A close-up photograph of a person's hand dropping a green plastic bottle with a blue cap into a recycling bin. The bin is light blue with a yellow funnel-shaped opening. The background is a blurred green landscape.

Half of all plastics ever manufactured have been made in the last 15 years.*

Plastics are causing loss of biodiversity, with around 700 marine species, including endangered ones, known to be negatively affected by plastics.*

Plastic pollution is estimated to cost the world \$2.59tn per year.**

*Source: National Geographic <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/environment/article/plastic-pollution>

**Source <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0025326X19302061>



We are in the midst of a global plastics crisis, with plastic production set to increase four-fold by 2050 and less than 9% of plastics currently being recycled, plastic pollution is affecting every corner of our planet. Given the gravity of this crisis, businesses can no longer assume that unsubstantiated claims, pledges, or pacts around their use of plastic will be enough to secure the public's trust in their brand. Now more than ever they need to prove the ways in which they are recycling, cutting the use of plastic and adopting alternative, compostable, materials through a robust certification process.

With pressure to reduce plastic usage coming from both consumers and governments, a certification against a trusted plastics standard can be of great value to businesses. At Control Union we have an array of plastic related certification and verification schemes. Between them, these schemes are suitable for companies of all sizes and from all sectors, in order to recognize their reductions in plastic impact, meet regulations and secure the public's trust for the long term.

The Control Union Plastics Certification Family



**Plastic Waste
Reduction Standard**
A VERRA STANDARD

Certification





PLASTIC FREE

The Plastic Free Certification program from A Plastic Planet is the world's first standard to accredit three types of product: Retail Ready Products, Packaging Products and Materials as Plastic Free. Control Union is the exclusive certification body for Plastic Free.

Shoppers are actively looking to buy products and packaging that do not contain indestructible plastic. This Mark is for them and deliberately designed to be clear, iconic and unambiguous. For products carrying the Plastic Free Mark, it is an aspirational mark of excellence and a demonstration of commitment to a future of products and packaging without plastic.

Overview

A Plastic Planet is a global solutions organisation with a single goal - to ignite and inspire the world to turn off the plastic tap.

They bring a fresh pro-business solutions-focused approach to environmental issues and own the Plastic Free Certification Program, which is a product specific certification.

Brands already bearing the Standard

Hundreds of brands are proudly carrying the Mark in countries across the world with a concentration in the EU market. This includes Teapigs, Percol Coffee, PLAYinChoc, Jellyfish Livewire, The Isle of Wight Distillery and Iceland.

Target Sectors

Food & drink, beauty, fashion, packaging, household, and gift cards to name a few.



Benefits:

- Clearly differentiating from the competition on the key issue of plastic
- Attracting shoppers actively looking for Plastic Free products
- Knowing the program is robust and international
- Association with A Plastic Planet's credibility and media reach



RESPONSIBLE PLASTIC MANAGEMENT

The Responsible Plastic Management certification comes from the not-for-profit social enterprise of the same name. Founded in 2019, their mission is to help businesses achieve a circular plastics economy by reducing plastic pollution through training, verification and certification.

Overview

Applicable to all sectors globally, the program can audit and certify the facts in declared Plastic Pacts, ensuring businesses have systems in place to reduce the use of plastics. The program uses policy, systems based standards and measurement in its approach.

Categorising businesses as either low, moderate or high plastic users, the scheme is based on 5 steps:

1. **Plastics Policy** - Commitment to Plastic Reduction
2. **Plastics Register** - Materials Mass Balance Inputs and Outputs
3. **Reduction Action Plan** - Understanding Options and Setting Realistic Targets
4. **Reduction Records** - Keeping track of Performance and commitment
5. **Improvement Commitment** - Continuous Improvement Cycle

Member Brands and partners

Heineken; Bombardier; Belfast Harbour; Meadow Foods, with the WWF and Ellen Macarthur Foundation as two key partner.

Target Sectors

Applicable for all sectors



Benefits:

- Reduce your impact on the environment
- Use the RPM Trust Mark for public claims
- Have a verified system to meet government's directives on plastic use reduction
- A competitive advantage when selling to environmentally conscious customers
- Potential to reduce costs associated with the production and use of plastics



OCEAN BOUND PLASTIC

The Ocean Bound Plastic Certification Program was co-developed by the NGO Zero Plastic Oceans and Control Union to protect oceans from the continuous leakage of Ocean Bound Plastic from land-based activities.

