

How to prepare for CFM certification

This guidance is for companies that are engaged in the development of a Carbon Footprint Management (CFM) system covering their corporate or product carbon emissions, and seeking NEPCon's CFM certification. Before you start following this guidance, you need to select the type of CFM system (corporate, product or both) and define the scope of your CFM certification.

1: How to prepare for CFM certification

We recommend that you appoint an in-house CFM coordinator, even if you are using an external consultant to help you. The coordinator should read the relevant parts of the CFM standard as well as manage and monitor the certification process. This will help you build valuable in-house competence.

An effective preparation process typically involves the following steps:

- 1** Minimum one person in your company studies the certification requirements
- 2** You establish a your CFM procedures including your company climate statement, your carbon data collection and calculation methods and your CFM Plan for emission reductions (e.g. using NEPCon's CFM Plan template)
- 3** You submit your CFM Plan and other documentation to NEPCon for review well in advance of your main evaluation

2: When are you ready for certification?

The following needs to be in place:

A Corporate climate policy that describes your organisation's overall intentions to manage the carbon footprint.

B Additional documentation: Carbon footprint management plan including 1: CFM procedures 2: Data collection and responsibilities 3: CFM calculations and results 4: Targets and action plan for emission reduction. 4: Samples of CFM trademark use (if relevant).

This is the minimum which is required from all certificate holders. Further documentation may be needed depending on the type and scope of your CFM certification.

C Clear division of roles and responsibilities, which ensures full and correct implementation of your CFM system. All relevant staff must be instructed in and understand the part of the procedure that they need to implement.

Now you are ready for the main evaluation, which, with a few exceptions, involves a certification visit at your site.

Get familiar with the requirements

The requirements for CFM certification are listed in NEPCon's CFM Standard. The list may seem overwhelming at first sight, similar to legal papers, which are difficult to understand unless you happen to be a lawyer. For this reason, NEPCon has developed a number of tools to help you to gain clarity.

Of course, you do not have to know the standard by heart in order to be certified, and some sections may even be irrelevant for your company.

We recommend you to start by gaining a general overview of the standards' structure and content. Then you can use them as a reference as you work your way through your procedure. Please contact us whenever you are in doubt about how a requirement is to be understood or whether it applies to you. In our experience, this is the best way to gather the relevant knowledge of the certification rules.

Staying on top of the rules

NEPCon will inform you of any significant changes to the CFM standard affecting your certification. We also inform about important system changes in our free e-newsletter 'Certified Wood Update'.

3: The certification requirements

Your CFM procedure must include all relevant activities within the scope of your certificate. The procedure may be added to your existing quality assurance or sustainability procedures, or may be written as a separate document. Relevant elements of your CFM procedure are:

- ✓ **Defining the scope** of the certificate: Your organisational boundaries (corporate) or the description of the product unit and function (product)
- ✓ **Data quality assessment:** Considerations of data quality issues and data quality improvements over time
- ✓ **Responsibility:** Clear definition of responsibilities for certification, including all parts of the CFM standard.
- ✓ **Results:** your displayed results and performance against carbon emission reduction targets
- ✓ **Training:** Training plan and records of completed training. You need to provide training for relevant staff so that they understand their specific role and responsibilities within CFM certification.
- ✓ **Documentation:** All relevant documentation must be kept on record for at least five years. This includes invoices, documentation concerning transportation (both in and out), outsourcing, staff training, volume summaries and the like.
- ✓ **Data collection:** Process for systematically collecting activity data within and outside of your organization (outsourced activities, contractors etc.)
- ✓ **Use of CFM labels:** Proper use of trademarks must be ensured.

NOTE: Learn more about the CFM certification process in our information guide "Nuts & Bolts of CFM certification".

4: Documentation

Typically, the following types of documentation that should be available for sampling during CFM audits:

- 1 Corporate Climate Policy and Carbon Footprint Management plan:** Explaining your overall climate goals, CFM procedures, responsibilities, staff training, data collection methods and results
- 2 Bills and invoices:** for heat and electricity consumption, outsourced activities, transportation of products, waste disposal etc.
- 3 Climate communication:** Use of CFM labels and claims, infographics on website, CSR reports, use of NEPCon's name and trademarks.



NOTE: Special circumstances may be important to take into account as you prepare for certification, e.g. outsourced activities, land use change, projects activities etc. This will be further clarified as part of your dialogue with NEPCon.

Get a head start

Contact us to find out how you can get a head start with our CFM training courses.

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