GREEN BUTTON
GOOD FOR PEOPLE.
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GREEN BUTTON CERTIFICATION PROGRAMME

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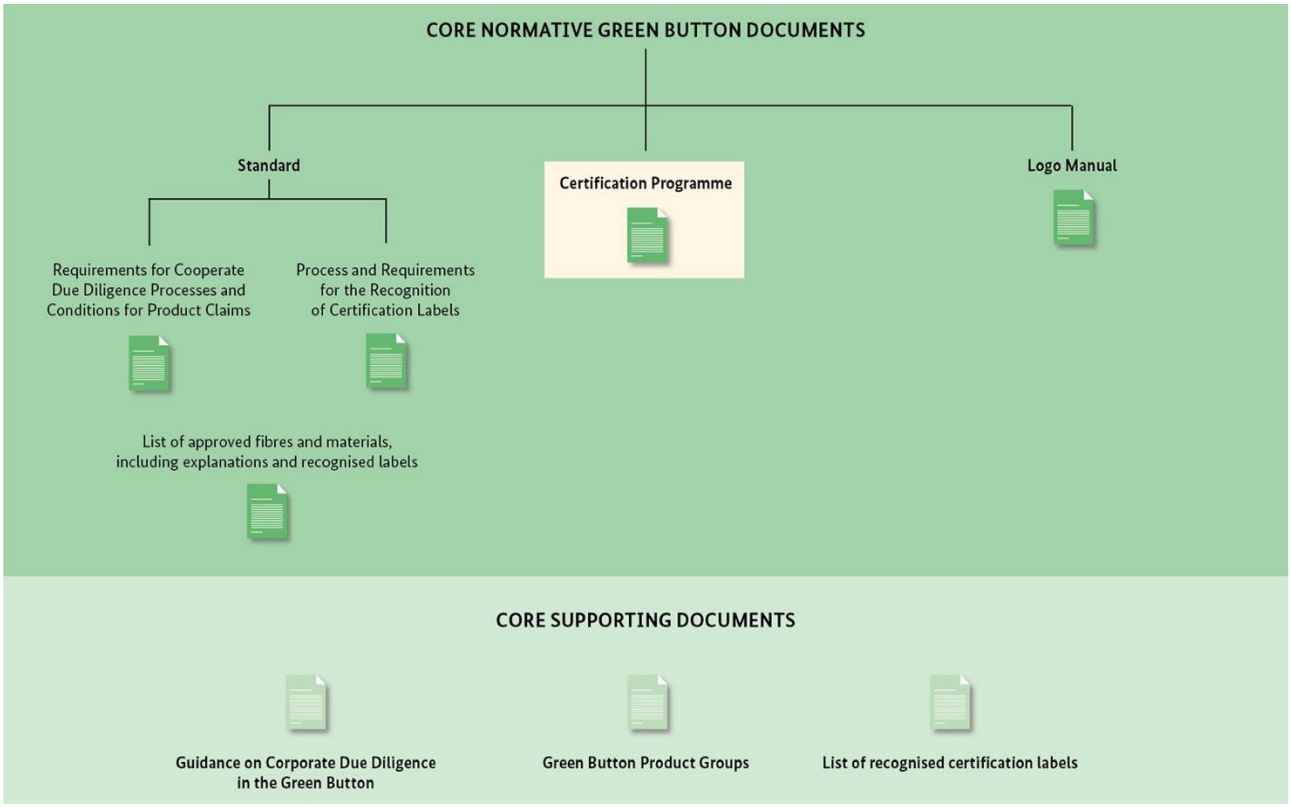
Green Button | Documents



Overview of the Green Button Standard's normative documents

GREEN BUTTON SECRETARIAT

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Introduction

The Green Button (*Grüner Knopf*) is a government-run certification label for sustainable textiles and is awarded on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). It provides consumers as well as public and private procurement agencies with guidance when purchasing textiles.

To this end, the Green Button is awarded to textile products that are sold by responsibly operating companies, are made only from approved fibres and materials, and whose production processes at the stages of manufacturing, wet processes, and raw material extraction have been verified by recognised certification labels with regard to social and ecological criteria.

The Green Button was launched on 9 September 2019 with an introductory phase. With the help of an independent advisory board, the Green Button was further developed between 2020 and 2021 and improved in two public consultations based on numerous valuable responses from various stakeholders. In doing so, the Green Button has been informed by the best practices of ISEAL (International Social and Environmental Accreditation and Labelling Alliance), the global membership initiative of sustainability systems. The result is a revised Green Button Standard, which consists of the documents *Green Button Standard:* Requirements *for Corporate Due Diligence Processes and Conditions for Product Claims* (link) and *Green Button Standard: Process and Requirements for the Recognition of Certification Labels (Meta-Label Approach)* (link). In addition to the content revisions at the level of the requirements, the introduction of the accreditation of the Green Button certification bodies is a significant innovation in the verification process, which strengthens the robustness and credibility of the certification label.

Companies wishing to display the Green Button Standard on their textile products must meet the requirements of the following normative documents:

- *Green Button Standard: Requirements for Corporate Due Diligence Processes and Conditions for Product Claims* (link) and
- *Green Button Standard: Process and Requirements for the Recognition of Certification Labels (Meta-Label Approach)* (link).
- Compliance with the *Process and Requirements for the Recognition of Certification Labels (Meta-Label Approach)* in the recognition area of fibre and material use as well as the *List of approved fibres and materials incl. explanations and recognised certification labels* shall be demonstrated by 31 July 2026 at the latest. Only when these requirements are met (on a voluntary basis or after 31 July 2026) does a product fully meet the requirements of the current version of the Green Button. Before 31 July 2026, products can also be labelled with the Green Button if they only demonstrate compliance with the requirements for manufacturing and wet processes via recognised labels.

This certification programme will be mandatory from 1 December 2024. It is intended and binding for certification bodies that carry out evaluations, assessments, and certification decisions to determine conformity in accordance with the Green Button Standard. Together with the Green Button Standard, it forms the basis for Green Button certification and licensing. The Green Button has a three-year certification cycle, which includes initial evaluation and surveillance in the first and second year after a positive certification decision and recertification in the third year.

The Green Button certification programme is based on the International Standard *DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065:2013-01, Conformity assessment - Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services* (hereinafter referred to as "DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065"). The standard formulates general requirements for accredited certification bodies.

DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065 requirements that apply unchanged to the Green Button are referenced in this certification programme. In many places, the Green Button goes beyond the requirements of DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065 to meet the special stakeholder expectations of certification labels making sustainability claims. The additional requirements are also intended to ensure effective cooperation of accredited certification bodies with the Green Button Secretariat, the accreditation body, the issuing body, and the scheme owner. The additional or adapted requirements are formulated in this document and, together with the DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065 requirements, form the valid certification programme. Thus, in order to understand the complete Green Button certification programme, DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065 and the present certification programme must be read in parallel.

Analogous to DIN EN ISO/IEC 17000 and DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065, the following verb forms also apply to the present additional requirements:

- "shall" indicates a mandatory requirement for certification bodies,
- "should" a recommendation (this may only be deviated from in justified cases),
- "may" a permission and
- "can" a possibility or a capability.

Overview of validity and changes to previous versions:

Versions	Published	Valid from	Changes
4.1	September 2024	1 December 2024	For the purpose of accreditation of the Green Button programme and to remove ambiguities. Important changes are: • Adjustment of the transition period for product claims • Extension of the accreditation deadline • Addition of the normative document “The Green Button Portal – Guide for Green Button Certification Bodies”, so that this becomes mandatory for certification bodies • Compliance with ISO 19011 now limited to the following evaluation types: document review and interview • Chapter on sampling revised • Specification of consequences of “not fulfilled” and “sufficiently fulfilled” • Deadlines defined for uploading the evaluation report to the Green Button portal

			• Specification of assessment of the evaluation • Clearer determination of the timing of monitoring • Definition of exceptional cases for extension of the certification and monitoring cycle • Chapter on termination, suspension or withdrawal of certification structured more clearly and tasks to be performed formulated more precisely • Simplification of the chapter on the evaluation of affiliated companies • Removal of the requirement that certification bodies must be approved for at least one comparable sustainability standard
4.0	July 2022	1 August 2022	Extensive revision. Important changes are: Adaptation of requirements for certification bodies, especially accreditation Introduction of requirements for accreditation bodies Adaptation of the qualification requirements for evaluation personnel Concretisation of the audit time calculation Concretisation of the sampling Concretisation of the product testing Adjustment of the modalities of evaluations, especially introduction of the possibility of remote surveillance, flexibilization of deadlines. Adaptation of the requirements for registration of products between evaluations Specification of the requirements for evaluations of distribution companies/group structures Regulations for the transition period from Green Button Standard 1.0 to 2.0
3.0	4 September 2020	5 October 2020	Fundamental revision based on ISO 17065 and Green Button-specific requirements
2.9	10 June 2020	10 June 2020	Minor revision
2.8	5 August 2019	5 August 2019	First version

1 Scope

(adapted) This certification programme contains requirements for the competence, consistent operation and impartiality of certification bodies evaluating companies seeking to certify their due diligence processes and practices according to the Green Button Standard. Companies that label their products and hold a certificate of compliance meet the specific requirements for implementing corporate due diligence regarding human rights and the environment in textile supply chains (certified processes) set by the scheme owner. Certification of these processes also requires consideration of the management system of the company being evaluated. This certification programme defines the necessary conformity assessment procedures and methods for the certification body to evaluate both processes and the management system.

2 Normative references

See 2 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

(additionally) In addition to the normative references listed in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065 and this certification programme, which must be applied by all certification bodies, the documents listed below form the basis for Green Button evaluation and certification:

- The currently valid version of the *Green Button Standard* (link), including the glossary
- The most current version, respectively, of *the Secretariat's templates for evaluation reports, the product list, and the certificate*
- The Green Button Portal – Guide for Green Button Certification Bodies

All valid versions of the normative documents are stored in the Green Button portal and on the Green Button website. If transitional periods apply, these are noted in the respective documents.

2.1 (additionally) Supporting documents

(additionally) The Green Button Secretariat supports clients and certification bodies by providing further information documents. In particular, certification bodies shall familiarise themselves with the document *Guidance on Implementation of Corporate Due Diligence in the Green Button*, as it provides important guidance on the meaning of the individual indicators. In addition, it defines expectations of clients with regard to the fulfilment of their corporate due diligence obligations.

3 Terms and definitions

See 3 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

3.1 Client

See 3.1 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

3.2 Consultancy

See 3.2 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

3.3 Evaluation

See 3.3 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

3.4 Product

See 3.4 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

(additionally) NOTE 4: In the context of the present certification programme, these are textile products that may be labelled with the Green Button Logo.

3.5 Process

See 3.5 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

(additionally) EXAMPLE: In the context of this certification programme, these are processes for implementing corporate due diligence, for example the process for analysing environmental and human rights risks in supply chains.

3.6 Service

See 3.6 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

(additionally) NOTE 3: In the context of the present certification programme, this includes e.g. the manufacturing of textiles.

3.7 Certification requirement

See 3.7 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

3.8 Product requirement

See 3.8 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

3.9 Certification scheme

See 3.9 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

3.10 Scope of certification

See 3.10 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

3.11 Scheme owner

See 3.11 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

3.12 Certification body

See 3.12 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

3.13 Impartiality

See 3.13 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

(additionally) For the application of this certification programme, the glossary in the normative documents of the Green Button Standard applies in the currently valid version.

4 General requirements

4.1 Legal and contractual matters

4.1.1 Legal responsibility

See 4.1.1 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

(additionally) Apart from legal entities, all other organisations with legal capacity can also be certification bodies, provided that they can sue and be sued. Natural persons are not organisations in this sense.

4.1.2 Certification agreement

4.1.2.1

See 4.1.2.1 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

(additionally) The requirements for certification agreements and the responsibility of the certification body required by ISO 17065 remain unaffected.

The agreement shall have been concluded in text form by the client and the certification body before the evaluation begins. The certification body may only use general terms and conditions (GTC) if this has been expressly agreed with the client as part of the agreement and the certification body has excluded contradictory GTC of the client.

The certification agreement must stipulate the applicability of German law and contain an arbitration clause that is internationally enforceable. Exceptions to this rule must be approved in writing by the Green Button Secretariat before the certification agreement is concluded.

