

# OCEAN BOUND PLASTIC

## CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

Social+ Ocean Bound Plastic Component



**FOR A SOCIALLY INCLUSIVE CIRCULAR ECONOMY**

## **Standard Component Development**

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## **Copyrights**

Because the authors believe that the requirements developed in this Social+ OBP Component may be beneficial to waste pickers<sup>1</sup> in many other contexts besides from the collection of Ocean Bound Plastic, the specific requirements established for Independent Collectors are available to use and adapt for all under the Creative Common license CC BY 4.0 terms. To view a copy of this license, visit:

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## **Reference Documents**

This Standard shall be used together with the following complementary documents:

- OBP-COL-STD: OBP Collection Organization Standard
- OBP-NEU-STD: OBP Neutralization Services Provider Standard
- OBP-SOC-GUI: Social+ Ocean Bound Plastic Component Implementation Guidelines
- OBP-DEF-GUI: OBP Program Definitions & Annexes
- OBP-TEM-GUI: OBP Program Templates
- OBP-LOG-GUI: OBP Logo Uses and Claims Guidelines
- OBP-FAQ-GUI: OBP Frequently Asked Questions
- OBP-REM-GUI: OBP Remote and Supervised/Shadow Audit Guidelines

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<sup>1</sup> Waste Pickers are designed as Independent Collectors in the OBP Certification Program



- OBP-ROS-GUI: OBP Recognition of other Standards and Audits
- OBP-FEE-CON: OBP Fees Structure

All documents are available on the “document center” section of the OBP Program website ([www.obpcert.org](http://www.obpcert.org))

**Revisions and Updates**

At the time of publication of this Social+ OBP component, waste pickers (Independent Collectors) are for the first time specifically addressed in a social certification standard. This initial inclusion of the informal collection sector into a formal certification program is expected to be improved over the first years with implementation feedback and learning. Any comment regarding the Social+ OBP component may be sent to [contact\(at\)obpcert.org](mailto:contact(at)obpcert.org)

Please note that requirement 5.6 may evolve with additional requirements designed to bridge the gap between the current remuneration of ICs and the applicable living income. A pilot is underway to validate feasibility, mechanisms, and impacts. If results are positive, the new requirement shall be introduced. As this addition may impact the financial aspects of Social+ OBP, sufficient notice shall be given for Organizations to adapt to this significant change.

**Revision history**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Version</b>	<b>Changes</b>
8 <sup>th</sup> Sept. 2023	V1	Initial Release



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# 1. INTRODUCTION

Waste Pickers provide most of the global collection volume for recycled material, and for recycled plastic it is 60%<sup>2</sup> of the worldwide volume. Similar ratios are observed for the collection of Non-Commercially Recyclable Plastic waste for the issuance of OBP Credits. Yet, Waste Pickers receive little to no recognition for their essential contribution to circular economy, environmental protection, and collection services. On the contrary, they work in high-risk conditions and are exposed to market price volatility, exploitative work conditions, discriminatory treatment and suffer most from climate change impacts.

The Social+ OBP component is designed to support the work of organizations that are stepping further from business as usual to engage with these communities in more ethical manners by providing them with similar direct and indirect benefits to a formal employment guaranteeing:

- Means and concrete solutions to keep children off work.
- Bargaining power and representativeness in the organization.
- Improved Occupational Health and Safety.
- Support with the administrative and financial aspects of everyday life.
- Development opportunities through actionable trainings.
- Improved and traceable income along with proof of regular payments.

The Social+ OBP component is also aiming at ensuring that the formal employees of the certified collection Organization benefit from ethical and social working conditions by ensuring the Code of Conduct developed by the Ethical Trade Initiative is implemented and fully abided by.

Finally, the Social+ OBP component is, for brands, whether they purchase recyclable material or OBP Credits, a tool to ensure that social and ethical criteria and price premium are applied all along the value chain up to the very first level of OBP sourcing, even when this first level is informal.

The requirements set forth in the Social+ OBP component are to be viewed as minimum and organizations are encouraged to assess the specific situation of their Independent Collectors' communities and employees and implement additional tailor-made impactful solutions.

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<sup>2</sup> GlobalRec, the international alliance of waste pickers estimates the global collection of plastic waste by waste picker to approximately 60%.

## 2. TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Capital letters are used throughout the document to signal the words that are included in the definitions available in OBP-DEF-GUI. Acronym's significance is also available in the same OBP-DEF-GUI document.

## 3. SCOPE

This document is not a standalone Standard; it is an optional component that provides greatly enhanced social benefits to Independent Collectors – ICs, and workers of the certified Organization. This component can be used together with the OBP-COL-STD (OBP Collection Organization Standard) for Commercially Recyclable Plastics, and/or with the OBP-NEU-STD (OBP Neutralization Services Provider Standard), for Non-Commercially Recyclable Plastics for the OBP Credits system.

