACTUAL CONDITIONS**

With regard to the contractual conditions, reference is to be made to the requirements of the edition in force of the RINA document "General contract conditions governing system, product and personnel certification", available from the site [www.rina.org](http://www.rina.org).



# RULES FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF THE WATER FOOTPRINT

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