SCCI Carbon Print-Score®

Certification Standard

Version 1. 2024

Stichting Certificatie
Creatieve Industrie

TRADEMARK

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Foreword

The **Stichting Certificatie Creatieve Industrie (SCCI)** is committed to supporting transparency, climate responsibility, and sustainable innovation across the creative industries. Through the development of the **Carbon Print-Score® Certification Scheme**, SCCI provides a structured system for measuring, verifying, and communicating the carbon footprint of products and materials.

As the owner and administrator of the Carbon Print-Score® Certification Standard, SCCI works in cooperation with industry organizations, technical experts, sustainability specialists, and independent auditing bodies. The objective of this collaboration is to ensure that the scheme reflects credible scientific methodologies and recognized environmental accounting frameworks while remaining practical for implementation within the creative industries.

The Carbon Print-Score® Certification Standard provides converters (printing companies) with a methodology for assessing and communicate the environmental footprint performance of printed products. The standard translates carbon footprint data into a clear and understandable classification system, allowing companies to communicate verified information about the greenhouse gas emissions associated with their products.

By supporting transparent reporting and independent verification, the Carbon Print-Score® certification scheme aims to strengthen trust in environmental claims and contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions across product supply chains. The scheme is designed to be applicable across multiple material categories, including paper and cardboard, plastics, textiles, adhesive films and composite aluminium sandwich materials.

The standard may be revised periodically to incorporate developments in carbon accounting methodologies, industry practices, and stakeholder input. Updates and transition requirements for future versions will be communicated by SCCI through official publications.

Further information about **SCCI** and the **Carbon Print-Score® Certification Standard** is available at: **https://www.creatieve-industrie.com**

Questions regarding the Carbon Print-Score® certification scheme may be directed to the **Stichting Certificatie Creatieve Industrie (SCCI)** through the official contact channels published on the SCCI website.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Environmental Labelling

Environmental labelling systems offer clear and accessible information about the carbon footprint of products, enabling them to make more eco-conscious choices. For printing companies, the selection of paper and other substrates directly affects both the carbon footprint of the final product and the company's total emissions. Typically, substrates account for around 60% of a company's total carbon footprint in the creative industry, making material choices one of the most impactful levers for emissions reduction. A product labelling system therefore allows companies not only to make environmentally conscious decisions, but also to communicate these efforts transparently to their customers.

When it comes to reducing carbon footprints across the supply chain, labels play a dual role: they guide consumers toward climate-friendly product choices while holding producers accountable for their environmental impact. The challenge for climate labels is not merely to inform, but to present complex emissions data in a way that is clear, transparent, and easy to understand — bridging the gap between technical measurement and everyday consumer decision-making.

1.2 The Carbon Print-Score®

The Carbon Print-Score® certification standard provides a consistent and transparent framework for quantifying, verifying, and communicating the carbon footprint of printed products within the creative industries. It is designed to support companies in assessing the climate impact of their products and to enable credible, comparable communication of this impact to customers and stakeholders.

In the Carbon Print-Score®, the carbon footprint of a product (CFP) represents the total amount of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions associated with a product, based on a life cycle assessment (LCA) and focusing on the single impact category of climate change. It is expressed in tonnes of CO_2-equivalent emissions per kg of printed product. The lower the carbon footprint of a product, the more sustainable the operations of the company and the product system are.

This labelling system is available exclusively for implementation by certified companies based on this certification standard and solely to certified ClimateCalc accounts.

The Carbon Print-Score® label as shown in the picture bellow, is structured to present key sustainability information in a clear and transparent way. At the top, it displays the

product category along with the relevant time frame of the carbon accounting. The centre of the label shows the product's rating, categorized from A to E, providing an easy-to-understand indication of its environmental performance. On the right side, a QR code is included. This QR code, enhances transparency and credibility, since when scanned, it directs users to detailed, product-specific information, including the CO_2 footprint, company details, certification data, and the date of calculation as well as the methodology used. This allows users to understand and verify how the rating was determined.

By making this data accessible, the label ensures that sustainability claims are supported by verifiable evidence. It helps prevent greenwashing while giving both clients and consumers direct insight into the product's environmental impact.

