

# Procedure 1: Certification Body Approval for CSI Fisheries Standards

Certified Seafood International (CSI) Certification Program

Fully Aligned to ISO 17065



**Procedure 1 Version 5.3: Certification Body Approval  
for CSI Fisheries Standards, April 2025**

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## Procedure 1: Certification Body Approval for CSI Fisheries Standards

### 1. Purpose

The Certified Seafood International (CSI) Program consists of Fisheries Standards applicable to wild-capture fisheries assessment globally and a standard for Chain of Custody certification for seafood through the supply chain.

This document describes the requirements for Certification Bodies to become approved to audit and certify applicants to the Fishery Management component of the Program.

The Fisheries Management Standard is a third party, independent and accredited certification Program owned and operated by Certified Seafood International, Inc. (CSI). The Program provides assurance that seafood is sourced from fisheries that have been certified to CSI Fisheries Standards.

### 2. Scope

The scope of Procedure 1 cover Certification Body registration, scope of accreditation, internal management systems, assessor competency requirements, requirements for subcontractors, contractual arrangements, registration with Accreditation Body, and communication.

### 3. Process

#### 3.1 Registration

Prior to applying to assess against the Fisheries Standard a Certification Body must be accredited to ISO 17065 “General requirements for bodies operating certification systems” or have been approved by another fishery management certification scheme as a certification body by a recognized Accreditation Body (defined as a member of International Accreditation Forum (IAF) and a signatory to the IAF Multilateral Recognition Arrangement) that has entered a memorandum of understanding with CSI to provide annual reports to CSI on accreditation activities including summary of accreditation activity, general program functioning, identified opportunities for program improvement, reviews of sanctions, and other related issues.

Upon request, CSI will provide any party with a copy of this Procedure and other relevant documents concerning Certification Body approval and duties.

Only Certification Bodies that are registered and formally recognized by CSI are authorized to quote for, and to conduct assessments against, the Fisheries Standard.

A registered Certification Body may apply to CSI to extend its scope to include another Standard following the same process used for the initial registration.

#### 3.2 Extension to Accredited Scope for The Fisheries Standard

Evaluations against Fisheries Standards must be carried out in accordance with the requirements of ISO 17065 and as a consequence it is a prerequisite for all applicant Certification Bodies to be accredited to ISO 17065. In addition, applicant Certification Bodies are required to demonstrate that their scope of accreditation for ISO 17065 expressly covers CSI Fisheries Standards. When a Certification Body’s scope of accreditation does not explicitly identify the CSI Fisheries Standard as falling within its accredited scope for ISO 17065, CSI requires that the Certification Body must obtain an extension to scope to encompass the CSI Fisheries Standard.

Applicant Certification Bodies shall apply directly to their Accreditation Body for such extensions to accredited

scope.

The applicant Certification Body must provide documentation that confirms that they have a current and active application in progress, as demonstrated by: An active application to its Accreditation Body for full accreditation that includes the CSI Fisheries Standard, or an extension of the current scope of its ISO 17065 accreditation to include the CSI Fisheries Standard.

Until full accreditation is achieved the Certification Body's certificates under the CSI Program must not contain the accreditation logo.

**3.3 Certification Bodies will be allowed an agreed amount of certification activity to allow for accreditation to be facilitated. Certification Bodies in the accreditation evaluation process can issue non-accredited certificates. [Named Certification Body Representative](#)**

On its application to CSI to become an approved Certification Body for CSI Fisheries Standards, the applicant Certification Body will name a Program Manager (or Certification Body Program Manager) responsible for overseeing all aspects of the Fisheries Standard accreditation. This representative shall have a thorough knowledge of the Fisheries Standard and the CSI Program by attending a formal training session operated by the CSI team. In the event that this named representative leaves the employment of the Certification Body, CSI shall be informed accordingly and provided with the name and details of his or her replacement within five working days.

**3.4 [Certification Body Management System](#)**

As part of the approval process, the Certification Body shall provide evidence to CSI to show that it has a fully documented and implemented management system meeting the requirements of ISO 17065, including:

**3.4.1**

- a) A quality manual, which is available to all staff and subcontractors working on certification under the CSI Program;
- b) A detailed management review process to ensure continuous improvement;
- c) A documented recruitment procedure, that includes selection, initial training, ongoing training, and performance assessment for relevant staff and assessors;
- d) Document control procedures satisfying ISO 17065, including procedures for approval, re-approval, appropriate and limited distribution, and preventing unintended uses; and
- e) Policies and procedures in response to appeals and complaints.

**3.4.2 The quality manual shall:**

- a) Include a quality policy statement, defining management's commitment to achieving its certification quality objectives, and quality procedures,
- b) Describe the management of the certification process, including technical review and control of certification,
- c) Identify and document ownership, have a clear organizational structure, and define key procedural documents, job functions, responsibilities, and reporting relationships of staff engaged in delivering their certification services, and
- d) Establish procedures for preventing, identifying, and managing non-conformities in the Certification Body's operations.

