NSF Sustainability℠
National Center for
Sustainability Standards

NSF Program Operator Rules

NSF International –
National Center for Sustainability Standards

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Contents

NSF International

Product Category Rule Program
General Program Instructions

1 General Program Instructions

These Instructions are used in the operation of the NSF International Product Category Rule Program with the intent to develop Product Category Rules (PCRs) and to verify and publish Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs) for any product or service. These Instructions meet the requirements of ISO 14025 *Environmental labels and declarations – Type III environmental declarations – Principles and Procedures.*

1.1 Scope of the Program

This program will cover the development of product category rules and verification of environmental product declarations by NSF for any product or service in a business to business or business to consumer communication. This program intends to perform these activities primarily for the North American market.

1.2 Objectives of the Program

The program objective is to develop PCRs and verify EPDs in a transparent and credible manner ensuring a science based approach that is independently verifiable and that is consistent with ISO 14025.

1.3 Program Operator

As the Program Operator, NSF International shall perform the following duties listed below:

- Prepare, maintain and communicate the General Program Instructions;
- Invite industry and LCA experts to participate in development of Product Category Rules when needed and engage a committee of third party experts to review the committee's work. The procedures for PCR development shall follow strictly the requirements of ISO 14025.
- Publish the list of organizations involved as interested parties in the program;
- Ensure Type III environmental declaration requirements are followed (see section 7 for EPD requirements);
- Establish a procedure to safeguard the consistency of data within a program;
- maintain publicly available lists and records of PCR documents and Type III environmental declarations within the program (see section 3);
- Publish PCR documents and Type III environmental declarations within the program;
- Monitor changes in procedures and documents of related Type III environmental declaration programs and revise procedures and documents when necessary;
- Ensure the selection of competent independent verifiers and PCR review panel members (see section 6);
- Establish a transparent procedure for the PCR review (see section 6), including the scope of the review, details of the review and how the PCR review panel is constituted;

— Establish procedures to avoid misuse of references to ISO 14025, the Type III environmental declaration program, its Type III environmental declarations and, where relevant, its logo (see section 9).

1.4 Audience of the Program

The audience for the NSF International Program is both business-to-business and business-to-consumer.

NSF International shall perform the following duties when developing a Type III environmental declaration for business-to-consumer communication as required by ISO 14025:2006 clause 9:

— Ensure no part of the required content of the declaration required by the PCR shall be omitted or simplified;
— Ensure the Type III environmental declaration is based on the life cycle of the product, unless a circumstance meets the requirements as defined by ISO 14025:2006 clause 9.2.1, then a specific stage can be excluded. The omissions shall be declared in the Type III environmental declaration;
— Ensure the Type III environmental declaration is available to the consumer at the point of purchase;
— Declare the means of obtaining the explanatory material in the declaration;
— If a PCR committee determines that a PCR will be developed for business-to-consumer communication, then consumer interests and environmental interests shall be represented in the PCR committee;
— Declare that the verification was performed by a competent third party.

1.5 Involvement of Interested Parties

NSF International shall solicit the involvement of interested parties in the development of PCRs and facilitate their participation in an open consultation process. The PCR development process shall be open to all parties affected by the PCR, including but not limited to product manufacturers, government bodies, product end users and specifiers, consumer organizations, and non-governmental organizations.

NSF International shall ensure that reasonable balance among the members of a PCR committee is achieved and potential conflicts of interest are identified.

1.6 Product Category Type

The product category type shall be defined within the PCR. Only PCRs that have been developed under these Instructions shall be posted for EPDs.

1.7 Safeguarding the Consistency of Data

NSF International shall safeguard the consistency of data through the implementation of Product Category Rules Development Procedure (AESOP 13789), NSF International EPD Declaration Requirements Checklist (AESOP 13785), and PCR Review Panel Member Checklist (AESOP 137XX).

2 Procedure for the Definition of Product Categories

The product categories for PCR development will be defined using recognized product category

code naming conventions, such as the UNSPSC (http://www.unspsc.org/) or GS1 (http://www.gs1us.org/).

3 Management of Data and Documentation

NSF International shall manage data and documentation in accordance with NSF internal procedures for the control of documents and the applicable requirements of the NSF International *Standards Development and Maintenance Policies*. NSF International's internal procedures are consistent with ISO 14001:2004 Clause 4.4.5, Control of documents.

NSF International will maintain a publicly available list of completed PCRs and supporting documents as required by ISO 14025. These documents will be available through NSF's site at http://standards.nsf.org. NSF International shall request the posting of completed PCRs in applicable publicly available PCR repositories as well.