4.1.2.2

See 4.1.2.2 in *DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065*

a) See 4.1.2.2 a) in *DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065*

b) See 4.1.2.2 b) in *DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065*

c) (adapted) the client makes all necessary arrangements for

   1) the conduct of the evaluation and surveillance, including provision for examining documentation and records, and access to the relevant equipment, location(s), area(s), personnel, and client's subcontractors where these are part of the textile supply chain. (additionally) This includes the need for the certification body to have access to all client information deemed relevant to the evaluation, including confidential information and that related to the client's outsourced activities. Upon request, the client must grant the same rights to the parties involved within the organisational structure of the Green Button (in particular the Secretariat/GIZ, the scheme owner, the accreditation body, the issuing body and any bodies designated by the Secretariat). Inspection of the information forms the basis for the integrity programme and serves in particular to verify and validate the assessment scheme for the requirements, to evaluate and, if necessary, to improve the evaluation processes for certification in order to ensure the quality and consistency of evaluations. Inspection of the information is limited to the aforementioned purpose. The information and documents (including the content of conversations) disclosed in this context will be treated confidentially and will not be disclosed to third parties;

   2) the investigation of grievances and evidence;

   3) the participation of the Secretariat, the scheme owner, the accreditation body, as well as any other bodies designated by the Secretariat within the Green Button organisational structure as observers in order to assess the certification body and gain knowledge about the practical application of the Green Button Standard;

d) (adapted) the client makes claims regarding the certification consistent with its scope;

e) See 4.1.2.2 e) in *DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065*

f) (adapted) the client complies with the license agreement with the issuing body even in the event of suspension, withdrawal, or termination of certification;

g) See 4.1.2.2 g) in *DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065*

h) See 4.1.2.2 h) in *DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065*

i) See 4.1.2.2 i) in *DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065*

j) (adapted) the client keeps records of all grievances made known to the client relating to compliance with certification requirements and makes these records available to the certification body during the evaluation; and

   1) takes appropriate action with respect to such grievances;

   2) See 4.1.2.2 j) 2) in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

k) See 4.1.2.2 k) in *DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065*

   (adapted) NOTE: Examples of changes are:

   - (additionally) significant changes to the corporate due diligence processes, such as a realignment of the risk analysis process.

4.1.2.3 (additionally)

(additionally) Furthermore, the agreement on the provision of certification activities must stipulate that the following information can be published on the website www.gruener-knopf.de/en and on vergabestelle.gruener-knopf.de/unternehmen in the event of certification:

a) Name of the client
b) Address of the client
c) Scope of the certificate
d) Expiration date of the certificate
e) Certification status
f) Name of the certification body
g) Date, location, and scope of the respective evaluation

This information must also be published in the event of unsuccessful recertification or surveillance.

4.1.3 Use of license, certificates and marks of conformity

4.1.3.1

(adapted) The certification body shall direct ownership, use and display of licenses, certificates, marks of conformity, and any other mechanisms for indicating a process is certified. This refers only to licenses, certificates, and marks of conformity issued by the certification body itself (see also NOTE 3).

See 4.1.3.1 NOTE 1 and 2 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

(additionally) NOTE 3: The use of the Green Button Logo as well as the advertising of the certification according to the Green Button Standard is regulated by a licensing agreement between the client and the issuing body. The issuing body ensures that the logo is displayed correctly.

4.1.3.2

(adapted) Incorrect references to the certification programme and/or misleading use of licenses, certificates, marks, or other mechanisms indicating that a company's due diligence processes and methods are certified, found in publications or other outlets, shall be reported to the issuing body by the certification body.

(adapted) NOTE: Incorrect references and misleading uses will be dealt with by the issuing body.

4.1.3.3 (additionally)

(additionally) In the event that the certification body wishes to use the Green Button Logo for marketing or information purposes, it must sign a licensing agreement with the Secretariat and comply with the associated rules.

4.1.4 (additionally) Change of certification body

4.1.4.1 (additionally)

(additionally) The client shall have the possibility to change the certification body, however:

a) The client may not change to another certification body during an ongoing evaluation. An evaluation is considered to be ongoing as soon as the certification body has started reviewing documents relevant to the audit in preparation for the actual evaluation.

b) A client with suspended certification shall remain with their current certification body until the nonconformities have been resolved.

c) Before taking over, the new certification body must ensure that the client has no outstanding non-conformities and that the client is aware of any need for improvement and the associated timeline for implementing the improvements.

d) The validity date of the current certificate shall be maintained under the new certification body and all outstanding surveillance of the current certification cycle shall be conducted as described in this certification programme.

4.1.4.2 (additionally)

(additionally) When the time comes for the client to change, the current certification body shall provide the following documentation to the succeeding certification body for the period of the current certification cycle:

a) Copies of previous reports, including reports of initial evaluations, surveillance, special evaluations and recertification evaluations, where available;

b) all evidence submitted to the certification body by the client, if the client agrees to make it available.

4.1.4.3 (additionally)

(additionally) During the initiation of a transfer, but at the latest on the day of the client's transfer, the subsequent certification body shall inform the Secretariat and the issuing body of the client's transfer.

4.1.4.4 (additionally)

(additionally) In the event that the certification body plans to abandon its Green Button activities, it shall inform its existing clients as well as the Secretariat and the issuing body at least three months in advance. The certification body shall implement 4.1.4.2 at the latest on the day of the discontinuation of its Green Button activities. If the certification body discontinues its Green Button activities and the client must therefore contract a new certification body, 4.1.4.1. a) - c) shall not apply.

4.2 Management of impartiality

4.2.1

See 4.2.1 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

4.2.2

See 4.2.2 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

4.2.3

See 4.2.3 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

4.2.4

See 4.2.4 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

4.2.5

See 4.2.5 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

4.2.6

See 4.2.6 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

a) See 4.2.6 a) in *DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065*

b) See 4.2.6 b) in *DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065*

c) See 4.2.6 c) in *DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065*

d) See 4.2.6 d) in *DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065*

(adapted) offer or provide consultancy or internal auditing to any Green Button clients.

(adapted) NOTE 1: This does not preclude the following: the possibility of exchange of information (e.g. explanations of evaluation results or clarifying requirements) between the certification body and its clients.

4.2.7

See 4.2.7 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

(additionally) This includes internal and external staff of the legally separate legal entities.

See 4.2.7 NOTE in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

4.2.8

(adapted) When the separate legal entity (or natural persons, such as external auditors) in 4.2.7 offers or produces the certified product (including products to be certified) or offers or provides consultancy (see 3.2), the certification body's management personnel and personnel in the review and certification decision-making process shall not be involved in the activities of the separate legal entity. The personnel of the separate legal entity shall not be involved in the management of the certification body, the review, or the certification decision.

See 4.2.8 NOTE in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

4.2.9

See 4.2.9 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

4.2.10

(adapted) Internal and external personnel of the certification body who have provided consultancy services to the client shall not be involved in the evaluation of the client and the certification decision for the client for at least three years and for at least one certification cycle.

(not relevant) 4.2.10 NOTE 1 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

4.2.11

See 4.2.11 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

4.2.12

See 4.2.12 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

4.3 Liability and financing

4.3.1

See 4.3.1 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

4.3.2

See 4.3.2 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

4.4 Non-discriminatory conditions

4.4.1

See 4.4.1 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

4.4.2

(adapted) The certification body shall make its services accessible to all applicants whose activities fall within the scope of its operations, provided that the applicants are eligible to apply for a Green Button license according to the issuing body.

4.4.3

See 4.4.3 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

4.4.4

See 4.4.4 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

4.5 Confidentiality

4.5.1

See 4.5.1 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

4.5.2

See 4.5.2 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

4.5.3

See 4.5.3 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

4.6 Publicly available information

See 4.6 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

a) See 4.6 a) in *DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065*

(additionally) NOTE: The certification body should note that this certification programme is publicly available on the website https://www.gruener-knopf.de/en;

b) See 4.6 b) in *DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065*

c) See 4.6 c) in *DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065*

(adapted) information about procedures for handling complaints and appeals shall be published by the certification body;

(additionally) information related to the Green Button shall be made available to the Secretariat and the scheme owner upon request.

5 Structural requirements

5.1 Organizational structure and top management

5.1.1

See 5.1.1 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

5.1.2

See 5.1.2 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

5.1.3

See 5.1.3 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

5.1.4

See 5.1.4 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

5.2 Mechanism for safeguarding impartiality

5.2.1

(adapted) The certification body shall have a mechanism for safeguarding its impartiality. The tasks of the mechanism shall include:

a) advising the certification body on its policies and principles relating to the impartiality of its evaluation and certification activities;

b) preventing any tendency on the part of the certification body to threaten the impartiality of the evaluation and certification activities through commercial or other considerations;

c) advising the certification body on matters that affect or can affect impartiality and confidence in evaluation and certification, including openness.

See 5.2.1 NOTES in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

5.2.2

See 5.2.2 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

5.2.3

See 5.2.3 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

5.2.4

See 5.2.4 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

5.3 (additionally) Accreditation of certification bodies and requirements for personnel

(additionally) All certification bodies shall be accredited for the Green Button conformity assessment programme by their national accreditation body in accordance with ISO 17065 as defined in Regulation (EC) 765/2008 before the certification body enters into a certification agreement with clients for the Green Button. Even after accreditation has taken place, the Secretariat or a body designated by it carries out certain supervisory functions as part of an integrity program.

Transitional provision: Certification bodies that were already approved for the Green Button 1.0 and that submitted an application for accreditation up to an including 31 July 2024, shall be grandfathered until the decision on their accreditation has been made. In the event of a negative accreditation decision, clients must be transferred to an accredited certification body in accordance with the applicable programme rules (see 4.1.4).

5.3.1 (additionally) Requirements for certification body personnel

5.3.1.1 (additionally) Requirements for the personnel's (professional) qualification

(additionally) Personnel for evaluations and for certification decisions shall have an attestation from the Secretariat confirming their (professional) qualification before they make an evaluation or certification decision for the first time. The attestation is issued if:

a) Appendix 1: Additional requirements for certification bodies and their personnel is fulfilled and

b) The personnel have successfully participated in the Green Button training programme according to the current version of the standard and the certification programme.

After receiving the attestation, the personnel shall regularly attend the Secretariat's calibration meetings (i.e. attend at least half of the scheduled meetings). If this does not happen, the Secretariat reserves the right to withdraw the personnel's attestation of (professional) qualification.

The requirements for the certification body's management of competence (see 6.1 ff.) remain unaffected by this.

5.3.1.2 (additionally) Further requirements for certification body personnel

(additionally) In addition to the requirements for 5.3.1.1 the personnel shall fulfil the conditions laid down in Appendix 1: Additional requirements for certification bodies and their personnel. Proof of this must be provided to the accreditation body.

5.3.2 (additionally) Duties of the certification body

5.3.2.1 (additionally)

(additionally) The certification body shall operate in accordance with the applicable Green Button certification programme and maintain its accreditation. In case of repeated non-compliance, sanctions can be imposed (5.3.4).

5.3.2.2 (additionally)

(additionally) The certification body shall grant the accreditation body, according to Art. 5 Para. 4 of Regulation (EC) 765/2008 and § 3 AkkStelleG, as well as the Secretariat and any bodies designated by the Secretariat access to and inspection of all relevant documents and information in order to enable the verification of compliance with the accreditation and licensing requirements. Any arrangements between the certification body and the client shall be made in such a way as to ensure this (see also 4.1.2). This includes in particular that:

a) certification agreements between the certification body and the client regulate the participation and disclosure of information as well as the right of access not only for the certification body but also for the accreditation body, the Secretariat and any bodies designated by the Secretariat;

b) all documents, records, and objective proof related to the evaluation and certification of the client are kept at the certification body and are accessible to the accreditation body as well as the Secretariat and any bodies designated by the Secretariat for monitoring purposes.

c) Certificates of the (professional) qualification of personnel for evaluations and for certification decisions in the course of accreditation must be submitted to the accreditation body.

5.3.2.3 (additionally)

(additionally) Should the accreditation of the certification body for the Green Button be suspended or withdrawn, the certification body shall inform the Secretariat immediately.

The certification body shall inform the accreditation body immediately of any changes that could affect the accreditations.

5.3.2.4 (additionally)

(additionally) The certification body shall allow for accompanied evaluations of Green Button clients and witness audits by the Secretariat or bodies designated by the Secretariat or the accreditation body. Comments from the Secretariat or accreditation body following an accompanied evaluation, in particular to improve implementation of the certification programme's requirements and interpretation of the Green Button Standard, shall be systematically processed and implemented by the certification body in accordance with Chapter 8.7 and 8.8 of DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065, otherwise the sanctions listed under 5.3.4 can be imposed.