Additionally, this document shall be used together with the guidelines (OBP-SOC-GUI) for implementation and auditing of the Social+ OBP component.

Organizations that wish to certify themselves with the OBP-COL-STD and the Social+ OBP component, shall replace the requirements of paragraphs 5.1 (b,c,d,e) of the former, with the requirements of this document.

Organizations that wish to certify themselves with the OBP-NEU-STD and the Social+ OBP component, shall replace the requirements of paragraphs 6.1 (b,c,d,e) of the former, with the requirements of this document.

Depending on the applying Organization structure and composition some requirements may be more relevant than others and some requirements may not apply.

Organizations are allowed to implement the Social+ OBP requirements on a selected portion of their supply chain. For example, with a specific group of Independent Collectors (ICs), or, if working with a Supplier Group, with selected Small Collectors. For the rest of the supply chain that is not selected to take part in Social+ OBP, the Organization will apply the usual OBP requirements of the corresponding Standard. In that case, the Organization will handle certified OBP and certified Social+ OBP, or OBP and Social+ OBP Credits as detailed in section 8.

Requirements of section 6 will be applicable to all the Organization's employees, whether they work directly with Social+ OBP or not.

This Social+ OBP component is applicable worldwide.



## 4.EFFECTIVE DATE

This component becomes effective on the release date. New certification applicants and already certified Organizations applying for the Social+ OBP component shall be assessed against this revision of the component from this date onwards.

## 5.REQUIREMENTS APPLICABLE TO INDEPENDENT COLLECTORS (ICS)

The guidelines for implementation and audit of the Social+ OBP component (OBP-SOC-GUI – available in the document center on obpcert.org website) contain information, recommendations and interpretation guidance for Organizations implementing the Social+ OBP component and CBs auditing against it. These guidelines shall be consulted when implementing Social+ OBP and preparing for an Audit.

### 5.1. IC COMMUNITY MANAGER

- a) The Organization shall have at least one position in charge of the relationship with the IC community. This position is referred to as “IC community manager”. The IC community manager shall be the primary point of contact for the ICs and the representative of their interests within the Organization. The IC community manager shall ensure ICs receive all benefits they are entitled to and comply with the commitments they make with the Organization.
- b) The number of IC community manager positions in the Organization shall be relevant to the size and diversity of the IC community included in Social+ OBP scope, allowing personal knowledge and follow up of each IC.
- c) The appropriate number of ICs per community manager will vary in each Organization depending on the Organization’s location, complexity, and IC community composition. As a reference, an IC community manager with full time dedication<sup>3</sup> should handle a maximum of 30-50 ICs. In cases where one IC sells OBP on behalf of several others, all ICs shall be accounted for in the previous reference number and the IC community manager shall have direct contact with all of them.

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<sup>3</sup> Part time dedication is also possible for example if the IC community is small or if the role is shared by several employees.

- d) The IC community manager shall maintain updated records of the IC community they work with. These records shall include IC personal details and critical information relevant to this standard. IC community managers must get recorded informed consent from ICs to collect and store this information and how they can have this information deleted in the future if they so wish to upon leaving the Social+ OBP program.
- e) The IC community manager shall explain to the ICs the benefits and obligations related to their participation in the Social+ OBP program and record acknowledgement of the ICs to join. This acknowledgement may be recorded through the signature of a written agreement, or a video recording or equivalent.

## 5.2. IC CHILD PROTECTION

Organizations shall refer to the definition of Child Labor in the OBP-DEF-GUI document for the proper interpretation of this requirement.

- a) The Organization shall ensure through communication and training that the IC community understands the importance of protecting and supporting children towards better development opportunities and that Child Labor will not be tolerated.
- b) The Organization shall work with ICs to effectively remediate Child Labor cases by providing solutions that are sufficient and sustainable to ensure children remain off work and are provided with the proper childcare and education. A non-exhaustive list of possible solutions is given below:
  - Financial incentives for ICs that maintain children at school.
  - Childcare solutions such as nurseries.
  - Integrating young adults into formal employment opportunities specifically adapted to their young age.
  - Providing work opportunities for non-working adult household members.
  - Providing training or support for non-working adult household members to help them find employment or create their own activity.
  - other mechanisms providing similar benefits and insurance that children remain off-work.
- c) IC community managers shall regularly visit collection sites, schools, or childcare facilities to identify Child Labor cases and verify implementation and effectiveness of the solutions provided by the Organization. The frequency of visits shall be adapted to the local context and monitoring results within the following guidelines:
  - Initial monitoring or if issues are found: Minimum once a month for 3 months.
  - Follow up monitoring: Minimum once every 3 months.





- d) The Organization shall apply a continuous improvement cycle and regularly reassess and improve solutions based on the monitoring results.

