

# ISCC PLUS

## GUIDANCE FOR OCEAN-BOUND PLASTIC





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## 1 Introduction

Ocean-bound plastic (OBP) refers to discarded plastic material, in all its forms, found within 50 kilometres of ocean coastlines, with a high likelihood of eventually entering the ocean.<sup>1</sup> As the urgency to address plastic pollution intensifies, certifying OBP is vital in mitigating its detrimental impact on marine ecosystems. This guidance document aims to provide clarity and direction to obtain OBP certification under ISCC PLUS. In addition to adhering to ISCC PLUS requirements for plastic materials, specific provisions must be met to certify OBP. This document further explains these specific provisions, focusing on supply chain elements, declarations, certificate requirements, and claims to ensure the integrity and credibility in OBP certification processes.

## 2 Scope and Normative References

This document comprises guidance for the certification of OBP under ISCC PLUS. The specific criteria described in this document complement the system basics described in the latest ISCC PLUS System Document and apply to all relevant elements in the supply chain.

## 3 Specific Provisions for OBP

### 3.1 Elements of the Supply Chain

The Points of Origin (PO) in an OBP supply chain are public locations such as shorelines, riverbanks, or coastal areas within a 50-kilometer radius from the shore where OBP can be found. Considering the impact of OBP on the marine environment and the shared interest of different stakeholders (e.g., local communities or NGOs) to mitigate it, ISCC acknowledges that OBP can be collected through sub-collectors or employees from a ISCC PLUS certified Collecting Point (CP).

*OBP supply chains*

The primary element in the supply chain requiring certification is the CP, which may operate as an OBP collection company. The CP must comply with general ISCC requirements and, specifically, the social criteria (see Annex I – Social Criteria for Ocean-bound Plastic). In addition to the ISCC PLUS requirements for plastic materials, the following requirements must be met to certify OBP:

*Collecting Points*

- > A detailed description of how the status of the material as waste is determined.
- > At least one team member of the collection team has to be interviewed by the auditor to approve the process of identifying OBP.

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<sup>1</sup> Definition is aligned with the definitions of OBP cert, Oceancycle, Zeroplastic Ocean/Prevented Ocean Plastic.

- > Collection sites must be transparently and separately listed, including the address, geo-tag, date, team members, pictures before and after cleaning and the amount collected for each day.
- > The weight of collected amounts must be plausible and verified by the auditor.

When non-certified individuals such as independent or sub-collectors collect OBP and provide it directly to the CP, they are classified as Dependent Collecting Point (DCP). DCPs may include local communities, fishermen or NGOs. DCPs can be engaged in OBP collection under the following circumstances:

#### *Dependent Collecting Points*

- When local communities organize the collection in other areas where the CP is not present,
- Due to weather or geographical-related reasons (e.g., monsoon season), the seasonal sub-collector (e.g., fishermen) cannot pursue their regular work activities,
- When NGOs organize beach or riverbank clean-ups involving volunteers.

DCPs must be trained and monitored by the CP regarding the ISCC PLUS requirements for OPB collection. When DCPs collect OBP, they must fill and sign a self-declaration confirming the compliance with general ISCC requirements and, specifically, the social criteria for DCP (see ANNEX I – Social Criteria for Ocean-bound Plastic), which is then provided to the CP. When purchasing OBP from DCPs, the CP shall ensure that the above conditions are met. In the case OBP is collected by CP employees, no self-declaration is necessary.

#### *Self-declaration*

Sample audits are essential for ensuring compliance of non-individually certified parties within the supply chain. The following elements of an OBP supply chain must be sample audited:

#### *Sample audits*

- DCPs,
- Other dependant storage facilities,
- PO where the CP collects the material like beaches, riversides, etc.

When the monthly volume of collected OBP material delivered to the CP by the DCP or stored at the dependent storage facility is one metric ton or less, it is considered as a low risk for fraud due to the minimal volume collected. In such cases, a sample audit is not required unless there is indication or evidence of non-conformity with ISCC requirements. If more than one metric ton of OBP per month is delivered to the CP by the DCP or stored at the dependent storage facility, the fraud risk is higher due to the larger volume collected. Therefore, auditing such DCPs or dependent storage facilities on a sample basis is obligatory (see Chapter 8.5 of the ISCC PLUS System Document for details on the sample size calculation).