5.3.2.5 (additionally)

(additionally) The certification body shall always ensure that the presentation of the Green Button in its communication with clients and in its external presentation is appropriate, up-to-date, and correct in terms of content. This refers both to the content related to the Green Button and to the activities of the certification body within the scope of the Green Button. In case of doubt, the certification body should contact the Secretariat to check the content and means of communication.

5.3.3 (additionally) Duties of the accreditation body

(additionally) The responsible accreditation body shall conduct its activities in accordance with *DIN EN ISO/IEC 17011* (Conformity assessment – General requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies).

Before taking up accreditation activities, appointed expert evaluators must successfully complete the Green Button training programme offered by the Secretariat.

In addition, the accreditation body must share assessment reports with the Secretariat if they concern certification bodies that offer or want to offer Green Button certification activities.

5.3.4 (additionally) Calibration and sanctions

5.3.4.1 (additionally)

(additionally) If a certification body or its appointed personnel fails to comply with the requirements listed under 5.3 or ignores any comments made by the accreditation body, the Secretariat, bodies designated by the Secretariat or the scheme owner, one or more of the following measures may become necessary, depending on the severity of the incidents:

a) notice with an offer of dialogue to the certification body
b) formal request for correction
c) submission and implementation of an action plan by the certification body
d) more intensive supervision within the framework of the integrity programme
e) withdrawal of the attestation of the personnel's (professional) qualification
f) financial sanctions/contractual penalties

It should be noted that the national accreditation authority decides on its own authority on the suspension or withdrawal of accreditation.

5.3.4.2 (additionally)

(additionally) If a certification body uses personnel for evaluations and certification decisions who do not have the required qualification, this constitutes a significant breach.

5.3.4.3 (additionally)

(additionally) For a certification body with suspended accreditation, certification activities are suspended. This means that no new clients may be contracted and no new evaluations of existing clients may be initiated. The certification body shall inform its existing clients about the suspension of evaluation activities within four weeks.

The suspended accreditation of the certification body shall be reactivated if the conditions imposed by the accreditation body have been implemented satisfactorily. This shall be confirmed by the accreditation body in text form and communicated to the Secretariat. This shall be evidenced by submission of the confirmation of the accreditation decision issued by the accreditation body or confirmation of successful monitoring and resolution of nonconformities or completion of accepted corrective actions.

If the accreditation of a certification body for the Green Button is withdrawn, the certification body shall inform its affected clients of this in writing within four weeks. The certification body shall inform its clients that they shall commission a new certification body to continue their certification before the next evaluation, but

within six months at the latest. If this does not happen, the certificates of the respective clients lose their validity.

The certification body shall establish internal rules for the transfer of certificates when the Green Button accreditation expires, based on the *IAF Mandatory Document for the Transfer of Accredited Certification of Management Systems*. This applies to both relinquishing and accepting certification bodies. In this context, the certification body shall also follow the requirements according to 4.1.4.

The date on which the accreditation body has formally informed the certification body of the suspension or withdrawal of its accreditation shall be deemed to be the effective date for the commencement of the above-mentioned periods. The validity of the notice of suspension of accreditation or immediate execution is not relevant.

6 Resource requirements

6.1 Certification body personnel

6.1.1 General

6.1.1.1
See 6.1.1.1 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

(additionally) The term "personnel" always means internal and external personnel. Only natural persons may be considered as "personnel". In order to "have access", there shall at least be a legally enforceable agreement with the natural person in the sense of 6.1.3.

See 6.1.1.1 NOTE in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

6.1.1.2
See 6.1.1.2 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

(additionally) Personnel used for evaluations and certification decisions shall have been previously approved by the Secretariat and maintain the approval (see 5.3.1 and in the Annex).

6.1.1.3
See 6.1.1.3 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

6.1.2 Management of competence for personnel involved in the certification process

6.1.2.1
See 6.1.2.1 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

(additionally) The regulations for the approval of personnel do not replace the requirements under 6.1.2 but are a supplement for the certification body. The procedure shall require from the certification body:

a) See 6.1.2.1 a) in *DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065*
b) See 6.1.2.1 b) in *DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065*
c) See 6.1.2.1 c) in *DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065*
d) See 6.1.2.1 d) in *DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065*

e) See 6.1.2.1 e) in *DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065*

(additionally) The competence management process shall further require the certification body to ensure that personnel employed for evaluations and certification decisions under the Green Button meet the requirements in 5.3.1 and participates in the Secretariat's regular calibration meetings.

6.1.2.2

See 6.1.2.2 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

a) See 6.1.2.2 a) in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

b) See 6.1.2.2 b) in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

c) See 6.1.2.2 c) in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

d) See 6.1.2.2 d) in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

e) See 6.1.2.2 e) in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

f) See 6.1.2.2 f) in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

g) See 6.1.2.2 g) in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

h) See 6.1.2.2 h) in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

(additionally) evidence of compliance with the suitability requirements and training for the Green Button.

6.1.3 Contract with the personnel

(adapted) The certification body shall require personnel to make evaluations and certification decisions by means of a contract or other document by which they expressly commit themselves in writing to the following:

a) See 6.1.3 a) in *DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065*

b) See 6.1.3 b) in *DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065*

c) See 6.1.3 c) in *DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065*

(additionally) to comply with the rules and requirements set by the Green Button.

(additionally) An "other document" may be used as an alternative to a contract only if the natural person is already employed via a contract with an entity in terms of 7.6.3 and 7.6.4.

See 6.1.3 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

6.2 Resources for evaluation

6.2.1 Internal resources

See 6.2.1 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

6.2.2 External resources (outsourcing)

6.2.2.1

(adapted) The certification body shall not outsource evaluations and certification decisions. The use of external personnel with a contractual commitment does not constitute outsourcing.

(not relevant) 6.2.2.1 NOTES 1 and 2 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

See 6.2.2.1 NOTE 3 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

6.2.2.2
(adapted) The certification body shall not outsource evaluation activities and certification decisions to non-independent bodies.

6.2.2.3

(not relevant) Outsourcing is not permitted

6.2.2.4

(not relevant) Outsourcing is not permitted

7 Process requirements

7.1 General

7.1.1

(adapted) Within the scope of the Green Button, the certification body shall apply the Green Button certification programme.

See 7.1.1 NOTES in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

7.1.2

(adapted) For the evaluation and certification of the client, the certification body shall apply the respective currently valid version of the normative documents of the Green Button Programme, together with the definitions in the glossary contained therein.

7.1.3

(adapted) Should the certification body require explanations regarding the application of these documents, it shall request an official interpretation from the Secretariat.

7.2 Application

7.2.1 (additionally) Assessment of eligibility to apply by the issuing body

(additionally) Whether a client is eligible to apply is decided by the Green Button's issuing body in accordance with the Green Button's specifications. This is done on the basis of an application form which the client shall complete online at www.vergabestelle.gruener-knopf.de and submit to the issuing body.

If the client is eligible to apply, the Green Button Portal provides access to further documents and information. The documents enable independent preparation for the evaluation. The client can hold a clarification meeting with the Secretariat, or a body/person designated by the Secretariat. The aim of the clarification meeting is to provide the client with information on the interpretation of the standard and to clarify open questions regarding the evaluation and certification process.

Subsequently, the client can conclude a certification agreement with an accredited certification body and submit an application to them to have the evaluation and certification process carried out.

7.2.2 Application process with the certification body

See 7.2 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

(additionally) The required information that the client must submit to the certification body as part of the application can include:

a) notification (email) of existing eligibility to apply from the issuing body;

b) any information made available via the application portal, such as the client's self-assessment;

c) details of the client's textile supply chains, such as an overview of business partners, suppliers, subcontractors, or production sites;

d) list of products/product types that should carry the Green Button;

e) names and addresses of the client's physical locations, the client's activities and processes, the client's human and technical resources;

f) the client's relationships within a larger corporate group, where relevant;

g) legal obligations relevant in the context of the Green Button (for example, those of the German Supply Chain Act in the future);

h) all outsourced processes used by the client that are relevant for conformity with the Green Button requirements;

i) documents and records that can be considered as evidence of compliance with the indicators of the Green Button Standard, such as:

- organization chart, job description, competences, and qualification certificates of the relevant employees (see also 7.4.1.2 for the definition of "relevant employees")
- due diligence policy
- corporate policies or guidelines (e.g. on sustainability or corporate social responsibility [CSR], corporate due diligence, human rights, environment, procurement, risk identification for products, countries, and raw materials).
- corporate or sustainability report
- publications in connection with due diligence
- risk analysis for textile supply chains
- reports and evaluations of supplier audits and visits
- measures and projects related to corporate due diligence
- evidence of communication with potentially affected stakeholders
- documentation and gap analysis of grievance mechanisms
- information on grievances received, in relation to supply chain management or in relation to environmental and social problems in supply chains
- documentation of corrective action and remediation
- evidence of relevant memberships (e.g. Partnership for Sustainable Textiles, Global Compact)
- training provided (e.g. on corporate due diligence) in the textile supply chain and in the company
- process descriptions for the recording and checking of certification labels for suppliers
- process descriptions for purchasing goods
- relevant certificates (e.g. recognized certification labels, *DIN EN ISO 9001*, *DIN EN ISO 14001*, sustainability standards)

7.3 Application review

7.3.1

See 7.3.1 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

7.3.2

See 7.3.2 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

7.3.3

See 7.3.3 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

7.3.4

See 7.3.4 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

7.3.5

See 7.3.5 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

7.4 Evaluation

(additionally) NOTE: This chapter contains subheadings for better orientation.

7.4.1 Planning the evaluation

See 7.4.1 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

(additionally) The certification body shall observe the following transitional provision:

- Compliance with the *Process and Requirements for the Recognition of Certification Labels (Meta-Label Approach)* in the recognition area of fibre and material use as well as the *List of approved fibres and materials incl. explanations and recognised certification labels* shall be demonstrated by 31 July 2026 at the latest. Only when these requirements are met (on a voluntary basis or after 31 July 2026) does a product fully meet the requirements of the current version of the Green Button. Before 31 July 2026, products can also be labelled with the Green Button if they only demonstrate compliance with the requirements for manufacturing and wet processes via recognised labels.

7.4.1.1 (additionally) Evaluation plan

(additionally) The certification body shall develop individual evaluation plans for each client for the initial evaluation, the surveillance evaluations in the first and second year after a positive certification decision and a recertification in the third year before the expiration of the certification. Regarding client sites with relevance to the Green Button, the rules of the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) shall apply.

7.4.1.2 (additionally) Specifications on the duration of the evaluation activities

(additionally) The certification body shall document and justify for each client how it calculates the time required for each evaluation (totality of audit, inspection, and document review including product sampling). The determined duration and the justification for the determination shall be recorded. The calculation must include details of how the time was measured.

The duration of the evaluation is calculated from the time required to determine compliance or non-compliance with the relevant indicators of the Green Button Standard using the audit, inspection, and document review methods. Table 1 indicates guidelines from which deviations in the form of reductions are only permitted in justified exceptions. See Table 2 for further guidance.

NOTE: The following definitions apply:

- Audit: Interviews with relevant employees of the client
- Inspection: Observation of the operational implementation and control of processes and activities relevant to the fulfilment of corporate due diligence obligations
- Document review: Review of documents and records, including product sampling.

Evaluation activities include the performance of the evaluation or surveillance. Any additional evaluation or surveillance tasks (e.g. in case of need for improvement or nonconformities or if a special evaluation is necessary) must be calculated according to time and effort.

For the report, a flat rate of at least three hours must be calculated in addition to the table. The evaluation and certification decision as well as any feedback loops with the client must be estimated individually for each client and calculated in addition to the table. The logistical preparation as well as the clarification of the assignment with the client are not included in the evaluation time and have to be calculated according to time and effort.

Table 1: Estimated minimum duration of initial evaluations

Number of the client's **relevant** employees (see definition below)	Document check in advance (core elements 1 and 4, rough check 2, 3, 5) in hours	Audit duration on site[1] in hours	On-site inspection duration[2] in hours	Sampling of products with Green Button Logo
1-5	5	3	3	10 min per product in sample
6-10	5	3,5	3,5	
11-15	5	4	4	
16-25	5	4,5	4,5	
26-45	6	5	5	
46-65	6	5,5	5,5	
more than 65	6	6	6	

NOTE: Document review will largely happen during preparation. The audit and inspection can go hand in hand and cannot always be clearly separated in time.

[1] In the case of surveillance audits, this can also be carried out as a remote evaluation (see 7.9).
[2] In the case of surveillance audits, this can also be carried out as a remote evaluation (see 7.9).