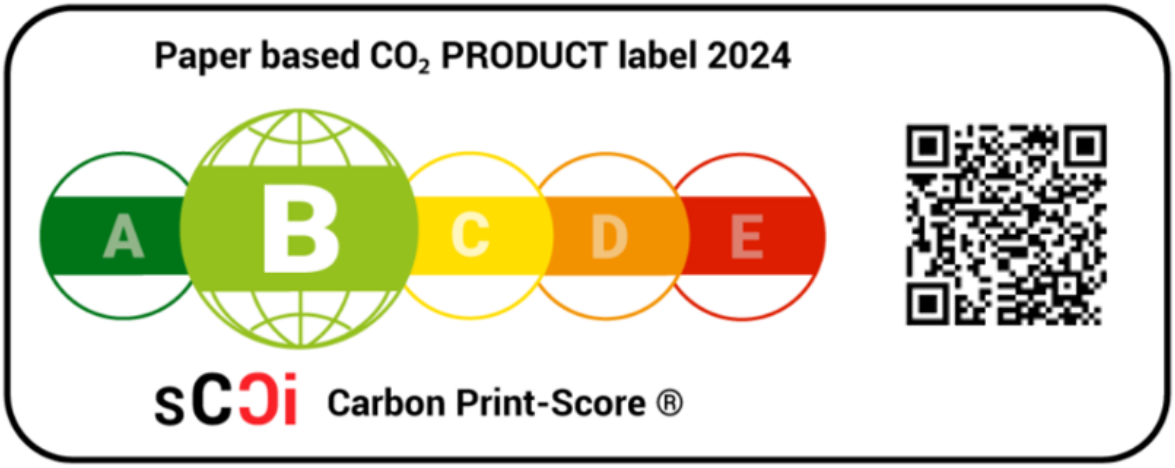


Figure 1.1: Example of the Carbon Print-Score® label for paper-based CO2 Product Label, developed by SCCI

1.3 ClimateCalc

ClimateCalc owned by the International Association of ClimateCalc (IACC), is a sector-specific tool that enables companies in the Creative Industry, particularly those in print and packaging, to calculate not only the CO_2 footprint (Scope 1+2+3) of their business, but also that of individual products from a life cycle perspective. This internationally recognised CO_2 calculator is in accordance with the Greenhouse Gas Protocol and several international industry and ISO standards, ensuring that calculations can be compared across companies and countries. To guarantee data quality and credibility, ClimateCalc uses company- and product-specific data wherever possible, and draws on internationally recognised databases when specific data is unavailable. Only companies that have undergone an annual external audit and obtained

ClimateCalc certification are authorised to use the tool for product-level carbon footprint calculations.

Building on this principle, the Carbon Print-Score® translates detailed carbon footprint calculations from ClimateCalc tool into a standardized label, based on verified data and a harmonized methodology. By presenting verified carbon footprint information through a clear classification system, the Carbon Print-Score® helps organizations improve transparency, encourages emission reductions, and supports the transition toward more climate-conscious production and consumption.

1.4 Normative References

The Carbon Print-Score® methodology aligns with internationally recognized environmental accounting frameworks.

- Greenhouse Gas Protocol - Corporate Accounting and Reporting Standard
- Greenhouse Gas Protocol - Product Life Cycle Accounting and Reporting Standard – product carbon footprint methodology
- ISO 14064-1:2018 – Specification with guidance at the organization level for quantification and reporting of greenhouse gas emissions and removals
- ISO 14067:2018 - Carbon footprint of product - Requirements and guidelines for quantification
- ISO 16759:2013 - Graphic technology - Quantification and communication for calculating the carbon footprint of print media products
- Sector-specific environmental reporting standards: Intergraf recommendations on CO_2 emissions calculation in the printing industry (Version 2.1 - 2021)

2. Product categories

2.1 Scope of the product category types

This certification standard applies to products manufactured, processed, converted, or traded within the creative industries. The scheme currently supports the following product categories used as substrates by companies in the creative industries:

- Paper and cardboard
- Plastic materials
- Textile materials
- Adhesive films
- Composite Aluminium sandwich (ACP)

The scheme may expand to additional product categories in future versions of the standard.

Sections 2.2 to 2.6 define the scope of products covered under the Carbon Print-Score® certification scheme and describe the main substrate categories eligible for assessment. These sections provide an overview of the material types included in the scheme, their typical applications within the creative industries, and the key characteristics that influence carbon footprint calculations and printed product performance.