PO, such as beaches and riversides where the CP collects the material, fall under a different approach to sample auditing. For these sites, 10% of the OBP collection sites must be considered for the calculation of the sample basis (see Chapter 8.5 of the ISCC PLUS System Document).

*Different sampling of PO*

In any case, if there is indication or evidence of non-conformity with ISCC requirements, it is necessary to audit these DCP, other dependant storage facilities or the PO where the CP collects the material.

*Evidence of non-conformity*

Both mechanical and chemical recycling operations are certifiable under ISCC PLUS for OBP recycling. The general requirements (see ISCC PLUS System document) are in place for the recycling process. If any collected OBP cannot be processed or remains unsold, the System User must ensure its disposal is conducted through appropriate waste management procedures.

*Recycling operation*

**3.2 Self-Declarations and Sustainability Declarations**

For OBP, the DCPs must use the ISCC PLUS Self-Declaration for OBP and provide a filled and signed version to the CP.

*Self-Declaration*

When OBP is sold to certified System Users along the supply chain, the information about OBP must be indicated in the Sustainability Declaration in the raw material or product specification by adding “OBP” in brackets (e.g., Mixed Plastic Waste (OBP)). When the raw material is forwarded after processing, “OBP” must be indicated in brackets along with the respective product. (e.g., PE (OBP)).

*Sustainability Declaration*

Type of raw material (optional):	Mixed plastic waste / Mixed waste plastic
Raw material specification (if applicable):	Mixed plastic waste (OBP)

Figure 1: Example of raw material and specification in the Sustainability Declaration

**3.3 Certificates for OBP**

ISCC PLUS certificates for OBP must contain the information about OBP. This information must be stated in the Annex I for materials.

*Certificates for OBP*

In the different stages of the supply chain, the indications in the material annex in the columns “input material” and “output material” must be as following:

*Material annex*

- > For Mixed plastic waste/Mixed waste plastic, OBP must be indicated by adding “OBP” in brackets e.g. Mixed plastic waste (OBP).
- > For intermediate or final products, “OBP” must be indicated in brackets after the specification of polymer e.g. Packaging (PE (OBP)).

If OBP is verified as post-consumer material and if claims about post-consumer recycling (PCR) are to be used at the end of the supply chain, this information must be stated in the annex I. In the column “Raw material category”, the option “Circular (PCR)” must be chosen (see Figure 2).

*Raw material category*

Annex I to the certificate:					
Sustainable materials handled by the certified site					
(This annex is applicable for all scopes except of Trader, Trader with storage, Warehouse, Logistic centres, MTBE and ETBE)					
This annex is only valid in connection with the certificate:					
ISCC-PLUS-Cert-unique certificate number issued on dd.mm.yyyy					
Input material	Output material	Add-ons (voluntary) <sup>1)</sup>	Raw material category <sup>2)</sup>	SAI FSA <sup>3)</sup>	FEFAC <sup>4)</sup>
Mixed plastic waste (OBP)	Packaging (PE (OBP))	N.A.	Circular (PCR)	N.A.	N.A.

Figure 2: Example of Annex I of ISCC PLUS Certificate handling OBP

### 3.4 Claims for OBP

ISCC PLUS allows claims that include OBP as part of the certified material. Any claims related to OBP must adhere to the guidelines outlined in the ISCC 208 Logos and Claims document in addition to the further clarifications outlined below.

*Claims for OBP*

OBP claims must be made with clarity and transparency to ensure accurate communication about the material’s origin and sustainability characteristics. When making claims about OBP, it is important to communicate that these plastics were at risk of becoming ocean pollution and refrain from implying that the material was directly retrieved from the ocean. This clarity helps differentiate OBP from ocean plastics and avoids misleading consumers.

*Clarity and transparency*

Additionally, OBP claims must always declare the percentage of OBP relative to the total weight of the product. This percentage must be calculated and disclosed accurately. System Users must communicate the exact OBP ratio to provide consumers with clear and truthful information.