The size of the respective client is relevant for the calculation. This is taken into account via the number of "relevant employees", i.e. those employees who carry out activities in connection with corporate due diligence in the textile sector. As a rule, this includes at least employees from the following areas:

a) Sustainability and Corporate Responsibility;
b) Legal department (insofar as it performs tasks related to corporate due diligence, such as defining a code of conduct or responsibility for grievance management);
c) (Strategic and operational) purchasing for textiles;
d) Product development for textiles (where relevant);
e) Member(s) of senior management.

For the calculation of the concrete required evaluation time, the certification body shall consider the following:

a) During the initial evaluation, all indicators of at least stage A must be evaluated.
b) The first surveillance evaluation is less comprehensive than the initial evaluation, as it focuses on selected indicators (cf. 7.9). The time required for the surveillance evaluation must be at least 50 % of the initial evaluation as described above for Table 1.
c) During the second surveillance evaluation, the certification body must also include all indicators of stage B (stage B deepens 33 of the 54 indicators from the initial evaluation). The time required for the second surveillance evaluation must therefore be two-thirds of the initial evaluation as described above for Table 1.
d) If textiles are sourced from a few countries and through a few supply chains, this can reduce the duration by a maximum of 20 %[3] , as the complexity of the client is limited.

   EXAMPLE: If a client sources from three countries and less than ten supply chains, only small samples are required. 7.4.4.5 Therefore, the duration can be limited.

   NOTE 1: The time spent by personnel who do not perform evaluation activities as such (i.e. technical expertise, translating, interpreting, and observing activities, and evaluation personnel in training) may not be counted towards the time set.

   NOTE 2: Time spent travelling to and from visited sites is not included in the calculation of time.

   NOTE 3: The time required can be provided by approved evaluation personnel working in teams or by a single person.

   NOTE 4: Due to the provision on the transition from the 1.0 version to the 2.0 version of the Green Button Standard, clients have to comply with all stage A indicators (point a) above) by 1 August 2023 at the latest.

The certification body shall provide the client with the determination and justification of the evaluation period as part of the certification agreement.

[3] The reduction must be applied proportionally to the document review, audit and inspection methods.

7.4.2 Personnel for evaluation activities

See 7.4.2 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

(additionally) External personnel tasked with carrying out evaluation activities must also be named. Where more than one person is involved, the evaluation plan must include the roles and responsibilities of the team members and any supporting persons (e.g. interpreters).

Evaluation personnel should not evaluate the same client more than six times in a row.

7.4.3 Communication of deadlines, resources, and the evaluation plan

(additionally) The dates of the certification activities, including the preparation of the evaluation and the on-site or remote evaluation, shall be agreed with the client in advance. The agreed evaluation dates and the planned evaluation personnel shall be entered promptly by the certification body in the Green Button Portal. The certification body shall ask the client before the start of the evaluation to ensure the availability of relevant employees during the on-site visit or remote evaluation.

(adapted) At least four weeks before the start of the on-site or remote evaluation, the client shall have submitted all relevant information to the certification body.

> *(additionally) NOTE: If the certification body does not have the required client information by four weeks before the start of certification activities, the evaluation should be postponed.*

(additionally) At least two weeks before the start of the evaluation, the certification body shall submit the evaluation plan to the client and save it in the Green Button portal. The evaluation plan shall at least contain or refer to the following:

a) objectives of the evaluation;
b) evaluation criteria;
c) scope of the evaluation including identification of activities and processes that are to be evaluated;
d) evaluation personnel deployed;
e) dates on which the activities are to be carried out;
f) location where the on-site evaluation is to be carried out or (if remote) the platform on which the evaluation is to be carried out;
g) the expected duration of the evaluation, broken down into activities and processes to be evaluated or into Green Button core elements to be evaluated;
h) the client's relevant employees and the times during the on-site visit or the remote evaluation when they shall be available.

7.4.4 Basic information on the evaluation

See 7.4.4 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

(additionally) As part of the evaluation, the certification body shall determine whether the relevant stage of corporate due diligence process requirements is met and whether the company implements effective processes for labelling eligible products. Evaluations for initial certification and recertifications shall include an on-site visit to the client's headquarters. Surveillance evaluations can be conducted on-site or remotely. This

decision is at the discretion of the certification body, but consultation with the Secretariat shall take place and the decision shall be justified (see also 7.9.5).

> NOTE: In justified exceptional cases, evaluations for initial certification and recertification can be carried out remotely. Justified exceptions are, for example, when all of the client's relevant employees usually work from home or at different locations or the client has very few employees and interviews with relevant employees can be conducted digitally.

The evaluation shall include an examination of the internal operating procedures and determine whether the procedures are suitable to ensure compliance with the requirements during the term of the certificate.

For the evaluation types of document review and audit (interview) in accordance with *DIN EN ISO/IEC 17021*, the certification body shall apply *DIN EN ISO 19011*.

If the certification body finds a Green Button Logo on a product that does not fulfil the requirements for labelling with the logo, it must inform the issuing body. If possible, it should send a photograph of the product with the logo to the issuing body (vergabestelle@gruener-knopf.de). The certification body is not responsible for checking the correct display of the Green Button logo on products that fulfil all the requirements for labelling. This is the responsibility of the issuing body.

7.4.4.1 (additionally) Preparation of the evaluation

(additionally) In preparation for the evaluation, the evaluation personnel must analyze the information, documents, and records received from the client (see 7.2) to familiarize themselves with the client's strategic direction, activities, processes, and supply chains.

In the course of preparation, the evaluation personnel must determine whether the client's systems and processes appear to be mature enough to perform a successful evaluation. To do this, the evaluation personnel must, in particular, analyze the client's evidence of compliance (see under 7.2) and compare it with the Green Button indicators. The certification body shall ensure that the information is sufficient to carry out the certification process. This should happen at least two weeks before the on-site visit or remote evaluation to give the client the opportunity to remedy any weaknesses before then. Both client and certification body should have the possibility to cancel or postpone the evaluation in case of obvious weaknesses.

> EXAMPLE: If the client has not submitted a policy, it can be assumed that corporate due diligence obligations are not yet embedded strongly enough to fulfil the Green Button indicators. The same applies to an analysis of the risks and adverse impacts for people and the environment caused by business activities. If there is no such risk analysis, a successful evaluation is unlikely and the planned evaluation should be postponed or cancelled.

7.4.4.2 (additionally) Opening meeting

(additionally) The evaluation must start with a formal opening meeting. This meeting should be attended by those responsible for the activities and processes to be evaluated and, if possible, the relevant member of the client's senior management.

The purpose of the opening meeting is to confirm the following points:

a) the process of the evaluation and the evaluation plan, taking into account the results of the preparation
b) the evaluation participants, their availability, and roles during the evaluation
c) the availability of facilities needed for the evaluation (such as meeting rooms)

d) the formal communication channels between the evaluation personnel and the client

e) measures to maintain the confidentiality of information and data

f) occupational safety, emergency, and security procedures for evaluation personnel where necessary

g) the conditions under which the evaluation can be terminated early

h) which classifications are possible for indicators and what consequences result from the respective classifications

i) the results of the previous evaluation, where relevant, and

j) the time and participants for the closing meeting.

7.4.4.3 (additionally) Information collection

(additionally) During the evaluation, evaluation personnel must collect and evaluate information relevant to the objectives, scope, and criteria of the evaluation. This must include information on how the company implements its corporate due diligence policies, guidelines, and process descriptions in practice. The design of interfaces between processes must also be the subject of information collection.

Evaluation personnel must use at least the following methods to collect information during the evaluation:

a) interviews with the client's relevant employees (audit);

b) observation of the operational implementation and control of processes and activities relevant to the fulfilment of corporate due diligence obligations (inspection);

c) review of documents and records (document review).

The following table lists the different types of evaluation for the Green Button and gives examples of the indicators for which they must be used.

Table 2: Overview and examples of evaluation types to be used

Evaluation type	Information/evidence	Examples of indicators
Audit	Interviews with the client's relevant employees	1.3.2 Internal awareness and expertise 2.3.1 Risk factors related to the business and procurement model 3.2.3 Support for suppliers
Inspection	Observation of the operational implementation and control of processes and activities relevant to the exercise of corporate due diligence, such as processes and activities: • for the identification of risks in the textile supply chains • for the company's own purchasing practice regarding its impact in textile supply chains • for the collection of grievances from textile supply chains and possible remedy	1.3.4 Consideration in decision-making and strategy processes 2.1 Analysis and prioritisation of risks 3.1.1 Evaluation of the qualification of suppliers and 3.1.2 Formal requirements for evaluation of suppliers 3.1.4 Ending of business relationships 5.2.2 Handling grievances
Document review	Review of documents and records where this has not already been done in advance or as part of other evaluation methods.	1.1.1 – 1.1.7 Components of the policy on responsible business conduct 4.2.2 – 4.2.7 Contents of the reporting

7.4.4.4 (additionally) Processes and activities for recording and checking certification labels for suppliers

(additionally) The evaluation personnel shall check whether the client has implemented processes to ensure that only products that are covered by recognised certification labels for the respective production stages (manufacturing, wet processes, fibres/materials used) and consist only of approved fibres and materials are labeled with the Green Button, in accordance with the above-mentioned transitional periods (cf. *Green Button Standard: Process and Requirements for the Recognition of Certification Labels (Meta-Label Approach)*, link).

The examination by the evaluation personnel shall include the following:

a) Random sample review of relevant documents proving the procurement of products with a recognised certification label. For example: supply contracts or terms and conditions showing that relevant goods are purchased.

b) Process descriptions for regularly checking that suppliers continue to participate in a recognised certification label and for placing orders for certified products, and

c) samples of records of the purchase of goods confirming that it is a textile end product that

- in accordance with the above-mentioned transitional periods, according to the information about the material composition on the product consists exclusively of fibers and material (blends) approved according to the *List of approved fibres and materials incl. explanations and recognised certification*

labels from the Green Button Standard (see also 7.4.4.5); and, in accordance with the above-mentioned transitional periods, has a recognised certification label for the respective production stage such as, e.g., order documents, delivery notes, invoices.

If, at the time of the evaluation, the client does not yet have products to be labelled with the Green Button Logo, the certification body must check whether the structural conditions of points a)-c) are fulfilled.

NOTE 1: The Green Button website provides an up-to-date and definitive list of all recognized certification labels for the respective supply chain levels, as well as up-to-date overviews of product groups that can be awarded the Green Button and of approved fibers and materials. Proof of the certification label can be provided both via several recognized certification labels and via a single certification label that is recognized for all relevant supply chain stages and scopes.

Note 2: It should be noted that certification labels for the supply chain levels of manufacturing and wet processes that are recognized at the time of publication of this certification programme will receive a renewed, provisional recognition for the Green Button according to the requirements of the Green Button Standard: Process and Requirements for the Recognition of Certification Labels by August 2024. By 31 July 2024, the benchmarking process for the continuation of recognition shall have been initiated for these certification labels. In this case, the provisional recognition is extended until the benchmarking process is completed and the results have been released by the scheme owner.

7.4.4.5 (additionally) General requirements for sampling

(additionally) The evaluation personnel shall use the following sampling tables for each evaluation. To reduce the risk of bias, the evaluation personnel shall select the sample populations and the individual samples. This shall not be done by the client.

After defining the population using Appendix 3, the evaluation personnel shall select the individual samples in accordance with the tables. In doing so, they shall:

a) prioritize samples that are potentially high-risk, such as high-risk countries or suppliers that are the subject of an internal or external investigation, such as a legal investigation of remedial claims or actions

b) select at least 25 % of the samples at random, rounded up to the nearest whole number, where the sampling table provides for four or more samples to be taken

c) conduct judgement-based sampling in the event that the evaluation personnel suspects problems within the population. Here, the selection of samples is based exclusively on the knowledge and judgement of the evaluation personnel (see also *DIN EN ISO 19011* Annex A.6.2)

d) draw half of the samples specified in the tables during monitoring. In the case of fractional numbers, the evaluation personnel shall round up to the next whole number.

The evaluation personnel shall document the following information on sampling in the evaluation report:

a) identified population and sample size derived from it

b) the results of the sampling.

7.4.4.5.1 (additionally) Specific requirements for sampling

(additionally) This section provides sampling tables for key functions, processes, and system elements to be sampled during each evaluation. If all samples prove to be non-compliant with the indicators of the Green Button Standard, further samples shall be taken to increase security. It is at the discretion of the evaluation

personnel to decide how many further samples to collect. In general, the evaluation personnel shall take sufficient samples to make a reasoned assessment of conformity, even if this means taking a larger sample than indicated in the tables.