For each category, a clear distinction is made between included materials, which are eligible for Carbon Print-Score® calculation and labelling, and excluded materials, which fall outside the boundaries of the scheme.

2.2 Paper and Cardboard-Based materials

Paper and cardboard substrates are among the most widely used materials in the printing and creative industries. They serve as the primary carrier for printed content across a broad range of applications, including publications, marketing materials, and packaging.

This category includes materials derived predominantly from cellulose fibres, available in a wide variety of grades, finishes, and structural compositions. These range from lightweight papers used for flyers and magazines to heavier and more rigid boards used for packaging and high-end printed products.

The performance and visual outcome of printed products depend strongly on substrate characteristics such as grammage, thickness, surface texture, coating, brightness, and opacity. Coated and uncoated papers, as well as treated surfaces, influence ink absorption, colour reproduction, and overall print quality.

Included:

- Paper (coated and uncoated) used for printed applications
- Cardboard and paperboard (e.g. folding boxboard, solid board, corrugated board)
- Laminated paper products used for printing, where lamination serves a protective or functional purpose (e.g. barrier, durability, or finish)

Excluded:

Paper-based products that form part of complex multi-material composites, where non-paper structural components (e.g. plastics or metals) individually contribute more than 5% to the total climate change impact score, are excluded.

2.3 Plastic

Plastic substrates in this scheme include both rigid and flexible plastic materials used as a primary carrier for printed content. These substrates are widely applied in packaging, signage, and promotional materials due to their durability, versatility, and print compatibility.

Plastic materials provide a smooth and consistent surface suitable for a variety of printing techniques, including UV printing, flexographic printing, digital printing, and screen printing. The selection of plastic type depends on factors such as flexibility, thickness, transparency, surface energy, and intended application.

Included:

- Rigid plastic sheets and panels used for printing
- Injection-molded or thermoformed rigid plastic items intended for printed graphics
- Plastic films and wraps used for printed applications (without adhesive)
- Flexible packaging materials

Excluded:

Plastic-based products that form part of complex multi-material composites, where non-plastic structural components (e.g. paper, metals, or textiles) individually contribute more than 5% to the total climate change impact score, are excluded.

2.4 Textiles

Textile substrates include fabrics used for printed applications such as banners, flags, soft signage, and decorative materials.

These materials offer flexibility, texture, and visual appeal, making them suitable for both indoor and outdoor printed products. The printing outcome depends on fiber type, weave, and surface treatment.

Included:

- Natural and synthetic textiles used for printing
- Woven, non-woven, and knitted fabrics

Excluded:

Textile-based products that form part of complex multi-material composites, where non-textile structural components (e.g. plastics, wood, or metals (frames)) individually contribute more than 5% to the total climate change impact score, are excluded.

2.5 Adhesive Films

Adhesive films are substrates used primarily for printed labels, car wrapping and stickers. These materials consist of a printable face material, an adhesive layer, and a release liner in most cases.

They are widely used in packaging, product identification, and branding applications, where printed information shall be applied directly onto surfaces.

Included:

- All types of printed self-adhesive labels and films
- Full label constructions, including the release liner, which shall be included in carbon footprint calculations

Excluded:

Adhesive film products that form part of complex multi-material composites outside the defined label structure, where additional non-adhesive film structural components individually contribute more than 5% to the total climate change impact score, are excluded.
(Note: The standard label construction, includes face material, adhesive, and liner)

2.6 Composite aluminium sandwich

Composite aluminium sandwich materials are engineered multi-layer substrates used primarily in printed signage, displays, and architectural graphics. These materials consist of two thin aluminium outer layers bonded to a non-aluminium core, forming a rigid yet lightweight panel suitable for high-quality printing applications.

The structure provides excellent dimensional stability, weather resistance, and surface uniformity, making it particularly suitable for large-format printing, both for indoor and outdoor use.

The printing performance depends on surface treatment (e.g. coated or primed aluminium), which influences ink adhesion, colour reproduction, and durability.

