

To all accredited and applicant Certification Bodies for the verification and validation of environmental product declarations (EPD).

Our ref.: DC2015UTZ029

Milano, 26/05/2015

**Re: ACCREDIA Department of Certification and Inspection – Informative circular N° 16/2015 with regard to accreditation for the EPD scheme (verification and validation of environmental product declarations).**

### Introduction

ACCREDIA issues accreditation to certification bodies for the verification and validation of Environmental Product Declarations (EPD) for the scheme “International EPD® System”.

EPD International AB is the program operator of the scheme “International EPD® System”, governed by the document “General Programme Instructions for EPD”.

The present circular is a response to the developments and updates of the scheme with respect to the information, now superseded, which was contained in the SINCERT document “Preliminary regulations for the accreditation of Bodies operating the verification and validation of environmental product declarations.”

The present document replaces the above SINCERT document.

### Standard and rules of accreditation

Accreditation standard	ISO/IEC 17065 ISO 14025 General Programme Instructions for EPD
Other reference standards	The reference standards for product life cycle analyses are: ISO 14040 “Life cycle assessment – principles and framework” ISO 14044 “Life cycle assessment – requirements and guidelines” UNI EN 15804 “Sustainability of construction - environmental product declarations – core rules for the product category of construction products.”
Accreditation certificate	The certificate of accreditation states:  1) the typologies of EPD verification  External verification of EPDs including: - EPD for single products - EPD for sectors - EPD for single issue - EPD for pre-certification  EPD process certification  2) The CPC codes (UN Central Product Classification), see Annex 1

## Process of accreditation

Number of certificates	It is obligatory for the CB to have completed the verification and validation of at least 1 EPD.
First accreditation for the CB without prior accreditation in any scheme	Documental exam of 1 day. Assessment of the CB's head office of 4 days. Witness assessment: - in each of the EPD typologies requested, except for pre-certification and EPD for single use which are accredited on the basis of document examination in cases of accreditation for one of the other typologies (EPD for single products, EPD for sectors and Process Certification) During the on-site and witness assessments at least one of the CPCs shall be sampled for each category requested according to the classification of Annex 1 (accreditation is granted to all CPCs of the category to which the sampled CPC belongs).
First accreditation for CBs with prior accreditation for the PRD scheme	Documental exam of 1 day. Assessment of the CB's head office of 3 days. Witness assessment and sampling of the CPCs as in the first case.
First accreditation for CBs with prior accreditation to ISO/IEC 17065 for the PRD scheme	Documental exam of 1 day. Assessment of the CB's head office of 2 days. Witness assessment and sampling of the CPCs as in the first case.
Extension of accreditation in other EPD typologies or CPC codes for CBs with prior accreditation in the EPD scheme	Documental exam of 0.5 day. - for extension to other typologies: witness assessment; - for extension to other CPC codes: on-site or witness assessment for the sampling of at least one of the CPCs for each category requested according to the classification of Annex 1 (accreditation is granted to all CPCs of the category to which the sampled CPC belongs).
Maintenance of accreditation	A witness assessment is carried out at least once per year. In this case the on-site surveillance can be substituted by a witness assessment. During the 4-year cycle usually a sampling takes place of all the categories and, where possible, of CPCs which were not covered in the witness or extension assessments.
ACCREDIA assessment team	The assessments are undertaken by ACCREDIA assessors, qualified for the EPD scheme. For documental exams and/or first accreditation or extension assessments, the presence may be required of an ACCREDIA technical expert.

## Process of certification

EPD verification certificate issued by the CB	<p>1) <u>EPD for single products and single issue</u> The certificate issued for EPDs regarding a number of products shall bear the references only to all the products included in the EPD verification and validation.</p> <p>2) <u>EPD Process</u> The certificate shall indicate the CPC codes for which the process was verified</p>
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	<p>by the organization with competence in the sector. Alternatively, the CB can indicate in the certificate the PCRs with respect to which the organization has developed the EPDs verified by the CB. The certificate is valid for three years.</p> <p>3) <u>EPD for sectors</u> The EPD sector certificate shall show (also as an annex) all the organizations/sites contained in the EPD sector (field of application of the certificate) as well as the productive sites used as a sample for determining the environmental impact of the sector stated in the EPD.</p>
Programming of the EPD verifications	<p>The EPD verification activity conducted by the CB consists of document examinations and verifications. The CB shall clarify in its regulations the criteria used for establishing whether the EPD verifications are performed at the operative locations of the applicant organization or elsewhere. Generally, the first verification and renewal of an EPD take place on-site. All verifications for the EPD process are always undertaken at the location of the organization at which the EPD process operates. The CB shall document a verification activity programme. The CB shall, for the EPD process, set out in its procedures the sampling criteria of the EPDs developed by the organization, and also the criteria applied for the inclusion in the sampling to be verified of the new EPDs developed by the organization.</p>
Duration of EPD verifications	<p>The CB shall have available a procedure for determining the duration of verifications for all EPD typologies in the scope of accreditation. The procedures shall take into consideration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- for EPDs for single products: the complexity of the product life cycle and the number of products included in the EPD;</li> <li>- for the EPD process: the necessity to examine the Management System of the process in addition to one or more EPDs developed by the organization and also the field of application of the certificate to be issued;</li> <li>- for the sector EPD: the environmental complexity of the sector and the number of sampled sites used for the evaluation of the environmental impact of the sector.</li> </ul>
Competencies of the CB's personnel	<p>The competencies specified required of the CB by the GPI shall be set out for the persons involved in the EPD verification process: verifier, decision-taking body, scheme manager (if identified by the CB) and the officer in charge of the contract review.</p>
Classification of the findings by the CB	<p>The CB shall define the criteria for the classification of NCs taking into consideration the activities performed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- document exam in the case of an EPD for single products, EPD for single use, EPD for sectors;</li> <li>- MS audit in the case of EPD process.</li> </ul> <p>The CB shall also clearly define the typology of any NC raised preventing the validation of the EPD or the certification of the EPD process, and which actions are required for such validation /certification. The criteria shall be made public.</p>