Sampling of products

The evaluation personnel shall assess whether products to be labelled with the Green Button Logo actually have all the necessary recognized certification labels. In addition, the evaluation personnel shall check whether the products consist only of approved fibers and material (blends) in accordance with the mentioned transitional periods. At a minimum, the certification body shall follow the sampling table below, based on the total number of a client's products labelled at the time of the evaluation (regardless of the number of supply chains).

Table 3: Sample size products

Number of products	Sample size
between 1 product and 3 products	all products
between 4 and 9 products	at least 3 products
between 10 and 25 products	at least 5 products
between 26 and 64 products	at least 7 products
between 65 and 121 products	at least 9 products
> 121 products	2 % of the products, but at least 10 products

Should the client source its Green Button products from very few suppliers or from suppliers that have the same recognized certification label, it is at the discretion of the evaluation personnel to reduce the sample size. A product is understood to be the same product in different sizes and colors.

> NOTE: During the applicable transition period, the inspection whether the products consist exclusively of approved fibres and materials shall take place only, if the client chooses to be evaluated according to the Green Button Standard's revised conditions for product claims.

Sampling the risk analysis

The entire Core Element 2 of the Requirements for Corporate Due Diligence Processes shall be evaluated. However, the evaluation personnel can draw samples from the client's risk analysis. In this case, the evaluation personnel shall at least follow the table below. All OECD sector risks and (if required) other relevant risk areas identified by the companies shall be evaluated for each sampled production country. This sampling approach shall be applied to all evaluations and surveillance evaluations. When selecting countries, evaluation personnel should ensure that predominantly high-risk countries and countries with many high-risk suppliers are selected.

Table 4: Sample size risk analysis

Number of production countries	Sample size (consider those production stages that are relevant in development stage A or B)
between 1 country and 3 countries	at least 1 country
between 4 and 6 countries	at least 2 countries
between 7 and 9 countries	at least 3 countries
between 10 and 16 countries	at least 4 countries
more than 16 countries	at least 5 countries

NOTE: Although the risk analysis does not need to be reviewed in detail for each supply chain, evaluation personnel should satisfy themselves that a risk analysis has been carried out in accordance with the *Green Button Standard: Requirements for Corporate Due Diligence Processes and Conditions for Product Claims* (link) for all supply chains in line with the client's processes.

Sampling of measures

In accordance with Core Element 3 of the Requirements for Corporate Due Diligence Processes, the evaluation personnel must examine those measures that the client has implemented as a consequence of the risk analysis for a country (see Table 4: Sample size risk analysis size Risk analysis). This must be done analogously to the table below. If a client has defined more than the indicated number of measures, the indicated number is the maximum to be checked. If a client has defined less than the specified number, all defined measures for a country must be evaluated. This sampling approach is to be used for all evaluations and surveillance evaluations.

Table 5: Sample size measures

Number of countries considered in the risk analysis	Sample size (concerning indicators 3.2.1, 3.2.2, 3.2.3) in the different stages of the supply chain (depending on the scope of development stage A/B)
1 high-risk country or country with a particularly large number of high-risk suppliers	up to 6 measures
2 to 3 high-risk countries or countries with a particularly large number of high-risk suppliers	up to 5 measures per country
4 and more high-risk countries or countries with a particularly large number of high-risk suppliers	up to 4 measures per country, at least 20 measures in total

NOTE: Evaluation personnel should note that it will not always be possible to distinguish one action from another, as in some circumstances a generic action can be appropriate. However, evaluation personnel

shall look closely at the action taken by the client and determine whether it is appropriate given the impact that has occurred or the potential impact.

Sampling of grievances and corrective actions

Evaluation personnel shall review grievance procedures in accordance with Core Element 5, Criterion 5.1 of the Green Button Standard's Requirements for Corporate Due Diligence Processes. Grievances received since the date of the last evaluation or, in the case of an initial evaluation, grievances received within the last twelve months shall be included. Evaluation personnel shall use the table below when reviewing grievance procedures.

Table 6: Sample size for grievances

Number of grievances received	Sample size
0 grievances	No sample can be drawn, but the description of the grievance process shall be evaluated against the indicators of the Green Button Standard.
between 1 and 3 grievances	all grievances
between 4 and 9 grievances	at least 4 grievances
more than 9 grievances	at least 5 grievances

Evaluation personnel shall review the remediation process in accordance with Core Element 5, Criterion 5.2. It shall check which corrective actions have been implemented by the client since the previous evaluation or, in the case of an initial evaluation, which have been implemented within the last 12 months.

Table 7: Sample size for corrective action

Number of corrective actions taken (with or without formal grievance)	Sample size
0 corrective actions	No sample can be drawn, but the description of the process for providing corrective action shall be evaluated against the indicators of the Green Button Standard.
between 1 and 3 corrective actions	at least 1 corrective action
between 4 and 9 corrective actions	at least 3 corrective actions
more than 9 corrective actions	at least 5 corrective actions

Sampling of dealing with suppliers

The evaluation personnel determine the sample size for the following indicators of the Requirements for Corporate Due Diligence Processes using the table below:

- 1.2.3 (Mandates for suppliers and cascading into the supply chains)
- 3.1.1 (Evaluation of the qualification of suppliers), and
- 3.1.3 (Incentives for suppliers)

If the sample size is larger than 1, the evaluation personnel shall select different types of suppliers for the sample, selecting suppliers in high-risk countries or high-risk suppliers.

Table 8: Sample size suppliers

Number of suppliers	Sample size
between 1 and 10	1 supplier
between 11 and 50	2 suppliers
between 51 and 100	3 suppliers
101 and more	4 suppliers

Sampling of relevant employees for the evaluation

The evaluation personnel shall randomly audit relevant employees (see 7.4.1.2) of the client to determine whether they are familiar with the topics of the Green Button Standard and their implementation in the company and have the necessary knowledge of corporate due diligence for their position. Several indicators of the Green Button Standard are relevant here:

- 1.2.2 (Communication to its own employees);
- 1.3.2 (Internal awareness and expertise);
- 1.3.3 (Incentive structures);
- 1.3.4 (Consideration in decision-making and strategy processes);
- 2.3.1 (Risk factors related to the business and procurement model);
- 3.3.1 (Capturing KPIs on procurement and purchasing practices);
- 3.3.2 (Improvement of procurement and purchasing practices);
- 3.3.3 (Strategy for the promotion of living wages).

The management of the purchasing department shall always be audited. A member of senior management should also be audited to verify the client's commitment to corporate due diligence. Other relevant employees shall be included for audits, inspections and document reviews according to the sampling table below.

Table 9: Sample size of relevant employees

Number of relevant employees	Sample size
1 relevant employee	1 relevant employee
2 to 9 relevant employees	at least 1 relevant employee + head of the purchasing department (i.e. at least 2 people in total)
10 to 20 relevant employees	at least 2 relevant employees + head of the purchasing department (i.e. at least 3 people in total)
21 to 30 relevant employees	at least 3 relevant employees + head of the purchasing department (i.e. at least 4 people in total)
more than 30 relevant employees	at least 4 relevant employees + head of the purchasing department (i.e. at least 5 people in total)

7.4.4.6 (additionally) Evaluation of the information

(additionally) Evaluation personnel shall verify that the information collected is sufficiently objective to be considered proof that the Green Button indicators are met. Information is considered objective if it is:

a) complete (all expected content is included in the information),

b) correct (the content is consistent with other evidence),

c) consistent (the information is consistent within itself and with related information) and

d) up to date (the content is new).

EXAMPLE: A code of conduct that covers all relevant topics but is not known or insufficiently known by interviewed employees cannot be considered as consistent information.

Only information that is objective and can be verified can be accepted as evidence. If the objectivity and level of verification of the information collected is low, evaluation personnel shall use their professional judgement to determine whether the information can be used as evidence.

7.4.5 Recognition of other evaluation results

See 7.4.5 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

7.4.6 Classification of the indicators

(additionally) Evaluation personnel shall compare the client's evidence with the Green Button indicators and classify the client for all indicators of the Requirements for Corporate Due Diligence Processes as in the table below. Stage A shall be achieved for all indicators at the initial evaluation, stage B at the second surveillance evaluation after initial certification (see *Green Button Standard*, link). Thus, from the second surveillance evaluation onwards, both stage A and stage B shall be achieved.

Table 10: Possible classifications of the indicators and their consequences

Classification	**Details**	**Consequences** (mentioned deadlines start on the last day of the on-site or remote evaluation)
Stage B fulfilled	The indicator is fully met for stage B.	--
Stage A fulfilled	The indicator is fully met for stage A. This means that the minimum requirements of the indicator are fulfilled. The mandatory increase of the maturity level is done by implementing a systemic requirement by the second surveillance evaluation (see right).	Systemic requirement: The client shall demonstrate during the second surveillance evaluation after initial certification that it also fulfils stage B for all indicators.
Fulfilled with note	The indicator is entirely fulfilled for the respective stage. However, the client's performance could be further improved.	None

Classification	Details	Consequences (mentioned deadlines start on the last day of the on-site or remote evaluation)
Sufficiently fulfilled (need for improvement)	The client is on track to fully meet the indicator and only minor improvements are needed. This means that the improvements: a) are achievable at short notice or b) do not represent a systemic phenomenon or c) are limited in scope, and d) do not result in a fundamental failure to fulfill the target of the relevant Green Button indicator. The evaluation personnel shall document any need for improvement in the evaluation report.	The client shall define a root cause analysis and a plausible corrective action plan suitable to bring about full compliance with the indicator two weeks after the evaluation. The certification body requires the client to have completed the implementation of the measures within 16 weeks after the evaluation. The certification body can then issue or confirm the certification. The evaluation personnel shall verify the effectiveness of the measures within 16 weeks after the evaluation and thus the fulfilment of stage A or stage B (see also 7.4.7, Root cause analysis and Effectiveness). If the certification has not already been issued or confirmed, this step is taken now. Ineffective measures or conditions that have not been fulfilled always constitute a nonconformity (see "Not fulfilled").
Not fulfilled (nonconformity)	The indicator is not fulfilled and there is a deviation, i.e. a nonconformity. This is an unmet requirement that, either alone or in combination with identified needs for improvement in other indicators, results or is likely to result in a fundamental failure to meet the target of the relevant Green Button indicator. Such fundamental failures are characterised by unmet requirements that: a) last over a long period of time or b) are systemic or c) affect many of the client's activities and processes or d) compromise the integrity of the Green Button or e) are not corrected by the client within the specified period for corrections and corrective action. The evaluation personnel document nonconformities in the evaluation report.	The certification body shall refuse or suspend certification. The client shall define a root cause analysis and a plausible corrective action plan suitable to bring about full compliance with the indicator two weeks after the evaluation. Based on the action plan, the certification body requires the client to have completed the implementation of the measures within 24 weeks after the evaluation. If the client believes it can demonstrate that it has fully corrected the nonconformity, the certification body shall initiate additional evaluation activities (cf. 7.4.7, Root cause analysis and Effectiveness). The evaluation personnel shall have completed the verification of the effectiveness of the measures and thus the complete or sufficient fulfilment of stage A or stage B within 24 weeks after the evaluation. If this has been done, the certification body can issue the certificate. However, if the client has only corrected the nonconformity to the extent that the relevant indicator is classified as 'sufficiently fulfilled'

Classification	Details	Consequences (mentioned deadlines start on the last day of the on-site or remote evaluation)
		and not as 'fulfilled', the certification body shall ask the client to continue working on correcting the nonconformity and shall check after a further maximum of 16 weeks whether the relevant indicators can now be classified as 'fulfilled' (see above under 'sufficiently fulfilled'). If this is not possible, the certificate shall be withdrawn.

(adapted) The evaluation personnel shall document for each indicator which evidence they used for the classification. The evaluation personnel shall inform the client of any need for improvement as well as deviations, i.e. nonconformities.

(additionally) Where a need for improvement or a nonconformity has been identified, the evaluation personnel shall formulate and record it in writing as a negative reversal of the indicator. Any need for improvement and any nonconformities shall be discussed with the client to ensure that the evidence used is appropriate and that the client understands the need for improvement and the nonconformities. If the client wishes to provide further evidence, they shall do so as soon as possible after the evaluation, but no later than two weeks after the date of the evaluation. The evaluation personnel shall not suggest solutions or give indications as to the possible causes of the nonconformities or their solutions.

7.4.6.1 (additionally) Closing meeting

(additionally) The evaluation personnel shall conduct a formal closing meeting. This meeting should be attended by those responsible for the activities and processes evaluated and, if possible, the relevant member of the client's senior management.

The purpose of the closing meeting is to:

a) present the impressions gained through the evaluation;

b) explain any need for improvement and any nonconformities and their consequences. The evaluation personnel shall ensure that the client understands the nonconformities and consequences. Improvement needs and nonconformities shall be presented to the client in writing (e.g. via PowerPoint slides or in report format) in the closing meeting.

