



RULES FOR THE WATER FOOTPRINT VERIFICATION

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CHAPTER 1 – OVERVIEW

1.1 Scope

These Rules define the procedures applied by RINA for the verification of Water Footprint (WFP) claims. Through this verification it is possible for an Organization to calculate the potential environmental impacts with respect to water (water footprint) related to its products or services or to the organization itself, applying a life cycle approach.

The verification of WFP statements are performed according to the verification criteria/requirements of an agreed scheme and any additional elements indicated by the supervisory body of the scheme, by the accreditation body or the competent authority.

The list of the schemes for which RINA is accredited is available on the RINA website: www.rina.org.

RINA applies its current fees and guarantees fairness and uniformity of application.

RINA may legitimately refuse requests related to organisations and/or their products/activities that are subject to restriction, suspension or proscription by a public authority.

1.2 Criteria

For an organization to start the water footprint certification process, it must:

- define the scope and objective of its water footprint;
- determine the boundaries of the system and choose the indicators based on the objective of the water footprint in compliance with the requirements of the aforementioned standard;
- calculate the potential environmental impacts related to the chosen indicators;
- accept what is required by the Standard and these Rules and what is communicated by RINA.

At the Organization's request, a preliminary site audit may be carried out to verify the general status of application of the reference standard.

1.3 Terminology

The terminology used in these Rules is the same as that used in the reference documents normally available on the websites of the supervisors' body of the schemes, of the accreditation bodies or of the competent authorities.

1.4 Principles for verification

RINA recognises key guiding principles of the verification processes and conducts all the activities to ensure accuracy, conservatism, relevance, credibility, reliability, completeness, consistency, transparency, impartiality, independence, safeguarding against conflicts of interest and confidentiality.

Within the scope of the application of these Rules, RINA does not provide consulting services to Organizations for the calculation of water footprint.



CHAPTER 2 – CONTRACT REVIEW

2.1 Request

Organisations wishing to apply to obtain validation and verification of their GHG statement must provide RINA with the data related to the statement, by sending the latest revision of the informative questionnaire form or the same data in another format.

These data are used by RINA to make its offer.

RINA can proceed with the offer based on the following data/documentation:

- name and address of the applicant;
- corporate form;
- number of employees;
- list of the product(s)/product(s)/service(s) being verified;
- reference standard(s);
- system boundaries;
- complexity of products/services (number of raw materials and components);
- type of water footprint (complete or for specific indicators);
- availability of the water footprint to interested third parties;
- accuracy of procedures for data collection, storage and management;
- mode of presentation of results.

Before accepting the contract, the organisation must provide all the missing information requested by RINA (for example data related to all the project participants, representatives of the organisation and the consultant data).

2.2 Contract

Organisations must formalise their order by sending RINA the request form or a contract duly signed by the Chief Executive Officer or authorised representative, by way of a power of attorney.

On receipt of the request form or the signed contract and the related documentation/annexes, and after a preliminary review to check their completeness, RINA appropriately informs the organisation of its acceptance of the order.

Only after RINA notifies to the organisation the acceptance of the order, the contract between RINA and the organization is considered stipulated.

CHAPTER 3 – SELECTION OF THE TEAM

3.1 Team assignment

RINA selects the team who performs the activity and the personnel who performs the independent technical review on the basis of the knowledge, skills and competency required, taking into consideration the verification criteria/requirements of the agreed scheme and any additional elements indicated by the supervisory body of the scheme or by the accreditation body/competent authority.



The team is fully independent of all aspects of the statement and have not assisted in the design of any statement components or of the information system, according to the procedures stated by the Committee for the Safeguard of Impartiality.

3.2 Team communication

In advance of the activity, RINA notifies to the organisation in writing of the names of the team members. The organisation may object to these appointments, within 5 working days of the notification, giving their reasons.

RINA reconstitutes the team in response to any valid objection.

CHAPTER 4 – WATER FOOTPRINT VERIFICATION

The purpose of the verification is to check that:

- the methods used to determine the calculated water footprint comply with the requirements of the ISO 14046 standard;
- the methods and inventory modelling used to conduct the water footprint assessment are scientifically and technologically sound,
- the data and model results are appropriate and reasonable with respect to the purpose and scope of the study,
- the interpretations reflect the identified limitations and the objective of the study,
- the water footprint report is transparent and consistent with the purpose and scope of the study.

The end result of this process is a Verification Report that identifies areas needing further elaboration or correction, the nature of the responses provided by the organization, the methods for verifying those responses, and explicit references to any changes in the Report or supporting annexes, and will express an opinion on the WFP statement with respect to the agreed-upon scheme verification criteria.

4.1 Document review

The team will review the documents to ensure that they meet the agreed-upon scheme verification criteria/requirements.

Normally, the documents that the organisation shall be required to provide RINA are included in the following:

- Product/service/organization water footprint report according to the relevant standard;
- report available to interested parties (Third party report), if relevant;
- Any other information/documentation required by the agreed scheme..