Included:

- Aluminium composite panels (e.g. ACP, Dibond-type materials) used as a primary substrate for printed graphics

Excluded:

- Solid aluminium sheets or plates without a core (covered under aluminium products)
- Composite materials where aluminium is not the primary structural component
- Multi-material assemblies where additional non-defined structural components are added beyond the standard sandwich structure

Aluminium sandwich materials that include additional non-defined structural components beyond the standard composite structure, where these components individually contribute more than 5% to the total climate change impact score, are excluded. Like-solid aluminium sheets without a composite structure

3. Certification Scheme

3.1 Principles

The Carbon Print-Score® certification scheme is based on the following principles:

Transparency
All certification requirements, methodologies and procedures are publicly available. Stakeholders and market participants have access to the rules governing the scheme.

Fairness and Accessibility
The scheme is open under transparent, fair and non-discriminatory terms to all traders willing and able to comply with the scheme's requirements.

Scientific Credibility
Carbon footprint calculations are based on internationally recognized methodologies and standards.

Independence
Certification decisions and compliance monitoring are carried out by competent independent organizations (third party verification).

Continuous Improvement
The scheme encourages organizations to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve environmental performance over time.

3.2 Governance of the Scheme

The Carbon Print-Score® certification scheme is owned and administered by the Stichting Certificatie Creatieve Industrie (SCCI). SCCI is responsible for the governance of the label, safeguarding the methodology, maintaining the certification framework, and ensuring the correct use of the Carbon Print-Score® within the creative and graphic sector.

Dienstencentrum B.V. fulfils the role of API and platform provider for the creation of the Carbon Print-Score® label. Through its CO_2 & Energy RI&E tool, Dienstencentrum facilitates the technical implementation of the label, enables the secure exchange of data, and supports users in applying the Carbon Print-Score® in their operational processes.

IACC acts as the provider of the ClimateCalc tool for the CO_2 calculations of graphic products. ClimateCalc ensures that all product-related CO_2 data is based on standardized, validated, and recognized calculation methodologies.

The International Association of ClimateCalc is responsible for changes to the ClimateCalc certification criteria.

3.3 Certification Requirements

To participate in the Carbon Print-Score® certification scheme, companies shall demonstrate compliance with the requirements defined in this standard and apply the approved methodology for calculating the carbon footprint of products based on ClimateCalc. Certification is available to organizations that can provide verifiable data regarding their production processes, material inputs, and transportation activities used in the calculation of the product carbon footprint.

As a prerequisite, companies shall hold:

1) An active licence and a valid certification of their carbon accounting through ClimateCalc verified by a competent auditing organization operating under the responsibility of the relevant national ClimateCalc association or by a national trade organisation accepted as a member by the International Association ClimateCalc.
2) An active licence of the CO2 & ENERGY RI&E

Following this, the Carbon Print-Score® classification and label may only be granted after an independent third-party assessment confirms that the product calculations, documentation, and communication of results comply with the requirements of the Carbon Print-Score® certification scheme. Certified companies shall maintain accurate records, ensure traceability of relevant data, and cooperate with periodic monitoring or surveillance activities to maintain certification.

3.4 Certification Process

The certification process is structured into three distinct stages, each designed to ensure that companies accurately measure, report, and verify their carbon emissions, and demonstrate eligibility for the Carbon Print-Score® label.

Stage 1: Carbon accounting certification through ClimateCalc

The first step requires companies to obtain certification through the ClimateCalc system. This stage focuses on establishing a reliable and standardized approach to carbon accounting. Companies shall calculate their carbon footprint using the ClimateCalc

methodology, ensuring that all relevant emission sources are included and properly documented.

An official audit is conducted on a yearly basis to verify the accuracy, completeness, and consistency of the submitted data. Successful completion of this stage confirms that the company's carbon accounting practices meet recognized standards and are suitable for further certification.

Stage 2: Registration, data submission, and certification in the CO_2 & ENERGY RI&E

In parallel with obtaining ClimateCalc certification, companies shall register in the CO_2 & ENERGY RI&E tool for the creation of Carbon Print-Score® labels. Registration is completed via the official website: *Home Page - Energie RI&E*

Companies are required to create an account and upload their product- or order-level carbon footprint calculations, either:

- manually, or
- via an Application Programming Interface (API), in cases where ClimateCalc calculations are integrated into an ERP or MIS system.

Further information on API integration can be found on the website: https://www.creatieve-industrie.com.

For companies with an existing account, access to the Carbon Print-Score® label module must be activated by contacting the helpdesk: Contact - Dienstencentrum | Adviesbureau voor certificeringen.

Once registered and data has been submitted, companies when ready may apply for Carbon Print-Score® certification.