*OBP percentage*

Transparency in claims is required to prevent greenwashing and build consumer trust. Clear and straightforward language should be used, avoiding technical language that could confuse consumers. By providing detailed information about the OBP share and the mass balance approach, System Users can enhance consumer understanding and support for practices that utilise certified non-conventional feedstocks.

*Clear and straightforward language*

Considering the guidelines of the ISCC 208 Logos and Claims document regarding the wording and phrases that can be used for making ISCC PLUS related claims, here are some examples that illustrate OBP claims:

*Examples*

- This packaging is linked to 50% recycled ocean-bound plastic\* (mass balance approach).
- This bottle is 80% ISCC PLUS certified and refers to ocean-bound plastic\* by the mass balance approach.
- For the production of this plastic toy, certified and non-certified materials have been mixed. 75% of the material can be traced back (mass balance approach) to the collection of ocean-bound plastic\*.

\*Explanation of OBP shall be aligned with the following definition: *“OBP is discarded plastic material (in all forms) located within 50 km of ocean coastlines, with a high likelihood of eventually reaching the ocean.”*<sup>2</sup>

Furthermore, OBP may be claimed as post-consumer recycled material if it was verified during the audit of the CP that the collected OBP consists only of post-consumer waste. Any instances of pre-consumer or industrial waste identified along shorelines or riverbanks must be reported to the relevant national authorities and indicated in the audit report. The collected materials in the storages and the collection sites must not include or getting mixed with any pre-consumer waste, otherwise no claim related to ‘post-consumer’ can be made.

*Post-consumer  
recycling*

Examples of waste which can be classified as post-consumer:

- > Packaging for end-consumer use (e.g. bags, bottles, take-away packaging, etc.)
- > Consumer goods (e.g. toys, sunglasses, bowls, boxes, etc.)

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<sup>2</sup> Definition is aligned with the definitions of OBP cert, Oceancycle, Zeroplastic Ocean/Prevented Ocean Plastic.



## Annex I – Social Criteria for Ocean-bound Plastic

Please take note that for the DCP, the criteria mentioned below should be applied where it is specified. The conditions should be adapted to their structure (e.g., workers referring to volunteers).

### 1. Social Development

#### 1.1. A Self-Declaration on Good Social Practice regarding Human Rights Is Available

Applicable scopes: CP

A self-declaration on good social practice regarding human rights must have been communicated to the workers. The company management and the workers' representative must have signed and displayed a self-declaration assuring good social practice and the human rights of all workers. The self-declaration must be in a language appropriate to the workers and surrounding communities. This declaration contains the following:

- > a commitment to the ILO core labour standards
- > respect for a living wage
- > respect for the social environment
- > commitment to fair contract arrangements

**Degree of obligation:** immediate requirement

*Commitment to  
good social  
practices*

#### 1.2. Other Forms of Social Benefits Are Offered by the Employer to Workers and their Families and/or Community

Applicable scopes: CP

Incentives including incentives for good working performance, bonus payments, support for professional development, family friendliness, medical care/health provisions and the improvement of social surroundings are offered. Workers should be encouraged to take out health insurance by creating awareness and providing information about available insurance policies. Health insurance can include long-term compensation in case of disability and payment of medical costs.

**Degree of obligation:** best-practice requirement

*Incentives  
for workers*

## 2. Employment Conditions

### 2.1. No Forced Labour

Applicable scopes: CP, DCP

There must be no use of forced, bonded or involuntary labour.<sup>3</sup> Labour that originates from human trafficking is strictly prohibited. Workers are guaranteed the freedom of movement and shall not be forced to hand over their identity cards to the employer or any other third party. If workers voluntarily surrender their identity cards to the employer for safekeeping, they shall have unrestricted access to their identity cards. Access must be free of charge and it can be documented. An agreement on the safekeeping of identity cards shall be available in written form, in a language understood by the worker. Retaining workers' salary, excessive deduction of fees from wages for disciplinary purposes, personal protective equipment, or deposits for accommodation or tools is prohibited.

