GC Issuer Accreditation Process
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Introduction

The EnergyTag Granular Certificate (GC) Scheme Standard introduces a framework for the implementation of robust Granular Certificates Schemes and the criteria to be met by GC Issuers in order to be compliant with EnergyTag. This document details the Accreditation Process to be followed for GC Issuers to claim to be “EnergyTag Compliant” or “EnergyTag Accredited” and use the EnergyTag trademark in making these claims.
GC Issuer Accreditation Process

Aim of the Accreditation Process

The process to accredit GC Issuers according to the EnergyTag Standard aims to collect evidence that the candidate GC Issuer administers a GC Scheme that is compliant with the EnergyTag Granular Certificate Scheme Standard.

Roles in the Accreditation Process

- **Applicant**: An organization that aims to become accredited as an EnergyTag Accredited GC Issuer for GC Schemes.
- **GC Issuer**: An organization responsible for administering the Granular Certificates within a Domain for a given Energy Carrier, ensuring the avoidance of Double Counting of the Attributes represented by the Granular Certificates it administers throughout their lifetime.
- **Accreditor (EnergyTag)**: The organization that administers the EnergyTag GC Scheme Standard and confers Accreditation of EnergyTag Compliant Issuers. EnergyTag is a non-profit entity registered in the United Kingdom.
- **Assessor**: EnergyTag or Organization appointed by EnergyTag which assesses Applicants for compliance with the requirements set out in this document and advises the Accreditation organ inside EnergyTag.

Overview of the Accreditation Process

![Figure - GC Issuer Accreditation Process](image)

The three main steps of the GC Issuer accreditation process are:

1. **Application**: in which the Applicant applies to be accredited.
2. **Assessment**: in which the Assessor collects evidence on whether the candidate GC Issuer is compliant with the criteria of the EnergyTag GC Scheme Standard, and based on which an Accreditation outcome is determined by the Accreditor based on the Assessment report.
3. **Accreditation**: in which the Accreditor formally accredits the GC Issuer based on the Assessment recommendation by the Assessor.

**Accreditation Process Steps**

**Step 1 – Application**

1) **Initial Application**
   a) The Applicant submits the [GC Issuer Assessment Application Form](#). The accreditation form requests basic contact details and requirements that must be met to proceed (See Annex 1).
   b) Based on the Application Form, the Accreditor decides to:
      i) **Continue to Assessment**: Accreditor will provide information to the Applicant regarding the accreditation process, its timeline, the required documentation, Assessment Fee, etc.
      ii) **Refuse the application**: Accreditor will provide details as to why and how issues might be rectified.
   c) EnergyTag appoints an Assessor¹ for the specific application.
   d) The Assessor concludes a Confidentiality Agreement with the Applicant (the Assessor will provide this).

2) **Assessment Document Preparation**
   a) The Applicant completes the two Assessment Documents:
      i) [GC Scheme Protocol](#) (See Annex 2), which gives an overview of the key aspects of the GC Scheme in standard format.
      ii) [GC Scheme - Protocol Assessment Checklist](#) (See Annex 3), which lists all criteria from the EnergyTag GC Scheme Standard and requests the Applicant to self-assess themselves against each one. The Assessor will use this as the basis for the Assessment.
   b) Once ready, the Applicant submits these documents to the Accreditor at accreditation@energytag.org, which then shares this with the Assessor.

3) **Review Assessment Document Completeness**
   a) The submitted documents are reviewed for completeness:
      i) If complete, the Assessor informs the Applicant that they are ready to proceed with the Assessment.
      ii) If incomplete, the Assessor communicates why and sets a deadline for the applicant to address the issues.

¹ Note the Assessor must ensure a 4-eye principle for Assessments.
Step 2 – Assessment

4) Assessment of Assessment Documents
   a) The Assessor assesses the GC Scheme Protocol and GC Scheme - Protocol Assessment Checklist to verify that the Applicant fulfills all requirements for operating an EnergyTag compliant GC Scheme.
   b) Where the Assessor observes non-compliance with the EnergyTag standard, a distinction shall be made between:
      i) **Recommendations**: recommendations on how the Applicant can improve their GC Scheme, based on best practices.
      ii) **Minor non-compliance**: non-compliance with the EnergyTag standard, that does not undermine the credibility of the GC Scheme and that can be remedied within a specified number of months.
      iii) **Major non-compliance**: non-compliance with the EnergyTag standard, that undermines the credibility of the GC Scheme making Accreditation impossible until rectified.