   NOTE: "Understanding" does not necessarily mean that the nonconformities are accepted by the client.

c) agree on the timeframe for improvements and for correcting the nonconformities;

d) where necessary, explain additional evaluation tasks of the evaluation personnel to verify the effectiveness of the improvements and corrections;

e) clarify the timeframe for the preparation of the evaluation report;

f) provide information on the certification decision process and the timeframe for the possible issuing of the certificate;

g) explain the timeframe for the next evaluation, where relevant, and

h) provide information on the certification body's complaints procedure.

The client shall be given the opportunity for questions. Any divergent opinions regarding the conclusions of the evaluation between the certification body and the client shall be discussed and, if possible, resolved. Any divergent opinions that are not resolved shall be recorded in the evaluation report.

7.4.7 Additional evaluation tasks

(adapted) The following additional evaluation tasks shall be performed by the evaluation personnel in case of need for improvement and nonconformities, provided that the client expresses interest in continuing the certification process.

7.4.7.1 (additionally) Root cause analysis of nonconformities

(additionally) The evaluation personnel shall request the client to analyze the cause of the need for improvement and for nonconformities and to describe the specific corrections and corrective actions to be taken to bring about improvements and to eliminate identified nonconformities. The root cause analysis and description of measures shall be entered by the client into the report template and submitted to the certification body within two weeks of the evaluation and thus before the certification decision.

> *NOTE: If the client does not send the root cause analysis and the description of corrections and corrective actions to the certification body within two weeks, it can be assumed that the client is not interested in continuing the evaluation process. The process would therefore be stopped at this point. It is therefore important that the client is aware of this deadline and adheres to it if interested in certification.*

7.4.7.2 (additionally) Effectiveness of corrections and corrective actions and deadlines

(additionally) Evaluation personnel shall review the root causes identified by the client, corrections and corrective actions already implemented or planned to determine whether they are appropriate to bring about the need for improvement or effectively address the nonconformities.

The certification body shall allow the client the following periods of time to fulfill the respective indicators:

a) Up to 16 weeks after the evaluation if there is a need for improvement (sufficiently fulfilled);

b) Up to 24 weeks after the evaluation in case of nonconformities (not fulfilled), in which case the client shall then at least sufficiently fulfill the relevant indicators of the *Green Button Standard*. If the indicators are then “sufficiently fulfilled”, the client is given up to 16 further weeks to completely fulfill the indicators.

Within the same time limits, the evaluation personnel shall verify that the client has now complied with the indicators, i.e. they must verify the effectiveness of all corrections and corrective actions taken. It is at the discretion of the evaluation personnel whether the verification shall be done on site or can be done by document review or remote evaluation. The evidence submitted on the correction of the nonconformities as well as on the implementation of the needed improvements shall be kept by the certification body. The client shall be informed of the outcome of the verification.

7.4.8

See 7.4.8 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

7.4.9 Documenting the results of the evaluation activities

(adapted) For the documentation of the evaluation results, the evaluation personnel shall use and completely fill in the Secretariat's evaluation report template.

(additionally) The evaluation personnel shall ensure the following:

a) The summary and categorisation covers each requirement of an indicator
b) Where a need for improvement or a nonconformity has been identified, it is expressed as a negative reversal of the indicator
c) Relevant proof is provided for each indicator; and
d) A deadline for correction and a status is given for any need for improvement or nonconformity.

The evaluation personnel can document notes to indicate to the client where they can improve beyond complete fulfilment of an indicator.

> NOTE: The evaluation report shall be detailed enough for outsiders to understand the evaluation personnel's assessment.

The following deadlines apply to the uploading of the evaluation report to the Green Button Portal and thus to the transmission of the report to the client:

Table 11: Preparation of the evaluation report

Uploading the evaluation report in the Green Button Portal	Deadline
After each evaluation, regardless of how the indicators were classified	No later than four weeks after the evaluation.
If a need for improvement has been identified	The report shall be revised and uploaded to the Green Button Portal again after the certification body has verified the effectiveness of the measures within 16 weeks of the evaluation.
If nonconformities have been detected	The report shall be revised and uploaded to the Green Button Portal again after the certification body has verified the effectiveness of the measures within 24 weeks of the evaluation. The report shall be revised and uploaded a second time within a further 16 weeks if the respective indicators were "sufficiently fulfilled" instead of "fulfilled" after the initial 24 weeks.

7.5 Review

7.5.1

See 7.5.1 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

(additionally) Persons who carry out evaluations and certification decisions shall fulfil the scheme owner's suitability requirements (see Appendix 1: Additional requirements for certification bodies and their personnel).

Persons carrying out evaluations and certification decisions shall ensure that the evaluation report is complete and conclusive (see 7.4.9).

7.5.2

See 7.5.2 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

7.6 Certification decision

7.6.1

See 7.6.1 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

7.6.2

See 7.6.2 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

(additionally) The certification body shall use a documented procedure to review the evaluation results before making a certification decision within four weeks of the evaluation. The information used for review shall include at least the following:

a) the evaluation report, including the classifications of all indicators;

b) the action plans for indicators that were classified as “sufficiently fulfilled” or “not fulfilled” submitted by the client and accepted by the evaluation personnel, where relevant;

c) a confirmation by the evaluation personnel that the effective implementation of the action plan still needs to be verified or, if relevant, already was verified (in case of need for improvement) or that the effective implementation has been verified (in case of nonconformities) and that either stage A or also stage B (from the second surveillance evaluation onwards) have been achieved, as well as

d) a recommendation as to whether or not certification should be granted, including all associated conditions.

The persons charged by the certification body with the decision shall fulfil the requirements of the scheme owner for personnel for certification decisions (see Appendix 1).

7.6.3

See 7.6.3 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

7.6.4

See 7.6.4 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

7.6.5

See 7.6.5 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

7.6.6

See 7.6.6 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

(additionally) In case of need for improvement: If no effective corrections have been made within 16 weeks after the last evaluation day, the certification body shall suspend the certificate.

For corrective actions in case of nonconformities: If no effective corrections have been made within 24 weeks of the last evaluation date, the certification body may not issue a certification or shall withdraw the certificate that has already been suspended (see also 7.11.4).

7.7 Certification documentation

7.7.1

See 7.7.1 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

(additionally) The certification body shall use the Secretariat's current certificate template and fill it out completely and in accordance with all instructions in the template. The duration of the certificate shall be 3 years minus 1 day, calculated from the certificate's date of issue. The certification body shall upload the issued certificate to the issuing body's online portal, which automatically sends it to the client.

7.7.2

See 7.7.2 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

7.7.3

See 7.7.3 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

7.8 (adapted) Directory of products with the Green Button Logo

(adapted) For each evaluation, the certification body shall ensure that the client uses the Secretariat's current product list template to document information on products/product types with the Green Button Logo and keep it up to date. The certification body shall conduct random sampling of the product list to check for accuracy during each evaluation.

7.9 Surveillance and (additionally) recertification

7.9.1

See 7.9.1 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

7.9.2

See 7.9.2 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

7.9.3

See 7.9.3 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

7.9.4

See 7.9.4 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

7.9.5 (additionally) Planning of surveillance

(additionally) Surveillance evaluations shall be carried out annually. The first surveillance evaluation shall be completed no earlier than 9 months and no later than 12 months after the certificate's date of issue. The second surveillance evaluation must be completed no earlier than 18 months and no later than 24 months after the date of issuance of the certificate.

In exceptional cases, at the discretion of the certification body, surveillance evaluations can be completed up to 15 months after the certificate's date of issue. Examples for such exceptional cases are:

a) Prolonged or short-term cases of illness on the part of the client or the certification body; or
b) Cases of force majeure, such as fire, explosion, storm, flood, earthquake or other physical natural disasters, epidemics, strikes or civil unrest.

If surveillance is carried out before or after the twelve months have elapsed, the certification body shall still maintain the original period of validity of the certificate.

Surveillance shall in principle be carried out on site. However, in the case that the certification body plans to conduct surveillance remotely, it shall document its reasons for this decision in the evaluation report. In case of higher complexity or higher risk of the client, on-site instead of remote surveillance should be carried out. Examples of factors that increase complexity or risk of the client are:

a) Has the client failed to meet the deadlines specified by the Green Button in the past?
b) Have nonconformities been identified in previous evaluations?
c) Have there been many changes to the client's due diligence processes?
d) Is the client sourcing from new supply chains or have there been many changes in existing supply chains?
e) Have there been any serious grievances regarding the client or its supply chains related to human rights, the environment, and/or integrity?
f) Is there sensitive data to be evaluated that should not be shared via screen?
g) Has the Secretariat's integrity program produced any relevant findings about the client?

If surveillance is to be carried out remotely, the certification body shall obtain the client's prior consent to this format and shall consider the following requirements.

7.9.5.1 (additionally) Technical implementation of remote evaluations

(additionally) The remote evaluation shall be carried out on a media platform that allows both direct dialogue-based exchange and joint viewing of documents. The certification body and the client shall agree in advance of the remote evaluation on which media platform the evaluation will take place.

The platform to be used is usually provided by the certification body or the client, if necessary also by the Secretariat. If possible, the client should not have to pay any additional licenses, user fees, etc. for the use of the platform. If there should be such costs, the client shall agree to them.

The platform to be used should allow the exchange of confidential documents and sufficiently ensure data protection and data security. This should be checked by the certification body, if necessary the Secretariat, before using appropriate platforms.

The technical requirements shall be checked in advance of the evaluation. The certification body shall check the functionality of the platform in advance of the evaluation.

7.9.5.2 (additionally) Data protection for remote evaluations

(additionally) All parties involved shall be aware of the opportunities and risks associated with the use of interactive web-based communication. For example, a secure connection and conscious handling of data are necessary for data and information security.

As with any evaluation, the same applies to remote evaluations: All data shall be treated confidentially. There shall be no recording of conversations or content during the evaluation. The certification body and its evaluation personnel shall be prudent in the use and protection of information acquired during the evaluation.

Confidential information is all information (whether digital or embodied in other documents) over which the client or the certification body or their affiliates have lawful control and which is made available to the respective other party verbally, in writing, or in any other form in connection with the certification procedure or the fulfilment of requirements for the permissible use of the Green Button, to the extent that there is a legitimate interest of the respective party in its confidentiality and to the extent that such information, other than oral information, is expressly and prominently marked as "confidential".

7.9.5.3 (additionally) Determination of the duration of the surveillance evaluation

(additionally) The certification body shall follow subchapter 7.4 to calculate the time required for surveillance. In addition, it must take into account that in the second surveillance evaluation after initial certification, not only the continued fulfilment of the stage A indicators, but also the fulfilment of the stage B indicators must be evaluated.

7.9.6 (additionally) Scope and process of surveillance

(additionally) The certification body shall agree in advance with the client the timing of the surveillance and the availability of relevant employees during the surveillance evaluation.

At least four weeks before the start of the surveillance evaluation, the certification body shall remind the client to submit to the certification body any updated and new documents relevant to the Green Button in the meantime (see 7.2 for a list of relevant documents). At least two weeks before the start of the surveillance evaluation, the certification body shall send the surveillance plan to the client.

The surveillance evaluation must start with an opening meeting where the evaluation personnel explain the process and the subject of the surveillance evaluation to the client again and confirm that all the client's required employees are available.

The scope of surveillance shall include at least:

a) review of any organizational changes on the client's side relevant to the Green Button;

b) review any changes to documents (e.g. Corporate Responsibility Policy or Code of Conduct) and processes relevant to corporate due diligence and Green Button requirements;

c) updated risk analysis(s) and derived measures;

d) new and updated supplier assessments;

e) progress in dialogue with (potentially) affected stakeholders;

f) where relevant, termination of business relationships since the last evaluation;

g) progress in cooperation with external stakeholders;

h) progress in the implementation of measures;

i) development of relevant key figures;

j) progress in implementing the living wage strategy;

k) reviewing the results of internal audits and management assessments as well as the results of supply chain audits, if conducted by the client. Reviewing the results for relevance to meeting the Green Button indicators;

l) updates to the client website related to due diligence (Core Element 4);

m) reviewing the appropriate handling of grievances related to supply chain management or environmental and social issues in supply chains (Core Element 5);

n) in the case of the second surveillance evaluation, the fulfilment of the stage B indicators;

o) (sample) review of the products on the product list that have been newly added for the use of the Green Button Logo since the last evaluation, in accordance with 7.4.4.5.