Overview

This program is designed to encourage the removal of Ocean Bound Plastic from the environment by adding financial value to effectively collecting and treating it before it reaches oceans. The scheme is composed of two subprograms:

- Ocean Bound Plastic Recycling
- Ocean Bound Plastic Neutrality

Certifications are available for those who collect or recycle Ocean Bound Plastic and those who finance this process. Certifications can cover individual, or multiple sites. The scheme aims to:

- Encourage Ocean Bound Plastic collection/cleaning from the environment to prevent contamination of oceans by plastic
- Ensure that the plastic collected is truly Ocean Bound Plastic
- Create additional value to products made with Certified Ocean Bound Plastic
- Generate a market for recyclable Ocean Bound Plastic, creating employment opportunities

Partners and Brands already certified

EcoFIL, Race for Water, Oceanworks, Mareaverde and Heng Hiap Industries

Target Sectors

Applicable for all sectors



Benefits:

- Gain recognition for environmental cleaning efforts
- Promote the use of recyclables, reducing fossil fuel usage.
- Access higher value markets and environmentally conscious consumers
- Be acknowledged protection of our oceans and their biodiversity
- Have a positive social impact creating jobs and better economic opportunities within vulnerable communities



GLOBAL RECYCLED STANDARD



RECYCLED CLAIM STANDARD

The Recycled Claim Standard (RCS) and Global Recycled Standard (GRS) are full product standards to verify and track recycled raw materials through a supply chain. Additionally, GRS includes criteria to prevent the use of potentially hazardous chemicals and verifies positive social or environmental production at the facilities. The RCS was developed by the Materials Traceability Working Group, part of OIA's Sustainability Working Group. GRS was originally developed by Control Union Certifications before ownership passed to the Textile Exchange.

Overview

The primary goal of these Standards is to verify the use of recycled materials in products and provide consumers with a tool to make informed purchasing decisions.

Furthermore, the objectives of the Global Recycled Standard are to define requirements to ensure accurate content claims and good working conditions, and that harmful environmental and chemical impacts are minimised. In addition GRS aims to:

- Provide assurance that products are processed more sustainably.
- Drive higher percentages of recycled content in products.





GLOBAL RECYCLED STANDARD



RECYCLED CLAIM STANDARD

Certification against these schemes ensures that the identity of the recycled material is maintained throughout the supply chain - from the recycler to the final product. Materials are verified to meet the ISO definition of recycled. Both pre-consumer and post-consumer material is accepted.

The **Recycled Claim Standard 100** guarantees that the product contains 95-100% recycled content without any non-certified material of the same type.

The **Recycled Claim Standard Blended** guarantees that the product contains 5-95% recycled content with no other restrictions on the remaining content.

The **Global Recycled Standard** guarantees that the product contains at least 20% recycled material (50% is the minimum content for labelling), with no other restrictions on the remaining content.

Partners and Brands already certified

Around 7,000 companies are certified to the Global Recycled Standard. It covers companies in ginning, spinning, weaving and knitting, dyeing and printing and stitching in more than 50 countries. This includes All Saints, Keel Toys Ltd, LF Fashion Ltd and ELeather.

Benefits:

- The RCS and GRS are the leading standards for recycled materials in the apparel industry
- Certification against the standards guarantees traceability from recycler to the final product
- Certification against the GRS guarantees ethical and responsible production, chemical restrictions for any toxic inputs and environmentally friendly practices in production
- Certified products benefit from being able to carry the scheme logos, providing reassurance to customers and consumers



ISCC PLUS

ISCC (International System for Carbon Certification) created ISCC Plus for recycled plastics and bio-based materials, to assist in the transition towards a circular plastics economy. It is a thorough basis for the voluntary implementation of sustainability criteria throughout supply chains, as well as verifying that companies meet environmental and social standards.

Background

Created to build upon existing certifications, companies with an existing ISCC-EU certificate can extend to ISCC PLUS during the validity period of their existing certificate. ISCC PLUS also applies for raw materials that are not covered under other similar schemes, including any bio-based or circular products that can be used to produce bioplastic, recycled plastic and recycled bioplastic.

Brands already bearing the Standard

In total, ISCC is certifying around 4000 companies worldwide, including Braskem SA – Brazil, Beiersdorf AG – Germany, Jokey SE – Germany, Natureworks LLC – USA and Itochu Plastics – Japan.