To implement the requirements of this chapter 5.2, the Organization may work on its own or seek the support of public or private organizations that can provide these services. In the latter case the Organization will work as a facilitator, solution seeker and ensure the perennity of the mechanisms.

### **5.3. IC WORKING CONDITIONS, OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY (OHS)**

- a) The Organization shall perform an occupational health, safety, and tool/collection practices' efficiency assessment, to identify the main risks to which ICs are exposed while performing their professional activities, and main practice/tool efficiency improvement opportunities.
- b) Based on the findings, the Organization shall identify and implement solutions adapted to the working conditions of ICs.
- c) The Organization shall monitor the impacts and effectiveness of the solutions implemented and keep records of OHS events and accidents involving ICs alongside the ones involving Organization's employees.
- d) The Organization shall apply a continuous improvement cycle and regularly reassess and improve solutions based on the monitoring results.
- e) When supplying Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) the organization shall train ICs on using them and facilitate adoption by incentivizing the use of PPE.
- f) The Organization shall maintain at purchasing sites a first aid kit and basic pharmaceutical products/medicines to administer basic treatment to ICs that may need it.
- g) The Organization shall offer ICs and its family members the option of some annual medical monitoring and routine treatment like vaccination, deworming tablets, etc. This can be done directly, either in collaboration with a medical center or through the payment of some health insurance/ health plan to the IC and its family members. Treatments will be provided with informed consent and relevant educational material to support their decision. Treatments cannot be used to reward or discipline ICs and their families.
- h) The Organization shall support willing ICs in getting social security benefits (if applicable) by acting as a facilitator between ICs and the responsible government entity(ies).

## 5.4. IC ACCESS TO FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INSTITUTIONS

- a) The Organization shall keep track of the payments made to ICs and shall establish a simple contract<sup>4</sup> signed with willing ICs. The contract and payment records can be electronic, or paper based but shall remain communicable to third parties.
- b) The Organization shall provide IC upon request justifications of their contractual status and/or revenue streams for third party reassurance.
- c) In cases where it is legally feasible the Organization shall provide domiciliation to the IC that require and request it for their paperwork.
- d) The Organization shall support willing ICs in the obtention of microloans by acting as a facilitator between ICs and microloan providers.
- e) The Organization shall ensure ICs are aware of the support they can get by reminding them about it (in workshops, through the IC community managers, etc) and keep records of the support it has provided to requesting ICs.

## 5.5. IC EMPOWERMENT

- a) The Organization should set up regular voluntary workshops, at least once every quarter, with ICs to support them in improving their self-esteem, hard and soft skills, and overall living conditions. ICs shall have a mechanism available to express their interest in particular subjects to the Organization. An indicative list of possible subjects is provided below.
- b) Workshop subjects shall be chosen considering all following variables: i) Expressed ICs' interests, ii) Potential benefits for them, and iii) Capacity to have the workshop delivered by experienced in-house or third-party panelists.
- c) The Organization shall ensure that some follow-up and/or concrete actions are taken in the context of the workshops. The Organization can achieve this either by taking internal actions or facilitating the liaison with specialized third parties that can provide guidance and support to ICs.

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<sup>4</sup> The contract is intended to be used as proof of a relationship for third parties, it should remain brief and easily intelligible stating only key obligations of the parties.

- d) Organizations shall track the impacts of the workshops to assess interests/benefits (record attendance, collect feedback surveys before and after to monitor progress, etc.).

Indicative list of possible workshops:

- Waste management, segregation practices, value of material and opportunities.
- Their role in circular economy, environmental protection, collection services, sanitation, and the value they bring to society.
- Creation and management of cooperatives.
- Microloans or similar financing tools.
- Safe working practices.
- Pollution prevention, hazardous and biological waste (recognizing these wastes and ways to handle them safely).
- Child Labor (definitions, impact on children, remediation, available support...)
- Their rights as civilians, opportunities to get support.
- Basic needs´ management (health, education, personal finances, nutrition, self-subsistence...)
- No harassment, gender equality.
- Soft skills, wellbeing, emotion management, conflict resolution.
- Other similar subjects that bring value to the ICs in their specific context.

## 5.6.IC COMPENSATION

- a) The Organization shall purchase Social+ OBP at market price plus a premium. The premium shall be at least 10% above market price.
- b) The Organization shall pay the premium separately on a weekly, bi-weekly or monthly basis. During the chosen period, the Organization shall purchase at normal market prices. At the end of the period, the Organization shall pay the premium, calculating it as a percentage of the purchased amount during the period considered.
- c) ICs shall be clearly informed of the premium existence, its basis of calculation and its payment mechanism.
- d) When purchasing Non-Commercially Recyclable Social+ OBP for the issuance of OBP Credits under the OBP-NEU-STD Standard the Organization shall not apply a premium.