5) Iterative Feedback Process
   a) The Assessor provides feedback on the Assessment documents to the Applicant, including a list of observations in the Observation Log of the GC Scheme - Protocol Assessment Checklist.
   b) The Applicant reviews the feedback attempting to address non-compliance and sends back updated Assessment documents.
   c) Two rounds of iterative feedback are included (if necessary) in the Assessment process before the Assessor proceeds to finalize the Assessment.

6) Final Assessment Report Preparation
   a) The Assessor drafts an Assessment Report, indicating:
      i) The conclusions of the assessment.
      ii) A list of Recommendations, Minor non-compliances, and Major non-compliances.
   b) The Assessor shares the Assessment report with the Accréditor for review.
   c) Based on this, the Accréditor and Assessor align on the final report and Accreditation Outcome.

7) Accreditation Outcome and Final Assessment Report
   a) The Accréditor shares the Assessment report with the Applicant including a clear indication of the Accreditation Outcome:
      i) **Accredited without non-compliance**: In this case, the GC Issuer can move directly to Accreditation.
      ii) **Accredited with minor non-compliance**: In this case, Accreditation is granted contingent on the resolution of Minor non-compliances:
(1) The Applicant shall, within a specified timeframe after reception of the Final Assessment Report, provide evidence to the Accrder that the Minor non-compliances are remedied.

(2) The Assessor shall verify whether the Minor non-compliances are sufficiently remedied.

(3) If not, the Applicant shall, within a specified timeframe, provide evidence to the Accrder that the remaining Minor non-compliances are remedied in line with the EnergyTag standard.

(4) If after this period, the minor non-compliances are still not remedied, then the Accrder may choose to review the Accreditation status.

iii) Not accredited due to major non-compliance: In this case, the GC Scheme cannot be Accredited. The GC Issuer is welcome to re-apply for an Assessment at a later date once they perceive Major non-compliances have been rectified.

b) The Applicant pays the Assessment Fee to the Accrder.

c) The Applicant may submit an appeal to the Accrder should they deem this necessary. The Accrder will consider all Appeals.

Step 3 – Accreditation

8) Accreditation of the Applicant GC Issuer

a) Where the Assessment has resulted in a Compliant EnergyTag GC Scheme, the Accrder proceeds to Accreditation of the GC Scheme.

b) The Accrder and the Applicant sign the EnergyTag Accreditation Agreement, which details the terms of Accreditation.

c) Upon signature of the EnergyTag Accreditation Agreement by both parties, the Applicant is formally Accredited by EnergyTag as an “EnergyTag Accredited GC Issuer”, which is valid for 3 years in cases where the GC Issuer system is operational and 1 year where the GC Issuer system is not yet operational. Accredited GC Issuer will be listed on the EnergyTag website.

d) The GC Issuer may claim to be “EnergyTag Compliant” or “EnergyTag Accredited” and use the EnergyTag trademark in making these claims.

Revision History

- Document created: 4-March-2024.
- Last reviewed: 4-March-2024.
Annex 1: GC Issuer Assessment Application

The GC Issuer Assessment Application Form requests the following information from the Applicant GC Issuer:

- Legal Entity Name of GC Issuer,
- Email of GC Issuer Contact Person,
- Region / State of Issuance,
- Project Overview,
- Earliest Start-date for Protocol Assessment,
- If the GC Issuer has exclusive access to a GC Domain.

It also checks the following basic requirements that the GC Issuer:

- Has an operational start date less than 12 months from the date of this application.
- Intends to comply with the EnergyTag GC Scheme Standard.
- Is independent of GC production, trade, and supply.
- Has effective coordination in place to prevent double-counting with local EAC Issuance.
- Complies with applicable local legislation relating to EACs.
The GC Scheme Protocol gives an overview of the key aspects of the GC Scheme in standard format.

GC Issuers should create a copy of the template provided and complete it as it forms the basis for the Assessment.

This document is publicly available on the EnergyTag website for all approved GC Schemes to enhance transparency and best practice sharing.

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2 For inspiration of protocols from current EAC Schemes, see the AIB’s Domain Protocol Page.
Annex 3: GC Scheme Protocol Assessment Checklist

The GC Scheme Protocol Assessment Checklist lists all criteria for becoming an EnergyTag compliant GC Scheme.

- It includes columns for both the Applicant and Assessor to review compliance of the Scheme with each criterion.

- It includes an observation log for discussion of non-compliance issues.
- Observations are dealt with by iterating between the Assessor and the Applicant.
- Once a sufficient number of observations are performed and resolved, a judgment is made by the Assessor deeming the Assessment status of the specific criteria.