RINA may, at its discretion, request also other documents for review apart from those indicated above, considered important for the purpose of verification.

Through the review of documentation, the team initiates and proceeds to strategic analysis and risk analysis as described below.



4.2 Strategic analysis

At the beginning of the verification, RINA assesses the probable nature, extent and complexity of the verification tasks by performing a strategic analysis of all the activities that concern the WFP statement.

Strategic analysis includes the following factors:

- a) the organization's control system for the identification and control of risks in the processing of data which could result in incorrect data in the WFP statement;
- b) any changes to the installation during the year (organization structure, product or production changes or processes) if the organization's WFP statement has already been verified previously;
- c) any management system (environmental or other) that the organization adopts relating to the management or processing of the emission data;
- d) type, purpose and complexity of the equipment and processes used, including calculation methods;
- e) the level of assurance defined by the organization.

4.3 Risk analysis

Based on the result of the strategic analysis, RINA conducts a risk analysis (identification and verification of uncertainty / errors in the organization's emission base and their importance for the result in quantifying the emissions) which, at a minimum, must include what follows:

- a) average number of contributions per single impact factor;
- b) type of data to be monitored;
- c) complexity of the organization's processes and installations;
- d) adequacy of the management system, the data processing system and the control system;
- e) information relating to previous assessments at the organization's installation.

As a result of the strategic and risk analysis, the verification times and sites to be sampled may be modified compared to those defined in the contract review.

4.4 Verification of processes

Following the document review, the team identifies additional questions and issues (objective evidence) that need to be addressed with the organisation.

The process also requires a site visit when it is a requirement of the scheme supervisory body or accreditation body and in other cases, at RINA's discretion, depending on the nature of the statement.

The date of the site visit is agreed, sufficiently in advance, with the organization and will be officially confirmed at least one week in advance.

The team during the visit will check the congruity between the water footprint and related documentation concerning mainly:

- Functional unit;
- System boundaries;
- Data collection, inventory and data quality assessment;
- Input/Output flows and their modelling in the analysis software;
- Calculation of indicators for water footprint;
- Characterization factors;



- Interpretation of results.

The review should be performed at the organization's site(s) unless another mode can be justified in specific cases.

If, during the team's review of the documentation in the case where it has been decided not to conduct the field visit, doubts or problems arise that cannot be resolved without a site visit, the team must still conduct such a visit to the organization to resolve any necessary clarification.

The verification is done based on sufficient sampling to verify the reliability of the data and information.

In the event that the team detects nonconformities, the timing and methodology for follow-up should be agreed upon with the corrective action manager at the organization.

The follow-up resulting from the previous verification is documented in the follow-up verification report

4.5 Draft Report

After the onsite visit, the team provides to the organisation a Draft Verification Report that summarises the issues that need to be further elaborated upon, researched or added to by the organisation in order to confirm that the WFP statement meets the requirements.

The organisation must provide additional information to clarify or otherwise make necessary improvements to the report and documentation that would result in a positive verification outcome.

According to the nature of the improvements/corrections and/or documentation provided, an on-site assessment may be necessary to verify the correct implementation of the proposed corrective actions.

4.6 Finding Management

There can be 3 types of findings: CAR (Corrective Action Request), CL (Clarification), R (Recommendation).

A Corrective Action Request (CAR) is issued if one of the following situations occurs:

- requirements have not been met.
- errors have been made in assumptions, data or calculation.

A request for clarification (CL) is issued if the information is insufficient or not clear enough to determine whether the applicable requirements have been correctly applied. A CL could then lead to a CAR, should the clarification reveal a failure to meet a requirement of the standard, or be positively closed should the additional information provided show compliance with the referenced standard.

A recommendation (R) is a cue for improvement that can be taken into account for future updates of the water footprint.

4.7 Final Report

Upon receipt of responses and modified documents from the organisation to the issues, the Draft Verification Report is revised to reflect the responses of the organisation and comments of the team against each of the issues. The Final Verification Report is prepared including the final verification opinion.

If the findings are not satisfactorily solved and accepted:

- after 3 months of the first issuance of the Draft Verification Report;
- there are more than three revisions.



RINA reserves the right to terminate the contract or to issue the Final Verification Report and a negative opinion, following agreement with the Organisation, the right to receive the fees agreed being understood.

4.8 Independent Technical Review

The final Verification Report prepared by the team is subject to an Independent Technical Review to ensure that the WFP statement and the verification process conducted by the team meets all requirements.

4.9 Verification Opinion

Once the verification process has been successfully completed, a verification opinion is issued to the organization, which contains an opinion on compliance with the verification requirements, a description of any non-conformities, and reports the inventory emission quantities, expressed in tons of CO₂-equivalent.

CHAPTER 5 - CONTRACTUAL CONDITIONS

For anything not provided for in this document, refer to the "GENERAL CONDITIONS OF CONTRACT FOR THE CERTIFICATION OF SYSTEMS, PRODUCTS AND PERSONNEL", available on the website www.rina.org.



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Technical rules