*Forced  
labour and  
retaining  
salary,  
property*

**Degree of obligation:** immediate requirement

### 2.2. No Child Labour

Applicable scopes: CP, DCP

Child labour is prohibited, as well as all forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery. The minimum age must comply with all local and national legislation as well as with ILO Conventions 138 and 182. No minors are to be employed. Documents must include records of workers' dates of birth and documented evidence that the employer is aware of relevant legislation.

*Children and  
young,  
pregnant or  
disabled  
workers*

**Degree of obligation:** immediate requirement

### 2.3. No Discrimination

Applicable scopes: CP, DCP

There shall be no indication of discrimination (distinction, exclusion or preference) practiced that denies or impairs equality of opportunity, conditions or treatment based on individual characteristics and group membership or association.

*Equality of  
opportunities*

**Degree of obligation:** immediate requirement

<sup>3</sup> In line with ILO Conventions 29 and 105

## 2.4. Respect and Ensure Gender Equity

Applicable scopes: CP, DCP

Special attention shall be paid to ensure that women and minority groups can participate meaningfully in meetings and negotiations in order to articulate/communicate their concerns/ideas. In all stakeholder consultation processes, including the FPIC, women and minority groups shall be appropriately included and their voices equally heard and respected.

*Equal participation in meetings and consultations*

**Degree of obligation:** immediate requirement

## 2.5. Regular Employment Is Available Wherever Possible

Applicable scopes: CP

Employment relationships shall be established through national law and practice. The employment of contract or temporary workers for permanent or ongoing tasks, e.g. to eliminate or reduce pay and benefits, shall not take place. This can be supported by a regular assessment of ways to promote the use of permanent and local labour.

*Employment relationships*

**Degree of obligation:** best-practice requirement

## 2.7. Workers Are Treated with Dignity and Respect

Applicable scopes: CP

The company shall not engage in or tolerate the use of corporal punishment, mental or physical coercion, verbal or physical abuse or sexual harassment or any kind of intimidation of workers. No harsh or inhumane treatment is permitted. A policy to prevent sexual and all other forms of harassment and violence shall be implemented and communicated to all levels of the workforce, contract workers and service providers.

*No punishment or abuse*

**Degree of obligation:** immediate requirement

## 2.9. All Workers Are Provided with Fair Legal Contracts

Applicable scopes: CP

All workers are provided with fair legal contracts in written form and in the languages understood by workers and explained carefully to them in case of low literacy. Copies of working contracts must be able to be shown to the auditor for every worker indicated in the records. Both the worker as well as the employer must have signed them. Personnel records for each employee must be kept for at least 24 months. Where a registration system exists, copies of working contracts must be registered with the labour authority of the country of production. In those countries where there are no requirements for formal

*Signed working contracts*

labour agreements between workers and employers, alternative documented evidence of a labour relationship must be present.

**Degree of obligation:** immediate requirement

### 2.10. A Living Wage Is Paid Which Meets at least Legal or Industry Minimum Standards

Applicable scopes: CP, DCP

The company's pay slips demonstrate that living wages/compensation per unit meet at least legal or industry minimum standards and are sufficient to meet the basic needs of workers and provide some discretionary income. Gross wages are paid to workers at least monthly, compensation per unit is paid per delivery.

*Payment*

**Degree of obligation:** immediate requirement

### 2.11. There Is a Person Responsible for Workers' Health, Safety and Good Social Practice

Applicable scopes: CP

An organigram is in place including the responsible person for workers' health, safety and good social practice.

*Competence of represent*

**Degree of obligation:** immediate requirement

### 2.12. Records of All Workers and Employees Are Available

Applicable scopes: CP, DCP

Records should clearly demonstrate an accurate overview of all workers and employees (including seasonal workers and subcontracted workers). The records must indicate full names, a job description, date of birth, date of entry, wage and the period of employment. Records must be accessible for the last 24 months.

*Record-keeping of employees*

**Degree of obligation:** immediate requirement

### 2.13. Working Times and Overtime Are Documented

Applicable scopes: CP, DCP

There is a time recording system that makes daily working time and overtime on a daily basis transparent for all workers and employers. Working times of

*Record-keeping of working times*



all workers during the last 24 months are to be documented. Rest breaks/days should also be documented during peak seasons.

**Degree of obligation:** immediate requirement