During this phase, an independent third party conducts a verification process, including:

- Correct application of the methodology: Confirming that ClimateCalc rules and calculation methods have been applied consistently and appropriately.
- Compliance with label requirements: Verifying that all labelling criteria, formats, and communication standards are properly followed.

Certification decisions are made by an independent third party to guarantee objectivity and impartiality, with oversight by SCCI.

Stage 3: Monitoring and Compliance

Following certification, ongoing monitoring is carried out to ensure continued compliance with the scheme requirements.

Monitoring shall include sample-based audits (steekproef): Conducted on a random selection of certified companies, with a minimum sample size equal to the square root of the total number of participating companies using the system.

This stage ensures that certified companies maintain compliance over time and continue to meet the requirements of the certification scheme.

More information about the auditing procedure can be found in chapter 5.

Misuse of the label may result in suspension or withdrawal of certification.

4. Methodology

4.1 Introduction

The methodology used for determining the extent of the labelling system is based on assessing the total carbon footprint of products using an extended Cradle-to-Customer method.

This method is a commonly used approach in life cycle assessment (LCA) to evaluate the environmental impact of a product from the extraction of raw materials (the cradle) to the point it leaves the manufacturing facility (the gate) and reaches the gate of the costumer. This approach accounts for the emissions associated with the transportation of the substrates from the manufacturing facility to distribution centres and, ultimately, to the final consumer. This method excludes the product's use phase and end-of-life disposal.

In particular, this approach helps quantify the carbon footprint by assessing emissions during the following stages:

1. **Manufacturing**: With evaluating the **Company Performance Indicator (CPI)** of each company. This scope 1+2+3 value, expressed in t CO_2 eq. per t product, indicates how many t CO_2 are released by a company during the production of 1 t of semi-finished or end product. The CPI covers on average the 25% of the total CO_2 emissions.

   This can be determined by dividing the entire CO_2 production of the company related emissions (scope 1+2+3) plus the CO_2 from the production of printing ink and varnish and the production of PE and cardboard packaging by the total number of semi-finished or end product produced.

$$\mathbf{CPI} = \frac{(t\ CO^2 \text{ of company related} + t\ CO^2 \text{of printing ink, varnish} + t\ CO_2 \text{ of PE and cardboard})}{t\ total\ amount\ of\ product}$$

2. **Material extraction**: With evaluating the **Substrate Performance Indicator (SPI)** of each substrate. This scope 3 indicator, expressed in t CO_2 eq. per t product, includes the CO_2 from the production of the substrate, the so-called CO_2 (fossil) plus CO_2 emissions from the production energy used and the "Transport CO_2", which was released during the transport of the substrate from the factory to the processing location. The SPI covers on average the 70% of the total CO_2 emissions.

The CO_2 (fossil) and CO_2 emissions from the production energy of the substrates can be found in CEPI Declarations, Paper Profiles, LCA reports or even other CO_2 Declarations of each substrates (this shall include the name and location of the producer, the amount of CO_2 per tonne of substrate, possibly supplemented by the amount of electricity purchased (in kWh) for the production of a tonne of substrate). As for the emission released during the transport of the substrate from the factory to the processing location, those can be reported from your supplier (only emissions from burning fuels) or by your own calculations of the km of the distance (google mas).

The SPI of the substrate is then calculated as follows:

$$\textbf{SPI} = \frac{(t\ CO^2\ from\ the\ production\ +\ t\ CO^2 from\ transportation\ from\ factory\ to\ processing\ location)}{t\ total\ amount\ of\ product}$$

3. **Transportation:** With evaluating the **Transport Performance Indicator (TPI)** of each company. This scope 3 indicator, expressed in t CO_2 eq. per t product, indicates how many t CO_2 are released by a company during the transportation processes of to and from sub supplier and to costumers of 1 t of semi-finished or end product. The TPI covers on average the 5% of the total CO_2 emissions.

   This can be determined by dividing the CO_2 production of the above mentioned transportation stages by the total number of tones of semi-finished or end product produced.

$$\textbf{TPI} = \frac{(t\ CO^2\ \text{from transportation to and from sub supplier}\ +\ t\ CO^2\ \text{from transportation to the costumers}\ )}{t\ total\ amount\ of\ product}$$

4.2 Total Score calculation and Certified range values

The total score for the Product Labelling System is determined by adding the three key indicators (CPI, SPI and TPI) that contribute to a product's full environmental impact within the **Cradle-to-Customer** approach.