## 6. REQUIREMENTS FOR THE ORGANIZATION'S EMPLOYEES

Employees considered for these set of requirements shall include all types of labor relationships of all kinds of personnel providing work to the Organization that are not ICs or Small Collectors. This definition expressly includes employees with long term or short-term contracts, contractors paid by time or by work piece, temporary workers daily workers, migrant workers, and any similar workers' type. It also includes volunteers (except for the payment related requirements). If the Organization is a cooperative, the members of the cooperative will be considered within the definition of employees.

For all of the above personnel, the Organization shall apply the Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI) Base Code<sup>5</sup> version ETI/V1/04/18 available on ETI website in English and many other languages at <https://www.ethicaltrade.org/resources/eti-base-code>. A copy of the Base code version ETI/V1/04/18 will remain available in the document center on the obpcert.org website.

As mentioned in the Base Code introduction, Organizations should use the Base Code abiding to the following guidance:

*The provisions of the Base Code constitute minimum and not maximum standards. Organizations<sup>6</sup> applying this code are expected to comply with national and other applicable laws. Where the law and the Base Code address the same subject, Organizations are expected to apply the provision that affords the greater protection to workers.*

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<sup>5</sup> The use of the ETI Base Code is made with express permission of ETI and ZPO would like to thank the ETI team for the work done and the authorization to use it.

<sup>6</sup> The term « compagnies » in ETI's original text was changed to "Organizations" to fit the OBP Standards definitions.

## 7. SUPPLIER GROUP CERTIFICATION

If the Organization wishes to include in the scope of the Social+ OBP component a Supplier Group, it shall ensure that all the Small Collectors making up the Supplier Group comply with all the applicable requirements for ICs and for their own employees.

To ensure compliance to the Social+ OBP requirements by Small Collectors, the Organization may use some of the following options:

- Placing permanently (or in a frequency that allows sufficient control) one or several IC community manager(s) at the Small Collector site and engaging directly with the ICs concerned.
- Engaging in frequent trainings and audits of the Small Collectors.
- Having the Small Collectors develop IC community manager positions and having them be in direct contact with the Organization.
- Have the Organization team, support the compliance of the requirements for the Small Collectors own employees.
- Any other options that the Organization may see fit.

Note: If the Organization considers that the direct control over all the Small Collectors making up its OBP Supplier Group is difficult to achieve, it may be advisable that the Organization implements the Social+ OBP component only on a part of its supply chain where it can ensure all requirements are fully met.

Organizations are allowed to offer both OBP, and Social+ OBP products at the same time as detailed in the next chapter.

## 8. SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT

This section is only applicable for Organizations that are applying Social+ OBP to a selected portion of their supply chain (IC or Small Collector) as explained in section 3.

### Organization applying the Social+ OBP component to the OBP-COL-STD

When the Organization certifies parts of its collection activities as Social+ OBP, and other parts as regular OBP, the collected Social+ OBP will be segregated from the regular OBP following the requirements of the applicable Supply Chain Model (refer to OBP-DEF-GUI) and considering Social+ OBP like an OBP Category.

### Organizations applying the Social+ OBP component to the OBP-NEU-STD

When the Organization certifies parts of its collection and treatment activities as Social+ OBP, and other parts as regular OBP, the Social+ OBP Credits will be accounted for separately from the regular OBP Credits. However no physical separation of the NCR OBP and NCR Social+ OBP is required beyond the first point of volume and weight measurement after collection.



# 9. PROGRESSIVE COMPLIANCE

To comply with the Social+ OBP component, Organizations will need to start implementing the requirements with the selected IC community and their own employees for several months before the first Audit takes place.

Recognizing that some requirements may take a long time to be fully implemented, certain specific flexibility is given for the first audit as described below. At the next certification audit (after 1 year), all requirements need to be fully complied with for the certification to be maintained.

## 9.1. REQUIREMENTS THAT ALLOW SPECIFIC FLEXIBILITY FOR THE FIRST SOCIAL+ OBP AUDIT

REQUIREMENT	SPECIFIC FLEXIBILITY
5.2 IC CHILD PROTECTION	5.2.c - At least 75% of the child population concerned shall have received a minimum of one initial visit. If issues were found during these visits, these should be registered, and a solution shall be identified and discussed with parents but may not be fully implemented yet.
5.3 IC WORKING CONDITIONS, OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH, AND SAFETY	5.3.g, h - May not be fully implemented yet but necessary planning and preparation must have been made to implement these requirements during the first year of certification.
5.4 IC ACCESS TO FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INSTITUTIONS	5.4.b, c, d - May not be fully implemented yet but necessary planning and preparation must have been made to implement these requirements during the first year of certification.
5.5 IC EMPOWERMENT	5.a, b, c, d - The first workshop may not have been executed yet but it should be planned (subject, speaker, date determined) and scheduled to occur in the first 3 months of the certification.

