Procedure 8: Appointment and Control of Assessors

Participating Scheme Owners: Certified Seafood International (CSI) and Community Catch Certification Programs

Fully Aligned to ISO 17065

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The Participating Scheme Owners utilizing the Unified Chain of Custody and this procedure relevant to the Unified Chain of Custody are Certified Seafood International (CSI) and Community Catch

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1. Purpose

This document sets out the procedures for appointment and approval of CSI Fishery Standard Assessors and Unified Chain of Custody Auditors to ensure that they have the competency to carry out assessments required for the Program.

2. Scope

This procedure applies to all personnel authorized to conduct assessments/audits under the CSI Fishery Standard or the Unified Chain of Custody Standard.

3. Method

3.1 Appointment

Each Assessor/Auditor will be required to meet the requirements of its Certification Body and those applicable to the CSI Fishery Standard or Unified Chain of Custody Standard to be assessed.

Prior to appointment, an Assessor/Auditor must submit a detailed C.V. to the Certification Body covering professional qualifications, training, and experience in the area of expertise required for assessment under the applicable Standard.

Approval of a new Assessor/Auditor will be carried out in two stages:

Stage 1

The Certification Body's Project Manager will review the appointee's C.V. against the relevant assessor criteria and interview the appointee. If the appointee is determined to possess the necessary skills, then the Certification Body will proceed to Stage 2.

Stage 2

Upon satisfactory completion of stage one, the appointee will undertake orientation. Orientation will cover at a minimum:

a) An overview of Certification Body's organization, quality systems and accreditation requirements;

b) The specific role and responsibilities of the Assessors/Auditors; and

c) A review of the chain of custody auditing methodology, if applicable and

d) FAO-Based Program for Responsible Fisheries Management assessment methodology, if applicable.

Assessor/Auditor competence will be determined through interview and professional experience review; such reviews will be documented and approved.

Where applicable, this may be followed by a series of witnessed assessments (i.e. shadow audits at least one, plus a signoff witness assessment) to verify Assessor/Auditor competence. Experienced Assessors/Auditors may demonstrate competence within a specific Program through interview and/or evidence of having completed an appropriate number of audits against the standard in question.

Satisfactory completion of this process will lead to confirmation of appointment. An Assessor/Auditor that has not performed an assessment or audit for a period of more than 24 months must reapply for approval as an Assessor/Auditor.

The Certification Body Program Manager/Administrator for each Program will maintain a master list of

approved CSI Fishery Standard and Unified Chain of Custody Standard Assessors/Auditors which will be shared upon request with CSI. For individual sub-contracted personnel, a formal contract will be drawn up on appointment and signed by both parties.

Upon appointment, each Assessor/Auditor will sign a Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Undertaking form.

3.2 Controls

The performance of each Assessor/Auditor will be monitored and reviewed as follows:

a) Reporting – Each Assessment/Auditor Report will be reviewed by the Certification Body's staff and the Certification Committee; and

b) The Certification Body shall ensure that approved Assessors/Auditors are afforded reasonable opportunity for ongoing professional development relating to best practice in the relevant sector (fishery or CoC). Records of professional development shall be maintained.

4. Records

The CB Program Manager/Administrator will maintain the following records for each Approved Assessor/Auditor:

a) The Assessor/Auditor Contract;

b) C.V.;

c) External Training Certificates;

d) Evidence of training on the relevant Standard;

e) Assessor Criteria Requirement Record;

f) Date of Approval;

g) Signed copies of Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality form;

h) Staff Training Records, where applicable;

i) Performance review schedule;

j) Assessor/Auditor performance review;

k) Addition to audit scope – training & supervised audits;

l) A record of audits conducted;

m) Internal assessment reports; and

n) Witnessed assessment reviews (once every three years).

5. Fishery Assessor Qualifications

Assessors must meet the following qualifications.

5.1 Formal Qualification

At least a post-high school diploma or equivalent (minimum course duration of two years) must have been obtained in a discipline related to fishery and or biological studies.

