



# CSC Certification Body Summary Audit Report 2021

## 1. Introduction

In January 2017, the Concrete Sustainability Council (CSC) launched its certification system for responsibly sourced concrete. The CSC is the Global System Operator, therefore maintains, and develops the international certification system, including the auditing software (“Toolbox”). A CSC-accredited Certification Body (CB) is the client’s key contact while undergoing certification. The CB manages the certification process: It assigns a qualified auditor to review the evidence provided by the client and to perform exemplary on-site audits. After the successful completion of the certification process, the CB issues the certificates and publishes them.

The CSC regularly conducts on-site audits of the Certification Bodies to ensure their compliance with the accreditation standards as set out in the CSC Technical Manual. This document is a summary report of the CB audits performed in 2021.

## 2. Objective

The overall objectives of the audits are:

- Ensure the robustness of the CSC certification system.
- Ensure that the rigor to obtain CSC certification is comparable.
- Ensure that the certification process is comparable.
- Enhance the CSC certification system by receiving feedback from the CB directly

## 3. Execution

First, CSC assesses the organizational process of the certification body through the following sub-items:

1. Training of auditors
2. Audit workflow description
3. Audit workflow checklist
4. Participation in global/harmonization meetings
5. On-site audit (required numbers, auditing process)
6. Correct use of the CSC system

Next, the validations of the certification bodies are assessed in randomly selected projects. This part is classified into the following sub-items:

1. Evidences: Prerequisites
2. Evidences: Exemplary Performance Credits
3. Evidences: Credits where publicly available information is required
4. Evidences: Credits where publicly available targets are required
5. Evidences: Supply chain credits
6. Evidences: Mandatory Credits

Lastly, the CSC provides a summary of both parts of the audit.



## **4. Key findings**

### **4.1. Organizational processes**

Nothing was objected to with regard to the organizational processes. The audited certification bodies (CB) were able to present valid accreditation certificates as specified in the CSC CB agreement. Furthermore, the certification bodies were able to describe their process, how current and future auditors are trained and how new information is distributed within the company.

In addition, the CBs could show their individual tools such as checklists. Regarding the on-site visits, the decision-making processes for choosing the plants to be audited could also be explained.

To ensure consistency in the implementation of the CSC system, the CB shall participate in harmonization meetings organized by the CSC. This obligation is fulfilled by the audited CBs.

### **4.2. Validation text**

When validating evidences, it is required that the auditor enters a suitable description into the toolbox. In some cases, the validation text was not precise enough, so that some validations were not immediately comprehensible and further clarification was necessary.

It was pointed out that the validation text should be as precise as possible. This would not only facilitate the CSC audit processes, but also create an advantage for the CBs in case past projects are looked into.

### **4.3. Checking the "Complies Checkbox"**

Clients must tick the box "complies" if they expect that their evidence/ explanation complies with the criteria. In very rare cases, this box is checked by the client, although no evidence is uploaded nor any explanatory text is given. During the CSC audit, it was pointed out that this issue should also be considered when auditing evidence.

### **4.4. Credits where publicly available information is required**

In cases where the company's website is referenced as evidence, the link should also be in the explanatory field. In a few cases this was not the case, so that the validation was not immediately comprehensible.

### **4.5. Chain of custody credit**

In one assessment, it was noticed that the supplier calculator was used, but the printout (PDF) was not uploaded. In order to ensure that the points awarded are comprehensible, it is mandatory that the required evidence is uploaded accordingly. Also, in individual cases, the supplier calculator was not used correctly or the resulting supplier score was used incorrectly. At this point, CSC has referred to Auditor Note 13 "CSC Certification Chain of Custody" dated 01.02.2021.

#### **4.6. Additional requirement: Concrete own score**

As described in the manual in chapter “2.2. Structure and Certification Level” in the CSC Technical Manual V2.1, in addition to the minimum scores, additional requirements must be met in order to obtain the certification levels - this includes a minimum own score for concrete producers aiming for CSC certification at the level Silver, Gold or Platinum.

In the past, this requirement was not considered in some cases. The corresponding assessments have already been corrected. During the CSC audits, this problem was highlighted again for awareness.

In addition, the CSC has recognized that the CSC Toolbox needs optimization in this respect. This optimization has now been implemented and documented in Auditor Note 16 "Additional requirements for Silver, Gold and Platinum". In the toolbox, it is now immediately visible for the client and for the auditor whether the additional requirements for the concrete producer are fulfilled or not. The Toolbox also prevents generating for example a Gold certificate and will only issue a Silver certificate because the requirement “Minimum own score for Gold” is not fulfilled.

### **5. Improvement opportunities for the CSC certification system**

Continuous improvement of the CSC certification system, including its toolbox, is an important lever to improve the sustainability performance of CSC certified plants. The CSC also took the opportunity of a feedback discussion with the certification body to find further potential for improvement for the certification system and its toolbox.

#### **5.1. CB Roundtable**

The CSC has increased its staff. In the future, communication with CBs will be improved through the involvement of a technical advisor. More so-called CB roundtables will be organized, in which current developments of the CSC will be reported and current problems can be discussed together. Furthermore, the importance of the harmonization meetings was underlined by the CBs. It was suggested that participation by at least one representative of the CBs should be mandatory.

#### **5.2. Validation process**

To improve the validation process for both clients and CBs, the following issues were addressed:

1. Simultaneous validation by multiple auditors
2. Validation by criteria

The CSC has now planned to address both optimization proposals in the near future. (1) will be addressed in early 2022. (2) is on the schedule for the next CSC version update.



## **6. CB compliance with accreditation standard**

The CSC audits conducted in 2021 have shown that in the vast majority of cases the respective certification bodies work in line with the CSC-CB agreement and the criteria defined in the CSC technical manual. The audits also confirmed the elevated certification know-how of the accredited CBs and their knowledge on concrete production and its chain of custody. The qualification of the CBs' auditors is ensured by internal auditor trainings. Minor non-conformities were jointly identified and promptly corrected. In addition, optimization opportunities were proposed, and discussed together with other CBs. They will now be implemented in 2022.

## **7. Continuation: CB audits in 2022**

The CSC will continue performing CB audits in 2022 in various markets.

Berlin, 22.12.2021

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Andreas Tuan Phan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Andreas Tuan Phan