The formula for calculating the total score is as follows:

Total Score = CPI + SPI + TPI

Note: All values shall be rounded up to three digits to maintain consistency and precision in labelling categorisation.

By combining these three components, the total score provides a comprehensive measure of a product's environmental impact, which is then used to assign a corresponding label within the system.

4.3 Traffic Light System

The five-category traffic light labelling system using the letters **A, B, C, D, E** is an extension of the traditional three-category system, providing information on a product's environmental impact based on its carbon footprint. This system uses five color-coded categories:

Each letter corresponds to a colour code, where:

- **A (Green)** – lowest range of product carbon footprint, indicating the most sustainable choice.
- **B (Light Green)** – Low product carbon footprint, still a good sustainable option.
- **C (Yellow)** – Moderate product carbon footprint, requiring attention and potential improvement.
- **D (Orange)** – Higher product carbon footprint, suggesting a need for sustainable alternatives.
- **E (Red)** – Highest product carbon footprint, suggesting a significantly need for sustainable practises.

Studies show that consumer perception and understanding of traffic light labelling is high, thanks to its intuitive and self-explanatory nature. This helps improve accuracy in estimating carbon footprints, as consumers often struggle to interpret numerical data. Compared to other types of climate labels, traffic light labelling provides straightforward guidance for selecting environmentally friendly products. It should be prioritized in policy discussions to combat the proliferation of various climate labels, reduce greenwashing and encourage climate-friendly purchasing decisions.

In a competitive market, the five-category traffic light labelling system can significantly enhance brand positioning by highlighting the environmental impact of products, even at a presell stage.

4.4 Data analysis

SCCI analyse sector specific data from products and companies that have been certified for carbon footprint calculations in the creative industry. Specifically, the data used in the system are always sourced from the previous year, ensuring that all information has been first certified, analysed and accurately reflects the scale of the labelling system for the upcoming year.

After the yearly analysis the SCCI may release updated Certified range values for categorizing a product with a label per category. Those range values can be found on the website: https://www.creatieve-industrie.com

When the distribution of carbon footprint data within a product category does not follow a normal distribution, transformations methods are applied to adjust the dataset and correct for skewness (like log, log10, square root, cube root and Box-Cox). This adjustment enables the data to be aligned with a normalized distribution so that consistent and comparable classification ranges can be established. The adjustment process ensures that the scoring system remains fair and representative across different product categories, even where underlying datasets may be asymmetrical or unevenly distributed.

Primarily the Gaussian curve, is a symmetrical, bell-shaped curve that represents the distribution of data and it is often referred to as the 68-95-99.7 rule, which describes how data are spread around the mean in a normal distribution:

- 68% of the data falls within one standard deviation of the mean.
- 95% of the data falls within two standard deviations of the mean.
- 99.7% of the data falls within three standard deviations of the mean.