### 3.4.3 The Certification Body must:

- a) Maintain comprehensive records demonstrating competency and impartiality for all staff involved in CSI certification, including certifications, training, experience, affiliations, and relevant relationships and associations.
- b) Develop and adhere to a detailed procedure for the selection and oversight of subcontractors and maintain a list of all approved subcontractors and documentation of their qualifications.
- c) Have resources to undertake CSI Fisheries assessments and certification services prior to entering into a contract with a potential applicant or existing member of the Program for those services.
- d) Identify the staff members accountable for the maintenance of its quality system.
- e) Establish management review procedures and policies. Reviews must be conducted at least once every 12 months.

The Certification Body will develop procedures for actions taken in response to any non-conformities raised in a certification audit, to evaluate the effectiveness of agreed objective evidence presented, or corrective or preventative actions taken by the applicant.

The Certification Body will also develop procedures in relation to the use of the CSI Fishery certificate, rules for granting, suspending or withdrawing the certificate, and the actions taken by the Certification Body should a suspension or withdrawal be required.

## 4. Contractual Arrangements

### 4.1 [Certification Body Contract Arrangements with CSI](#)

On approval, the Certification Body will be required to enter into a contract with CSI providing the basis by which the Certification Body can undertake assessments against CSI Fisheries Standards for potential applicants. The contract will identify the terms and responsibilities of each party with respect to conducting third party accredited audits and the certification of applicants to the CSI Fisheries Standards, but will not constitute a guarantee of certification business

### 4.2 [Certification Body Contract Arrangements with Applicants](#)

The Certification Body must enter a contract with the applicant prior to undertaking any assessment activity and certification reporting.

The Certification Body shall inform CSI of the identity of each applicant within a period of one week of entering a contract for the provision of assessment services.

The contractual arrangement shall include the notification to the applicant of the requirements of the Certification Body to provide the applicant's information associated with the assessment and certification status, to CSI.

#### **4.3 Certification Body Contractual Arrangements with Its Own Staff and Sub-Contracted Assessors**

The Certification Body shall have in place agreements with staff, Assessors (including subcontracted assessors) such that the Certification Body carries out Assessments:

- a) With all due skill and care and staff conducting themselves in a professional manner;
- b) In accordance with the CSI Fisheries Standards;
- c) In accordance with any conditions attached to their Accreditation and only for the CSI Standard categories for which it is registered;
- d) Using only assessors who are approved and formally CSI trained to meet the competencies of CSI Fisheries Standards for undertaking such assessments; and
- e) In accordance with international best practice in third party assessment and auditing, which includes auditor code of conduct for impartial and ethical behavior.

#### **4.4 Provision of Certification Information to CSI**

The Certification Body shall inform CSI of all certification decisions within a period of 3 working days of notice to the applicant.

### **5. Certification Body Registration with Accreditation Body**

Any Certification Body wishing to carry out assessments against CSI Fisheries Standards must be accredited to ISO 17065 by a CSI-recognized Accreditation Body.

Should accreditation to the scope of CSI Fisheries Standards not be granted within 12 months of registration with CSI, the Certification Body's approval with CSI may be invalidated and re-registration will not be permitted until the Certification Body is approved for assessments under the CSI Fisheries Standard by a recognized Accreditation Body.

#### **5.1 Accreditation Status**

The Certification Body shall inform CSI of any change in accreditation status, within 7 days of that change. The Certification Body shall not contract for or conduct any assessments or audits when its accreditation is suspended or limited with respect to certification under the CSI Fisheries Standard.

#### **5.2 Scope of Expertise**

Certification Bodies must demonstrate that their staff and contractors have the knowledge and expertise to work within the specified fields of knowledge relevant to the seafood sector being assessed. Each assessor undertaking certification assessments must have the appropriate qualifications, training, experience, and skills to perform an evaluation against CSI Fisheries Standards. Certification Bodies must demonstrate that each assessor and sub-contracted assessor has been given approved training conducted by CSI for conducting assessments under the CSI Fisheries Standard.

#### **5.3 Assessor Registration and Qualification Requirements**

The Certification Body shall maintain up-to-date records for each assessor showing compliance with the requirements for qualifications, training, and experience required under the CSI Fisheries Standard

These records shall be made available to CSI on request.

All Assessors must be able to report in the English language. Assessors must have formal education to a minimum agreed by the Certification Body and Accreditation Board. Assessors must have formal auditor training in relevant assessment techniques.

Assessors must have successfully completed a recognized training course for the CSI Fishery assessment techniques which includes:

- a) General knowledge of the CSI Program;
- b) Knowledge of relevant legislative requirements and regulations; and
- c) Knowledge and understanding of the specific fishery management processes.

A Certification Body training program for each new Assessor to the Program shall include an assessment of knowledge and skills for each field of evaluation and document of satisfactory completion of the training program.