5.2 Technical Skills and Qualifications

5.2.1 Lead Assessor Training

a) For Lead Assessors only, successful completion of a Lead Assessor training course based on ISO 19011 principles that must have a minimum duration of 37 hours and must be externally recognized by the industry. The certificate must specify the course content and duration. Successful completion must be indicated on the certificate.

b) Training on FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.

c) Training on FAO Guidelines for the Eco-labelling of Fish and Fishery Products from Marine Capture Fisheries.

d) Attended and successfully completed the CSI Fisheries Criteria Assessors Course.

5.2.2 Experience

Demonstrate experience in at least one of the following:

a) Fish stock assessment - must have experience in the production or review of stock assessment(s) relevant for the fishery(ies) under assessment;

b) Fish Stock Biology/Ecology – must have five years experience in research expertise in biology and ecology of the target or similar species;

c) Fishing impacts on aquatic ecosystems – must have at least five years' experience in research into, policy analysis for, or management of, fisheries impacts on aquatic ecosystems, and/or marine conservation biology;

d) Fishery management and operations - must have at least ten years' experience as a practicing fishery/aquatic natural resource manager and/or fishery/aquatic natural resource management analyst. Must also have a good understanding of the management system(s) used in the fishery under assessment;

e) Local Knowledge Current knowledge of the country, language and local fishery context that is sufficient to support meaningful assessment of the fishery.

5.3 Communication Skills

"Working language" skills in the corresponding native/working language. The "working language" for the Program is English. This must include the locally used specialist terminology in this working language.

6. Unified Chain of Custody Qualifications

6.1 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 auditor undertaking certification assessments must have the appropriate qualifications, training, experience and skills to perform an evaluation against the Unified CoC Standard. Certification Bodies must demonstrate that appropriate training for each auditor and sub-contracted auditor has been undertaken to understand the Unified CoC Standard. The importance of demonstrable competency under the scope of evaluation cannot be over emphasized for all staff and Auditors.

6.2 Auditor Registration and Training

The Certification Bodies will hold detailed files for each auditor undertaking Unified CoC Standard assessments.

The Certification Bodies shall maintain up-to-date records demonstrating how each Auditor complies with the requirements for qualifications, training and experience required under the Unified CoC Standard.

These records shall be made available to the CSI and supplied on request.

6.3 Specific Auditor Qualification Requirements

All auditors must be able to report in the English language. Auditors must also be able to communicate effectively with the language spoken at the site of the applicant. (The use of independent interpreters accompanying the auditor will be acceptable to cover any language barriers).

Formal education to a minimum of a high school diploma or equivalent (minimum course duration of two years) must have been obtained in a discipline related to fish processing or food production studies.

Lead Assessors must have successfully completed of a Lead Assessor training course based on ISO 19011 principles that must have a minimum duration of 37 hours and must be externally recognized by the industry. The certificate must specify the course content and duration. Successful completion must be indicated on the certificate.

The auditor must have formal auditor training in assessment techniques that are relevant in the seafood supply chain.

Auditors must have at least two years auditing experience in similar assessment programs or relevant work experience in the seafood industry.

Auditors must have successfully completed a recognized training course for the Unified CoC assessment techniques which includes:

a) General knowledge of the entire CSI Standards and relevant FAO references;

b) Specific Details of the Unified CoC Standard and certification Process;

c) Detailed experience of conducting Mass Balance verification tests and product traceability checks;

d) Knowledge and understanding of specific processes to the sectors in the supply chain being assessed; and

e) Knowledge of relevant legislative requirements or regulations.

Auditors must have experience and knowledge in the production or review of the type of fish packing, processing, and distribution, retail and foodservice relevant for the unit of certification, the supply chain and species under assessment.

The Certification Body shall have a training program for new auditors to the program that shall incorporate, at a minimum:

a) An assessment of knowledge and skills for each field of evaluation; and

b) A document signed off upon to prove the satisfactory completion of the training program by a competent trainer within the Certification Body.