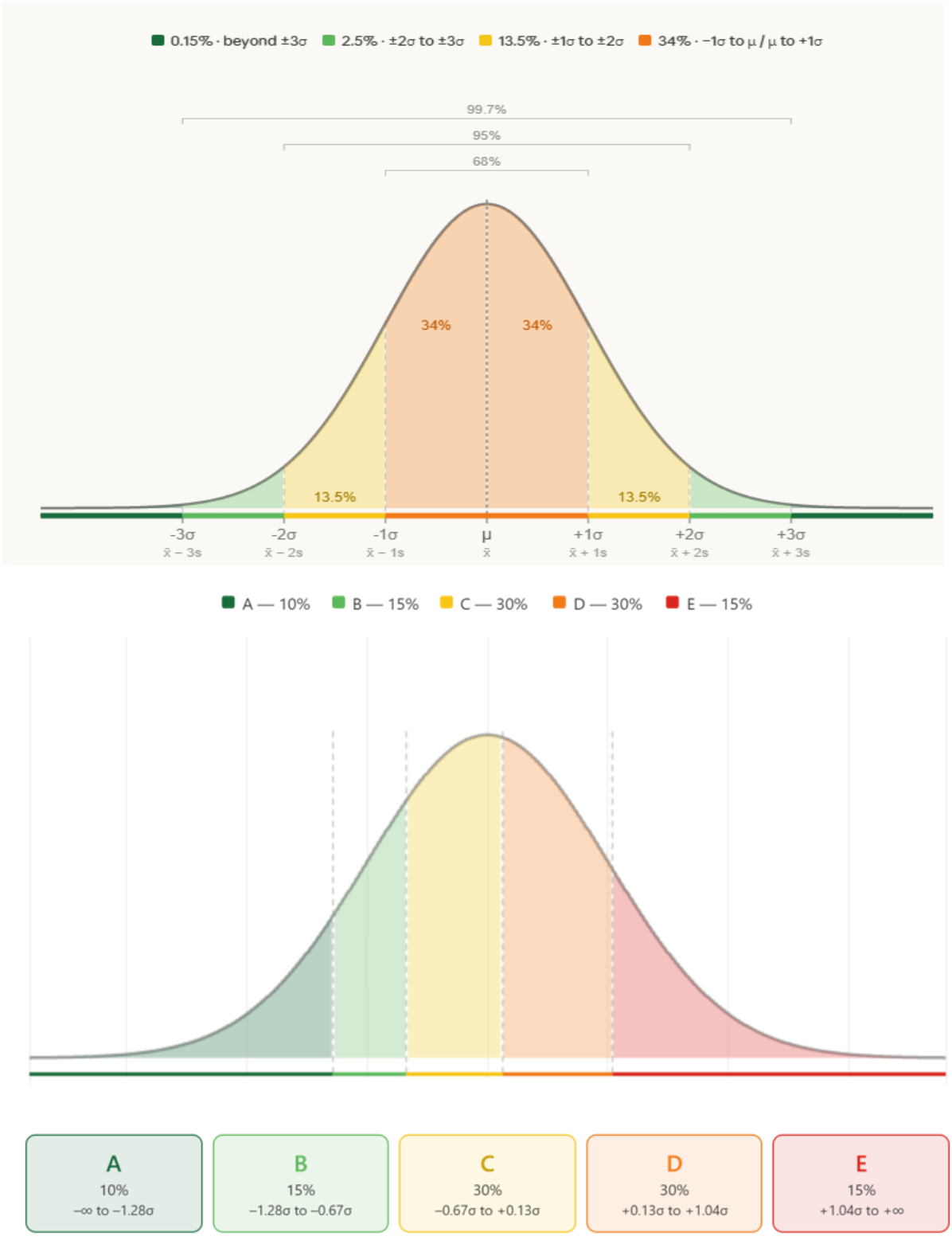


Figure 3.1: Gaussian Curve in *a normal distribution (top) and the extended version (below)*

To align the analysed data with the Gaussian curve, an extended method is used that maps the five categories of the traffic light system into five Gaussian-translated

categories. In the table below, the indicators are distributed across these categories, reflecting the percentage of the Gaussian curve in relation to the traffic light labelling system.

Table 3.1: Percentage distribution of data across five gaussian-like categories.

A/A	Label	Percentage	Explanation
1	A	10%	Very Low Carbon Footprint
2	B	15%	Low Carbon Footprint
3	C	30%	Moderate Carbon Footprint
4	D	30%	High Carbon Footprint
5	E	15%	Very High Carbon Footprint

5. Auditing procedure

5.1 Scope and purpose

This auditing procedure applies to all independent third-party verification companies responsible for auditing companies in the creative industries based on the Carbon Print-Score® certification standard. The procedure covers periodic compliance audits, verification of company-level carbon accounting, verification of product carbon footprint calculations, verification of label use, and assessment of traceability and data integrity.

5.2 Responsibilities

SCCI is responsible for maintaining this procedure and ensuring its correct implementation. Independent third-party auditors are responsible for conducting audits in accordance with this certification standard. Auditors shall demonstrate competence, independence, and impartiality, and shall operate in accordance with recognized international, European, or national standards. Auditors shall have no conflicts of interest with the companies they assess.

5.3 Normative References

The application of this auditing procedure requires the use of the ClimateCalc methodology and associated guidance documents, the SCCI Carbon Print-Score® label requirements, and the CO_2 & ENERGY RI&E system documentation. Relevant international standards, such as ISO 14067 and ISO 17065, shall also be taken into account where applicable.