#### **5.4 Certification Body Assessor Practical Evaluations**

Each newly trained assessor will need to be supported by and have fieldwork reviewed by an experienced qualified CSI lead assessor (Procedure 8, 5.2.1). All lead auditors shall hold ISO Lead Assessor qualification based on ISO 9001, ISO 14011 or 18001 or 19011 through an IRCA registered training body.

#### **5.5 Continued Training and Competency Monitoring**

The Certification Body must have in place an annual review program to maintain Assessor competence to CSI Fisheries Standards, fishery sector best practices and relevant laws and regulations.

An Assessor shall undergo additional training by the Certification Body whenever the CSI Team issues new versions of the Fisheries Standard, procedures, checklists, policies, or guidance documents.

Training and monitoring shall also include calibration across Assessors to the CSI Fisheries Standard, which will include assessment report reviews and comparisons.

Training is to be provided to each Assessor wishing to maintain their active status at least once every two years.

#### **5.6 Conflict of Interest, Confidentiality, and Code of Conduct**

The Certification Body and the Assessors it employs must avoid any conflict of interest, or breach of confidentiality or ethics. The Certification Body is bound by contractual agreement with CSI to abide by these requirements. The Certification Body shall also have signed agreements in place with all Assessors registered to assess against CSI Fisheries Standards. These agreements shall include, at a minimum, the following types of topics:

- a) Prohibitions against conflicts of interest;
- b) A requirement to divulge to the Certification Body any potential conflict of interest (such as prior consulting, prior employment, and the like) before undertaking an assessment, or that may arise during the assessment;
- c) A policy for the Certification Body to investigate notifications or incidences of potential conflicts of interest and to exclude the Assessor for a specific period where appropriate;
- d) Prohibitions against consulting for or soliciting consultancy or other types of work with a CSI Fishery Applicant in the two years prior to undertaking an assessment, during an assessment and during the certification process;
- e) Prohibitions against conduct or remarks that may, in the view of CSI, disparage the program, program

management or owner and related staff, certified facilities, or associated organizations, (including Certification Bodies and Accreditation Boards); and

- f) Prohibitions against using or sharing confidential information from the applicants assessed.

Copies of these agreements shall be provided to CSI upon request. The Certification Body and its Assessors will notify CSI immediately of any potential breaches of these requirements. CSI and the Certification Body shall formally discuss possible actions to address any potential breach known to either party.

### 5.7 Subcontracted Assessor

The Certification Body's obligations concerning oversight, training, and competencies contained herein apply to all approved Assessors whether staff or independent subcontractors.

The Certification Body shall not, at any time, use any subcontractor Assessors that have not been approved through the Certification Body assessor approval process.

### 5.8 Specific Qualification Requirements for Certification Body's Staff

Information on the relevant qualifications, training, and experience of each member of the staff involved in the CSI Fishery certification process shall be maintained by the Certification Body. Records of training and experience shall be kept up-to-date. These records shall include, at a minimum:

- a) Name and address;
- b) Organization affiliation and position held;
- c) Educational qualifications;
- d) Experience and training related to fishery management, assessment processes, assessment reports and corrective action evidence, and CSI Fisheries Standards

Staff used by the Certification Body to conduct assessor training, calibration, and competency reviews shall also demonstrate proper experience, training, and competencies as described above.

Records of Certification Body personnel training, experience, and competency shall be provided to CSI upon request. The certification review committee shall be adequately staffed to ensure timely reviews and decision-making.

New assessor had fieldwork reviewed by a qualified CSI lead assessor

All lead auditors shall hold ISO Lead Assessor qualifications based on ISO 9001, ISO 14011 or ISO 18001 through an IRCA registered training body.

For further details about assessor's requirements please refer to RFM Procedure 8: Appointment and Control of CSI Assessors.



## 6. Communication

CSI welcomes communication and information exchange with the Certification Body. CSI will, from time-to-time, seek a Certification Body's input into CSI Fisheries Standards, related documents, and the assessment process.

CSI recognizes the importance of accreditation during the development of all the CSI Fishery and Certification Process. CSI will continue to liaise with all approved Certification Bodies and Accreditation Boards, when appropriate in the further development of the program.

The Certification Body must commit to CSI that the following are satisfied:

- a) All offices that make certification decisions related to CSI Fisheries Standards are duly registered with CSI and with their Accreditation Board;
- b) Each Assessor is qualified to perform the assessment services on behalf of the Certification Body in accordance with the criteria set out herein and other related Fisheries Standard documents and has complied with all training and competency requirements;
- c) The Certification Body maintains an accurate record of the qualifications of each Assessor and the training undertaken by such Assessor;
- d) All factual information supplied to CSI and/or the Accreditation Board
- e) by the Certification Body is, or was when given, true, accurate and not misleading;
- f) The Certification Body has the power and all necessary consents, licenses and registrations to conduct their business, and to enter into and perform the contract, with CSI; and
- g) The Certification Body has read and understood and shall comply with their obligations and requirements as established in this document and other CSI Fisheries Standards, Procedures, and processes.