NSF International will maintain a publicly available list of verified EPDs through NSF's site at www.nsf.org.

4 Data Confidentiality Management

When developing PCRs and verifying EPDs, NSF International shall not disclose without a Company's prior written consent and shall keep confidential any information supplied to it by a Company about the Company and its Product. NSF shall release the information only to those persons or agencies authorized or required by law to receive such information. Confidentiality does not apply to any information known to NSF independently, generally available to the public, or obtained by NSF from a third party under no obligation to the Company not to disclose said information.

Upon request by a Company, NSF may execute a separate, uniform, and standard written confidential disclosure agreement with the Company or with a Company's supplier(s).

5 Development and Maintenance of the PCR

5.1 Content of the PCR

NSF International shall ensure the development of the contents of the PCR document in conformance with ISO 14025:2006, clause 6.7, Procedure for the development of PCR and in alignment with the principles of ISO 14020:2001.

5.2 Period of Validity

PCRs developed by NSF International shall be valid for a period not to exceed five years, as determined during the consultative process with interested parties. Prior to the expiration of the period of validity, the PCR document shall be reviewed by the PCR Development Committee for any needed revisions. Any substantive changes to the PCR will be developed using the same process as the original development of the PCR.

Changes in relevant information impacting a PCR may be brought to the attention of NSF by any interested party. A PCR may be revised prior to the end of the period of validity if indicated by changes in relevant information.

5.3 Selection Procedure for Predetermined Parameters

Selection of predetermined parameters for the reporting of LCA data shall be performed in consultation with the PCR Development Committee and other interested parties. Predetermined parameters may be identified from one or more life cycle assessments performed in accordance with the ISO 14040 series of standards or from an information module developed in support of a Type III environmental declaration. As indicated in ISO 14025, the following parameters resulting from LCA or from information modules may be considered as predetermined parameters:

- a set of impact category indicator results;
- a set of inventory results that are elementary flows (e.g. iron ore, CO_2);
- a set of data that do not represent elementary flows (e.g. waste).

6 Independent Verification of the PCR

NSF International shall ensure that independent verification of the PCR is performed through a third-party review panel in accordance with ISO 14025:2006, Clause 8.1.2, PCR review.

Competence of the PCR verifiers and of the PCR review panel will be determined in compliance with ISO 14025:2006, Clause 8.2, Independence and competencies of verifiers and PCR review panel.

7 Independent Verification of the EPD

NSF International shall verify EPDs based upon PCRs that have undergone third-party review in compliance with ISO 14025. EPDs verified under this program shall comply with the relevant standards for Type III environmental declarations.

Independent verification of the EPD and underlying data shall be performed in accordance with ISO 14025:2006, Clause 8.1.3, Independent verification of data and ISO 14025:2006, Clause 8.1.4, Independent verification of the Type III environmental declaration.

Competence of the independent verifiers will be determined in compliance with ISO 14025:2006, Clause 8.2, Independence and competencies of verifiers and PCR review panel.

8 Resources for Program Development and Operation

As Program Operator, NSF International may seek funding from organizations to support initial and ongoing program development and operation activities. No participation fees will be charged by NSF International to interested parties for participation on PCR Development Committees, for attendance at PCR Development Committee meetings, or for commenting on a draft PCR document.

9 Procedures to Avoid Misuse of References to the Program and Its Logo

NSF and the NSF logos are registered trademarks of NSF International. No manufacturer or person shall apply or use the logos in connection with a product or EPD, or represent in any way that the EPD is independently verified by NSF, until receipt of written authorization from NSF. NSF may pursue legal recourse if the logo or references to the NSF Product Category Rule Program are misused.

All EPDs that are independently verified by NSF shall apply the relevant authorized NSF Mark to the report. The NSF Mark may not appear on the Product.

10 Periodic Review of General Program Instructions

NSF International shall ensure that the General Program Instructions are reviewed at least every three years and updated as needed. NSF funded the development of this document and will fund future periodic reviews. If other funding sources are identified, those sources will be acknowledged.

11 Reference Documents

The following documents are referenced as requirements of these Instructions:

ISO 14020:2001 Environmental labels and declarations – General principles

ISO 14025:2006 Environmental labels and declarations — Type III environmental declarations — Principles and procedures

ISO 14040:2006 Environmental management — Life cycle assessment — Principles and framework

ISO 14044:2006 Environmental management — Life cycle assessment — Requirements and guidelines

ISO 21930:2007 Sustainability in building construction — Environmental declaration of building products

NSF International *Standards Development and Maintenance Policies* (2009)