Target Sectors

- Any bio-based or circular products that can be used to produce bioplastic, recycled plastic and recycled bioplastic
- ISCC distinguishes its sectors in “energy”, “industrial applications” and “food and feed”

Benefits:

- With an ISCC Plus certificate, your company has a robust proof of traceability towards a sustainable source.
- ISCC is already broadly implemented on a global scale in a broad range of supply chains
- As Control Union is a leading certification body for Biofuels and Biomass programs globally (with offices in 70+ countries), we are able to support your full supply chain.
- Your valid ISCC certificate is proof of your compliance with ISCC requirements on sustainable biomass production, traceability of origin and documentation of greenhouse gas saving potential compared to fossil fuels.



PLASTIC WASTE REDUCTION STANDARD

The Plastic Waste Reduction Program, managed by scheme owner Verra, aims to support and scale up activities that increase plastic waste recycling and/or collection from the environment.

The Plastic Waste Reduction Program (Plastic Program) is a crediting mechanism that drives investment into projects that verifiably reduce plastic in the environment anywhere in the world. Projects that collect and/or recycle plastic waste and meet the requirements in the Plastic Waste Reduction Standard (Plastic Standard) are eligible to register with the program and can be issued Plastic Credits. Each Plastic Credit represents one tonne of plastic waste that would otherwise have not been collected or recycled. These credits can be sold to companies that want to compensate their own plastic footprint.

Plastic Standard certification works a little differently than our other plastic certifications – all projects have to go through the processes of validation and verification. Control Union is an approved Validation and Verification Body (VVB) and offers:

1. Validation of project design (before or during project implementation); and
2. Periodic verifications of the amount of collected/recycled plastic waste (during and/or after project implementation).

Target sectors

Applicable for any company interested that sets up activities to collect and/or recycle plastic above baseline rates.

Benefits:

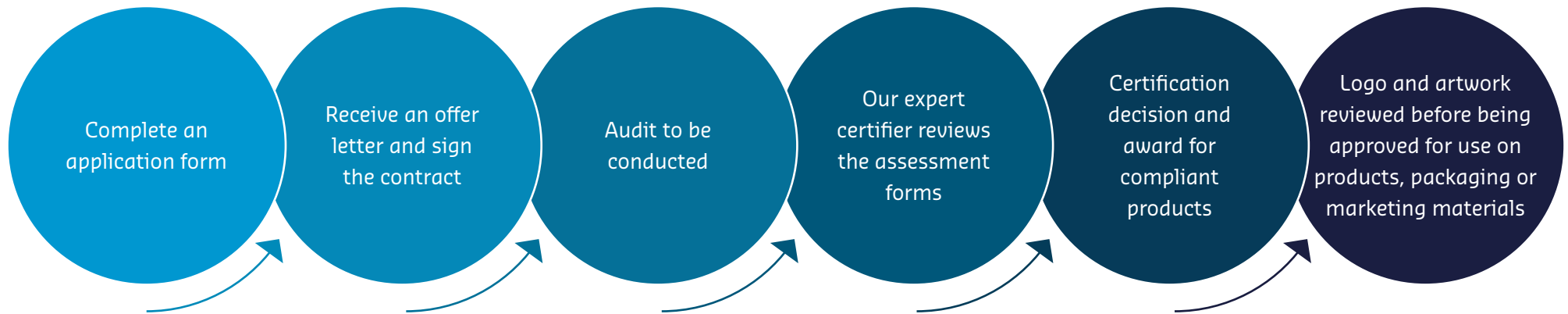
- Support companies in their ambitions to reduce the plastic footprint of their operations
- Secure the credibility and quality of your Plastic Credits
- Finance your plastic waste collection and/or recycling activities
- Generate additional revenue streams through the sale of Plastic Credits
- Build a sustainable brand

The certification process





Whilst the process for each scheme has slight variations, the overall approach for compliant companies to gain certification is as follows:



Summary





	Plastic Free	RPM	OBP	GRS	RCS	ISCC Plus	PWRS
Chain of custody	No (Product specific)	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Management system	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Certificate validity	1 year	1 year	1 year	1 year	1 year	1 year	N/A
Type of audit	Remote assessment	On-site*	On-site*	On-site*	On-site*	On-site*	On-site*
Can be audited along with other schemes	N/A	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

**These standards require onsite audits unless this is impossible due to Covid-19 restrictions, in which case they will permit a remote audit.*