### Entry into force of the Circular

The Circular is applicable immediately from the date of publication. For CB's already holding EPD accreditation, the certificate will be changed to include all the CPCs belonging to the same category in accordance with the Annex within six months of the date of publication.

With kind regards,

Emanuele Riva  
Director of the Department of Certification and Inspection

## ANNEX I

For the provision of the PCR (Product Category Rules) and the classification of EPDs, the International EPD® System makes reference to the CPC codes (United Nations Central Product Classification). The following classification has been established with categories which gather CPCs with two digits:

### Category: Food & agricultural products

- [01](#) - Products of agriculture, horticulture and market gardening
- [02](#) - Live animals and animal products (excluding meat)
- [03](#) - Forestry and logging products
- [04](#) - Fish and other fishing products
- [21](#) - Meat, fish, fruit, vegetables, oils and fats
- [22](#) - Dairy products and egg products
- [23](#) - Grain mill products, starches and starch products; other food products
- [24](#) - Beverages
- [25](#) - Tobacco products

### Category: Construction products

- PCR and PCR Basic Module 2012:01 – Construction products and construction services

### Category: Constructions & infrastructure

- [53](#) – Constructions
- [54](#) - Construction works

### Category: Machinery & equipment

- [43](#) – General-purpose machinery
- [44](#) - Special-purpose machinery
- [45](#) – Office, accounting and computing machinery
- [46](#) – Electrical machinery and apparatus
- [47](#) – Radio, television and communication equipment and apparatus
- [48](#) – Medical appliances, precision and optical instruments, watches and clocks

### Category: Electricity

- [17](#) - Electricity, town gas, steam and hot water
- [69](#) - Electricity, gas and water distribution (on own account)

### Category: Furniture & other goods

- [38](#) - Furniture; other transportable goods n.e.c.

### Category: Transport vehicles & equipment

- [49](#) – Transport equipment

### Category: Textile & leather products

- [26](#) - Yarn and thread; woven and tufted textile fabrics
- [27](#) - Textile articles other than apparel
- [28](#) - Knitted or crocheted fabrics; wearing apparel
- [29](#) - Leather and leather products; footwear

### Category: Wood & paper products (non-construction)

- [31](#) - Products of wood, cork, straw and plaiting materials
- [32](#) - Pulp, paper and paper products; printed matter and related articles

### Category: Fuels & chemical products (non-construction)

- [11](#) - Coal and lignite; peat
- [12](#) - Crude petroleum and natural gas
- [13](#) - Uranium and thorium ores and concentrates
- [33](#) - Coke oven products; refined petroleum products; nuclear fuel

- [34](#) - Basic chemicals
- [35](#) - Other chemical products; man-made fibres

Category: Glass and plastic products (non-construction)

- [36](#) - Rubber and plastics products
- [37](#) - Glass and glass products and other non-metallic products n.e.c.

Category: Basic ores and minerals

- [14](#) – Metal ores
- [15](#) - Stone, sand and clay
- [16](#) - Other minerals

Category: Metal products (non-construction)

- [41](#) - Basic metals
- [42](#) - Fabricated metal products, except machinery and equipment

Category: Services

- [18](#) - Natural water
- [39](#) - Wastes or scraps
- [61](#) - Wholesale trade services
- [62](#) - Retail trade services
- [63](#) - Accommodation, food and beverage services
- [64](#) - Passenger transport services
- [65](#) - Freight transport services
- [66](#) - Rental services of transport vehicles with operators
- [67](#) - Supporting transport services
- [68](#) - Postal and courier services
- [71](#) - Financial and related services
- [72](#) - Real estate services
- [73](#) - Leasing or rental services without operator
- [81](#) - Research and development services
- [82](#) - Legal and accounting services
- [83](#) - Other professional, technical and business services
- [84](#) - Telecommunications, broadcasting and information supply services
- [85](#) - Support services
- [86](#) - Support services to agriculture, hunting, forestry, fishing, mining and utilities
- [87](#) - Maintenance, repair and installation (except construction) services
- [88](#) - Manufacturing services on physical inputs owned by others
- [89](#) - Other manufacturing services; publishing, printing and reproduction services; materials recovery services
- [91](#) - Public administration and other services provided to the community as a whole; compulsory social security services
- [92](#) - Education services
- [93](#) - Human health and social care services
- [94](#) - Sewage and waste collection, treatment and disposal and other environmental protection services
- [95](#) - Services of membership organizations
- [96](#) - Recreational, cultural and sporting services
- [97](#) - Other services
- [98](#) - Domestic services
- [99](#) - Services provided by extraterritorial organizations and bodies