If the evaluation personnel find an incorrect use of the Green Button Logo, they shall inform the issuing body. If possible, they should send a photo of the incorrect use to the issuing body.

The surveillance evaluation shall end with a closing meeting where the evaluation personnel explain to the client any need for improvement and nonconformities as well as their consequences.

7.9.7 (additionally) Classification of indicators during surveillance

(additionally) In the event that indicators are identified during surveillance where the client needs to make improvements or has nonconformities, the evaluation personnel shall define and perform additional evaluation tasks in accordance with 7.4.8.

When classifying the indicators, the evaluation personnel shall also follow 7.11.

7.9.8 (additionally) Surveillance report

(additionally) At the latest four weeks after the surveillance evaluation, the certification body must upload the evaluation report to the issuing body's online platform and thus transmit it to the client. For the preparation of the evaluation report, it shall use the Secretariat's template and complete it in full.

7.9.9 (additionally) Continuation of certification

(additionally) The certification body shall, in accordance with ISO 17065 and 7.6 in this certification scheme, decide on the continuation of certification.

7.9.10 (additionally) Recertification

(additionally) For recertification, the client shall meet both stage A and stage B of the Green Button Standard. The evaluation for recertification shall be carried out according to chapter 7.4.

In principle, recertification shall be completed before the certificate expires. In exceptional cases, the certification body can extend the validity of the certificate by three months. Examples of such exceptional cases are:

a) prolonged or short-term cases of illness on the part of the client or the certification body, or
b) cases of force majeure, such as fire, explosion, storm, flood, earthquake or other physical natural disasters, epidemics, strikes or civil unrest, or
c) transition phase from one version of the Standard to the next.

In the event that a client wishes an extension, they must request this from the certification body via the online platform, giving reasons. In the event that a certification body wishes an extension, it must post this extension on the online platform, giving reasons. The following applies to both cases: The Secretariat is informed by the online platform about the extension and its reasons. If there are queries or concerns, the Secretariat contacts the certification body. The decision on the extension is the responsibility of the certification body. It can extend the certificate informally by three months by making a corresponding note in the online platform. No new certificate needs to be issued.

The calculation of the time required for the evaluation for recertification shall be based on updated information from the client. The time required is typically two-thirds of the time that would be required for the client's initial certification if the initial evaluation were conducted at the time of recertification (i.e. not two-thirds of the time of the original initial certification).

> NOTE: Some client information may not have changed since the last evaluation, e.g. the content of the policy or the allocation of responsibilities. Unless the current version of the standard provides for a higher level of ambition for the respective indicators, unchanged information does not need to be reassessed. Changes on the client side as well as the maturity of due diligence processes observed in previous evaluations should be taken into account when calculating the time needed. It is unlikely that a recertification evaluation will take less than one day.

7.10 Changes affecting certification

7.10.1

See 7.10.1 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

(additionally) The certification body shall inform its clients of any new Green Button certification requirements and of any deadlines within which the clients shall ensure compliance with new requirements in order to remain certified (see Green Button Standard).

7.10.2

See 7.10.2 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

(additionally) Other changes that can affect the certification mainly refer to changes that affect the already evaluated processes of corporate due diligence or their implementation.

7.10.3

See 7.10.3 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

(additionally) **Special evaluation**

The changes can require a special evaluation from the point of view of the certification body, the issuing body, the Secretariat, a body designated by it or the scheme owner. The special evaluation shall be carried out either like an initial evaluation or like a surveillance evaluation and either on site or remotely. The reasons for carrying out a special evaluation as well as the chosen scope and type of the evaluation shall be documented by the certification body in the evaluation report. An evaluation report shall also be prepared after a special evaluation in accordance with this certification programme. The duration of an existing certificate does not change as a result of a special evaluation.

7.11 Termination, reduction, suspension or withdrawal of certification

7.11.1

See 7.11.1 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

7.11.2

See 7.11.2 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

7.11.3

See 7.11.3 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

(additionally) **Certification is terminated at the client's request**

If the client does not wish to continue the certification, the certification body shall ask the client to inform the Secretariat of the planned withdrawal. As soon as the certification body becomes aware of the planned withdrawal, it shall also inform the Secretariat.

The following deadlines shall also be applied:

a) In the case of an open need for improvement: the client's certificate shall become invalid no later than 16 weeks after the last evaluation. The certification body shall change the expiry date of the certificate in the online portal accordingly.
b) In the case of open nonconformities: In this case, the client's certificate is already suspended (see Table 10). The certification body shall set the validity of the certificate in the online portal to the date on which it became aware of the client's desired withdrawal.
c) If neither a need for improvement nor nonconformities are open:
   - If the original certificate term ends less than 12 months after the last evaluation, the certificate expires on the specified date.
   - If the original certificate term ends more than 12 months after the last evaluation, the certification body shall change the validity of the certificate in the online portal. The date on which the certificate ends may be a maximum of 12 months after the last evaluation and should be agreed with the client.

7.11.4

See 7.11.4 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

(additionally) **Certification is suspended**

The certificate shall always be suspended:

a) if nonconformities are identified during an evaluation and indicators are therefore classified as "not fulfilled",
b) if the client has not effectively addressed the need for improvement or nonconformities that were already identified in the previous evaluation beyond the period granted,
c) if no further evaluation of the client has taken place within a maximum of 15 months after the last evaluation.

However, it is at the discretion of the certification body to allow the client a short additional period of two weeks to implement improvements or corrective actions. In such a case, the evaluation personnel shall verify the effectiveness of the measures immediately after the two weeks and document the results of the verification. If the client has not implemented the improvements or corrective actions satisfactorily, the certificate shall be suspended.

If the certification body suspends the certificate, it shall:

d) inform the client immediately and give them the opportunity to effectively address any need for improvement or nonconformities within 16 or 24 weeks,

e) Inform the client of the date from which the certificate is suspended and inform them that they may not label any new articles with the Green Button logo, but may only sell products that have already been produced and registered in the online portal, and
f) Inform the Secretariat and issuing body of the date of suspension, so that this can be entered in the online portal by the issuing body. However, the validity date of the certificate remains the same.

If there are nonconformities or a need for improvement and the client wishes to lift the suspension, the certification body shall apply section 7.4.7 (Additional evaluation tasks). The effectiveness of the improvements and measures implemented by the client shall be reviewed by the evaluation personnel as part of a special evaluation (see 7.10.3) after 16 or 24 weeks.

If the last regular evaluation of the client was more than 15 months ago, the certification body shall schedule a special evaluation and take into account in the design of the special evaluation that stage B of the indicators may also have to be fulfilled.

(additionally) **Certification is withdrawn**

The certification body shall withdraw the certificate after suspension if:

a) the need for improvement and nonconformities have not been corrected after 16 or 24 weeks,
b) the effectiveness of the improvements or measures taken by the client cannot be confirmed,
c) the evaluation personnel identify new nonconformities,
d) if the client and certification body cannot agree on a date for a special evaluation.

If the certificate is withdrawn, the certification body shall immediately change the validity period of the certificate in the online portal and set its expiry date to the date of certificate withdrawal. The certification body shall inform the client, the Secretariat and the issuing body accordingly.

Once the certificate has been withdrawn, the client can only be recertified after a successful full evaluation in accordance with the currently valid Green Button requirements.

7.11.5

See 7.11.5 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

7.11.6

See 7.11.6 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

(additionally) **Certification is reinstated**

If the certification is reinstated after suspension, the certification body shall inform its client, the Secretariat and the issuing body immediately and let the client know that they may label their registered products with the Green Button logo again from the date of reinstatement. However, the validity date of the certificate remains unchanged.

7.12 Records

7.12.1

See 7.12.1 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

7.12.2

See 7.12.2 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

7.12.3

See 7.12.3 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

7.13 Complaints and appeals

7.13.1

See 7.13.1 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

7.13.2

See 7.13.2 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

7.13.3

See 7.13.3 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

7.13.4

See 7.13.4 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

7.13.5

See 7.13.5 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

7.13.6

See 7.13.6 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

7.13.7

See 7.13.7 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

7.13.8

See 7.13.8 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

7.13.9

See 7.13.9 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

7.14 (additionally) Registration of products between evaluations

(additionally) The client can register new products for labelling with the Green Button at any time during the certification cycle. For this purpose, the client shall enter the details of the new products in a form on the online portal. The product list must be randomly sampled and evaluated annually by the certification body during surveillance (see 7.4.4.5 and 7.9.5).

If the client has reported products in a main textile group that were not yet listed on the client's existing certificate, the certification body shall add this main group to the certificate.

7.15 (additionally) Evaluation of affiliates

(additionally) If a parent, subsidiary, or sister company (in the following: affiliate) of a corporate group applies for a Green Button certificate and this company uses the resources and processes of other affiliates in the group in whole or in part to implement the corporate due diligence processes and to ensure the requirements of the Green Button, these companies shall be understood as a single entity in the sense of requirement 3.2.1 in *DIN EN ISO 9000*. Therefore, the used resources and processes of further affiliates are not "outsourced" in the sense of requirement 3.4.6 in *DIN EN ISO 9000*, but shall be fully subject of the scope of the management system (3.5.3) and fully evaluated, as far as they are essential components of the corporate due diligence processes. This shall be taken into account when drafting the certification agreement as required by 4.1.2.2 in ISO 17065 and, if applicable, in the formulation of the scope in terms of requirement 7.3.1 in ISO 17065.

Such an affiliate can apply for the Green Button in the following circumstances:

a) It shall bear the product responsibility as the party placing the product on the market.

b) It is a client of the certification body, and the certification agreement shall be approved by the other affiliates of the corporate group used to fulfil its corporate due diligence obligations.

c) The review of compliance with the corporate due diligence requirements shall cover the affiliate and the resources, processes, and management system of the further affiliate(s) to the extent that they are used by the affiliate to fulfil its corporate due diligence obligations. In particular:

   - If in Core Element 1 the affiliate refers to the policy of the corporate group or individual further affiliates, it shall be clear from these documents that the policy also refers to the affiliate. In addition, there must be a publication by the affiliate (indicator 1.2.1).
   - For the indicators in Core Element 4, the affiliate must be considered separately, i.e., the external communication must be in the name of the affiliate, but with reference to the further affiliated company.

d) For the evaluation, the certification body records, as part of the evaluation planning and evaluation time calculation, which requirement is to be checked at which affiliated company and how the evaluation is carried out (on-site or remotely, see 7.4.4).

e) The evaluation report and certificate shall be issued to the affiliate and, if the main activities in the area of corporate due diligence processes originate from another affiliate, include a reference to the latter.

NOTE: In the event that the further affiliate also applies for the Green Button with the certification body, elements of the management system that have already been evaluated as well as those parts of the evaluation that have already been covered by the evaluation of the affiliate do not have to be evaluated again.

8 Management system requirements

8.1 Options

8.1.1 General

See 8.1.1 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

(additionally) The Green Button's requirements shall be embedded in the certification body's management system.

8.1.2 Option A

See 8.1.2 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

8.1.3 Option B

See 8.1.3 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

8.2 General management system documentation (Option A)

8.2.1

See 8.2.1 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

8.2.2

See 8.2.2 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

8.2.3

See 8.2.3 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

8.2.4

See 8.2.4 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

8.2.5

See 8.2.5 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

8.3 Control of documents (option A)

8.3.1

See 8.3.1 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

8.3.2

See 8.3.2 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

8.4 Control of records (option A)

8.4.1

See 8.4.1 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

8.4.2

See 8.4.2 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

8.5 Management review (Option A)

8.5.1 General

8.5.1.1

See 8.5.1.1 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

8.5.1.2

See 8.5.1.2 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

8.5.2 Review inputs

See 8.5.2 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

8.5.3 Review outputs

See 8.5.3 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

8.6 Internal audits (Option A)

8.6.1

See 8.6.1 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

(additionally) The certification body's procedures for internal audits shall take the Green Button into account.

8.6.2

See 8.6.2 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

8.6.3

See 8.6.3 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

8.6.4

See 8.6.4 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

8.7 Corrective actions (Option A)

8.7.1

See 8.7.1 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

8.7.2

See 8.7.2 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

8.7.3

See 8.7.3 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

8.7.4

See 8.7.4 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

8.8 Preventive actions (Option A)

8.8.1

See 8.8.1 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

8.8.2

See 8.8.2 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

8.8.3

See 8.8.3 in DIN EN ISO/IEC 17065

References

DIN EN ISO/IEC 17030 Conformity assessment - General requirements for third-party marks of conformity

DIN EN ISO/IEC 17029 Conformity assessment - General principles and requirements for validation and verification bodies

DIN EN ISO 19011:2018-10 Guidelines for auditing management systems (ISO 19011:2018); German and English version EN ISO 19011:2018

ISO/TS 17033 Ethical claims and supporting information - Principles and requirements

ISO 22095 Chain of custody - General terminology and models

Appendix 1: Additional requirements for certification bodies and their personnel

In addition to the requirements of the national accreditation body, further prerequisites shall be fulfilled for the Green Button in order to obtain accreditation as a certification body.

- The certification body shall be approved for at least one comparable sustainability standard.

The certification body shall maintain personnel to perform the following functions for use for the Green Button:

- at least one person for evaluation tasks with the competencies listed below. This person may not do any direct client acquisition for the certification body;
- at least one person for assessments and certification decisions with the competencies listed below;
- a program manager who will be the contact person for the scheme owner, the Secretariat and any bodies commissioned by the Secretariat (this person can also carry out evaluation tasks or assessments and certification decisions).

Suitability requirements for personnel:

Competence requirements for personnel shall be made taking into account the internationally applicable standards. Personnel shall have the following knowledge:

1. Qualifications:
   - university entrance qualification, e.g. through vocational training in a relevant specialisation
   - **Or** university or university of applied sciences degree in relevant fields such as textile management, environmental science, economic geography, political or social science, sustainability management (at least bachelor's degree or equivalent)
   - **As well as** native speaker or business fluent in German and English (proof for non-native speakers via language certificate level C1/C2 or alternatively at least three years of study and/or work experience in the context of the respective language)
   - **As well as** attestation of (professional) qualification for the Green Button (see 5.3.1.1), issued by the Secretariat.

2. Professional experience:

Personnel tasked with evaluations, assessments or certification decisions:

- In the case of a university or university of applied sciences degree: at least two years of professional experience in the implementation or verification of corporate due diligence and/or social, sustainability, or environmental standards in supply chains of the textile or agricultural industry (e.g. as a management system officer in companies, as a consultant, as an internal or external auditor)
- Without a university or university of applied sciences degree: at least five years of professional experience in the implementation or review of corporate due diligence obligations or social, sustainability or enviro mental standards in textile or agricultural supply chains (e.g. as a management system officer in companies, as a consultant, as an internal or external auditor)

- **As well as** at least five audits carried out (excluding training or observation audits) according to one or more of these standards in the last two years
- **As well as** successful participation in:
  - a IRCA Certified Training for **at least one of** the following standards: *DIN EN ISO 9001*, *DIN EN ISO 14001*, *DIN ISO 45001*, **or**
  - an SA8000 course (at least Basic), conducted by SAI or by an "SAI-approved external course provider", **or**
  - APSCA Registered Auditor or APSCA Certified Social Compliance Auditor status.

3. The following evidence must be provided:
   - Curriculum vitae with information on periods, companies, functions
   - Certificate of higher education entrance qualification or of the (technical) university degree obtained
   - Training certificate
   - List of audits performed, indicating the standard being reviewed, the customer's industry, and the date of the audit.

Appendix 2: Deadlines in the Green Button programme

The following deadlines shall be met under the Green Button and shall be communicated to the client by the certification body. The Green Button Portal shall be used as shown in the table.

Table 12: Deadlines in the Green Button programme and use of the Green Button Portal

When?	What?	Who?
As early as possible	The date of the evaluation is agreed with the client and entered in the Green Button Portal. The location of the evaluation and the evaluation personnel should be named.	Certification body
4 weeks before the evaluation at the latest	Client sends relevant information to the certification body. Certification body should postpone evaluation if the information does not reach them in time.	Client
2-4 weeks before the evaluation	Preparation of evaluation and document review on Core Elements 1 and 4 and, where appropriate, on Core Elements 2, 3, and 5	Certification body
At least 2 weeks before the evaluation	Evaluation plan is sent to the client and added to the Green Button Portal. Client is advised of serious information gaps that could possibly prevent certification.	Certification body
During the evaluation	Opening meeting, information gathering, closing meeting Where relevant: Certification body informs the client according to the classification in 7.4.6 about: • need for improvement (sufficiently fulfilled); • identified nonconformities (not fulfilled); • their consequences. Information on fulfilled indicators can also be provided.	Certification body/ Client
2 weeks after the evaluation at the latest	Root cause analysis and action plan are sent to the certification body in the event that nonconformities or a need for improvement are identified.	Client
4 weeks after the evaluation at the latest	• Certification decision, if no nonconformities and no need for improvement have been identified. Certification body uploads certificate to the Green Button Portal • If need for improvement has been identified: Certification decision can now be made (or after verification that measures taken were effective)	Certification body

When?	What?	Who?
	and certification body uploads certificate to the Green Button Portal • Regardless of how the indicators were classified: Certification body uploads evaluation report to the Green Button Portal.	
Within 16 weeks after the evaluation	In case of need for improvement (sufficiently fulfilled): • Client has implemented the action plan. • Certification body verifies the effective implementation of the action plan and, if not already done, issues certificate. • Certification body uploads revised evaluation report to the Green Button Portal.	Certification body/ Client
Within 24 weeks after the evaluation	In case of identified nonconformities (not fulfilled): • Client has implemented the action plan • Certification body verifies the effective implementation of the action plan and can issue certificate if all non-conformities have been downgraded to at least “sufficiently fulfilled” • Certification body files revised evaluation report in Green Button Portal • If improved from “not fulfilled” to “sufficiently fulfilled”, the certification body verifies again after a further maximum of 16 weeks whether “fulfilled” has been achieved • Certification body deposits revised evaluation report in the Green Button Portal	Certification body/ Client

Appendix 3: Recommendations for sampling

Introduction

Gathering objective evidence requires some sampling, for example, reviewing a representative sample of documents and records, interviewing a representative sample of employees, or observing a representative sample of key functions or processes.

The methods used to define a sample must ensure that the samples are representative and free from bias. A robust sample is about ensuring an appropriate sample size in relation to the population. This can help to increase confidence in evaluation results. To define a 'good' sample, evaluation personnel need to know the value of the population as accurately as possible. This requires sufficient readable data in advance of the evaluation to be able to plan the evaluation accordingly.

The sample should be large enough to reasonably ensure that it represents the majority of the population. A sound sample also requires the right sampling technique. Evaluation personnel can select samples based on professional and informed judgement (e.g. to investigate a potential problem) or through statistical sampling methods. In either case, evaluation personnel should sample enough to provide sufficient evidence of whether systems and processes are in place and effective within the client's operations.

Furthermore, the actual process of collecting objective evidence involves interaction with people and requires strong communication, interviewing and observation skills.

Sampling technique

The process of gathering objective evidence involves:

- the examination of a selection of documents and records,
- the interviewing of a selection of employees and
- observing selected key processes of the client's business practices, e.g. risk analyses, procurement practices, labelling of products, assessment of producers, and implementation of grievance mechanisms.

When collecting evidence, it is important to think about the selection of issues to be reviewed, i.e. the sampling method and sample size.

For an adequate sample, evaluation personnel should follow seven steps:

1. Identify and review the objective of the evaluation criteria. What is the evaluation about? Is it about general compliance in a routine activity - in which case you may need to evaluate many records (e.g. monitoring results or invoices) - or is it about a regulation, e.g. a policy?
2. Identify the population.
3. Determine the population of available information. How many records, employees, etc. are available for the review in total? And what is relevant for the part to be evaluated? If the population cannot be determined exactly, you should at least estimate it.
4. Choose a sampling method. Should you use a decision-based or a statistical approach? Or a combination of both?
5. Determine an appropriate sample size. How many items do you need to check given the population, the objective, and other practical considerations such as time?

6. Carry out the sampling.
7. Document the results. Have you recorded what you saw and documented the methodology used, the sample size in relation to the population, and your reasons for doing so?

Sampling method

Evaluation personnel usually use one of two types of sampling: decision-based or statistical.

1) Decision-based sampling

Decision-based sampling can be used when evaluation personnel believe that there could be a problem and want to obtain objective evidence to confirm or refute this suspicion. In this case, the sample is targeted at a specific subset of the population. For example, if the Green Button client has recently contracted a new business partner from a high-risk country, the evaluation personnel can decide to focus the sampling activities on this new partner to determine whether the Green Button client has conducted adequate due diligence.

If a nonconformity is found during sampling, there is no way to determine the frequency of the nonconformity within the sample population and thus the reliability of the statements about each member of that population. More work is needed for this.

2) Statistical sampling

Figure 1 shows the relationship between sample size and the accuracy of the information the sample provides about the sample population.

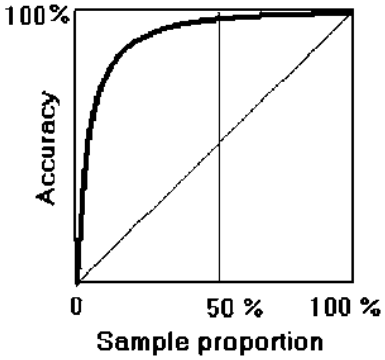

Figure 1: Relationship between sample size and accuracy

Accuracy can be achieved with relatively small sample sizes. The prerequisite for this is that the samples are representative. Too small a sample will result in low accuracy. As soon as more than about 10 % of the sample population is sampled, the yield can decrease.

The **following statistical sampling methods** are among the most common sampling approaches:

a. Simple random sampling: A simple random sample is a subset of a population (e.g. supply chains, people, products) that is randomly selected so that each unit in the population has the same probability of being selected. To select a sample at random, the "square root rule" is often used to determine sample size. Another method is percentage sampling.

Simple random sampling is suitable for homogeneous populations.

b. Stratified random sampling: If the population under study is not homogeneous but consists of several sub-populations that are known or assumed to be different, then it is better to draw a simple random sample from each of these sub-populations. This is called "stratified random sampling". With stratified random sampling, it is important to note that no element of the population may be excluded when determining the subpopulations and that each element may only be assigned to a single subpopulation. For example, the population of suppliers involved in a supply chain could be grouped according to the type of supplier (e.g. retailers, spinners, dyers, etc.).

Stratified random sampling is best suited to situations where there are obvious groupings within the population whose characteristics are more similar within the grouping than between the grouping (e.g. retailers are probably more similar to each other than their similarities are to spinners or dyers).

Stratification helps to ensure that estimates of an existing trait are accurate, especially when there are differences between subpopulations.

c. Systematic sampling: This is a statistical method involving the selection of elements from an ordered sampling frame. The most common form of systematic sampling is the equal probability method, where every kth element of the population is selected, where k, the sampling interval, is calculated as follows:

k = population (N)/sample size (n)

In this method, each element of the population has a known and the same selection probability. Systematic sampling is only to be used when the given population is homogeneous, as the systematic sampling units are evenly distributed across the population. If there is a natural flow of subjects in the population, such as the production of Green Button T-shirts in a manufacturing process, then it is easier to sample every kth unit. In any case, it is important that the list of subjects or the process is naturally random in the sense that there is no pattern to their order.

d. Subgroup sampling: This is a method where the population is divided into subgroups and the subgroups are randomly selected for sampling rather than the individual elements to be studied. Data are then collected on all the individual elements in the selected subgroups.

Subgroup sampling is used when 'hierarchical' groupings can be identified in a population, such as factories and workers within factories. For example, let's assume that a factory uses a timekeeping system to determine working hours, with several timekeeping devices in each building. In order to estimate the working hours of

the workers, one could take a sample of the factory buildings instead of the time clocks and then measure all the time clocks in the selected buildings.

e. Multistage sampling: This is a more complex form of subgroup sampling. Measuring all the elements in the selected subgroups may be too expensive or not necessary at all. In multistage sampling, the subgroup units are often referred to as "primary" sampling units and the elements within the subgroups as "secondary" sampling units. Unlike subgroup sampling, where all secondary units are measured, multistage sampling collects data for only a sample of the secondary units. For example, the population could be divided into building complexes, then into buildings, and finally into furnishings.

Implementation of the sampling

To reduce the risk of bias, the evaluation personnel must select the sample, not the client. It is also important to ensure that the correct population is included in the sample. For example, if the evaluation personnel want to check whether employees have received training on the OECD Guidance, they should sample the list of all employees and not the training materials, which are likely to have been given only to the trained employees.

Documentation of the results

Documentation of the sampling results is important for several reasons. Firstly, the evaluation personnel and the certification body want to ensure that the evaluation and the corresponding certification decision are trustworthy and that the sampling methods used increase confidence in the evaluation results. In addition, ISO 17065 requires that at least one person makes the certification decision based on all information related to the evaluation, its review, and any other relevant information. The lack of documented sampling methods, sample sizes, and corresponding results can result in the certification body being unable to make a certification decision.