5.4 Documentation and Records

All audits carried out under this procedure shall be documented in an official Audit Report (see Annex A for an example template). The report shall include the findings of the audit, any identified non-conformities, the required corrective actions, and the final conclusion of the auditor.

All audit reports and supporting documentation shall be stored in a non-editable format and send to SCCI. These records shall be retained for a period of 5 years by SCCI and the third-party verification companies to ensure traceability and transparency of the certification process.

5.5 Pre-Audit requirements

Prior to the audit, the company shall provide all necessary documentation to enable a complete and effective assessment. This shall include the most recent ClimateCalc

audit report and certificate as evidence that the company holds a valid ClimateCalc certification. The auditor shall use this report to assess the validity, scope, and status of the certification.

In addition, the company shall provide a completed and up-to-date list of all the substrates used, representative product carbon footprint calculations, access to relevant data in the CO_2 & ENERGY RI&E system, and supporting documentation for all relevant input data. The company shall also provide evidence of the correct use of the Carbon Print-Score® label.

If the company uses an Application Programming Interface (API) or other system integrations (e.g. ERP or MIS systems) to transfer or generate carbon footprint data based on ClimateCalc, the company shall provide access to the system or relevant documentation to allow verification of the data flow and calculation logic.

The audit shall not be completed if the required documentation is incomplete, if data is missing, or if significant calculation errors are identified.

5.6 Audit requirements

General

The audit shall be carried out in a structured manner consisting of preparation, execution, reporting, and follow-up. During the preparation phase, the auditor shall review the documentation provided by the company and define the scope and sampling approach. During execution, the auditor shall perform detailed verification activities. The reporting phase shall document the findings, and the follow-up phase shall ensure that any required corrective actions are implemented (if applicable).

Verification Requirements

No.	To be audited	Documentation requested
1	It must be verified that the company holds a valid and up-to-date ClimateCalc certification. The certification scope must be applicable, and the audit report must correspond to the current certification period.	- Most recent ClimateCalc audit report - ClimateCalc certification documents
2	It must be assessed whether ClimateCalc product calculations are properly integrated with internal systems (e.g. ERP/MIS), with or without API integration, and subsequently linked to CO2 & ENERGY RI&E. Data	- Integration validation records or the most recent ClimateCalc audit report

No.	To be audited	Documentation requested
	transfers must be accurate, consistent, and, where applicable, automated.	
3	All substrates used by the company must be identified and documented. Product specifications and material composition data must be complete and consistent with the Carbon Print-Score® categories. All excluded substrates must be clearly identified and supported by documented justification.	- List of all the substrates used in the company - Categorisation of substrates into the Carbon Print-Score® categories - Product specifications - Material composition data - Exclusion justification
5	The correct use of labels must be validated. All data must be complete, traceable, and auditable. A representative sample per category of substrate labels must be selected to confirm traceability from source data through calculation to the final label.	- Real or representative examples - Supporting documentation - System extracts (ClimateCalc, CO2 & ENERGY RI&E, ERP/MIS)

5.7 Non-Conformities and Corrective Actions

Non-conformities identified during the audit shall be documented and classified according to their severity. Minor non-conformities are those that have limited impact and do not compromise the integrity of the results, while major non-conformities are those that significantly affect compliance or the accuracy of calculations.

The auditor shall define appropriate corrective actions and establish deadlines for their implementation. Depending on the severity and number of non-conformities, certification may be maintained, suspended, or withdrawn.

More specifically:

Minor Non-Conformities (KT): to be resolved or addressed within 12 months (usually before the next audit, provided it is scheduled within 12 months).

Major Non-Conformities (GT): to be resolved within 3 months, as a condition for certification.

5.8 Audit and monitoring frequency

The certification audit shall be conducted when a company applies for the Carbon Print-Score® certification.

Monitoring shall be conducted on a yearly basis and shall include sample-based audits (steekproeven), carried out on a random selection of certified companies. The sample size shall be at least equal to the square root of the total number of participating companies using the system.

The list of participating companies shall be provided to the independent third parties by the owner of the CO_2 & ENERGY RI&E, Dienstencentrum B.V..

5.9 Competence and Independence of Auditors

Auditors shall possess the necessary knowledge and experience in carbon accounting, life cycle assessment, and printing or manufacturing processes relevant to the scope of the scheme. They shall act independently and impartially and shall not have any conflicts of interest with the companies they audit.

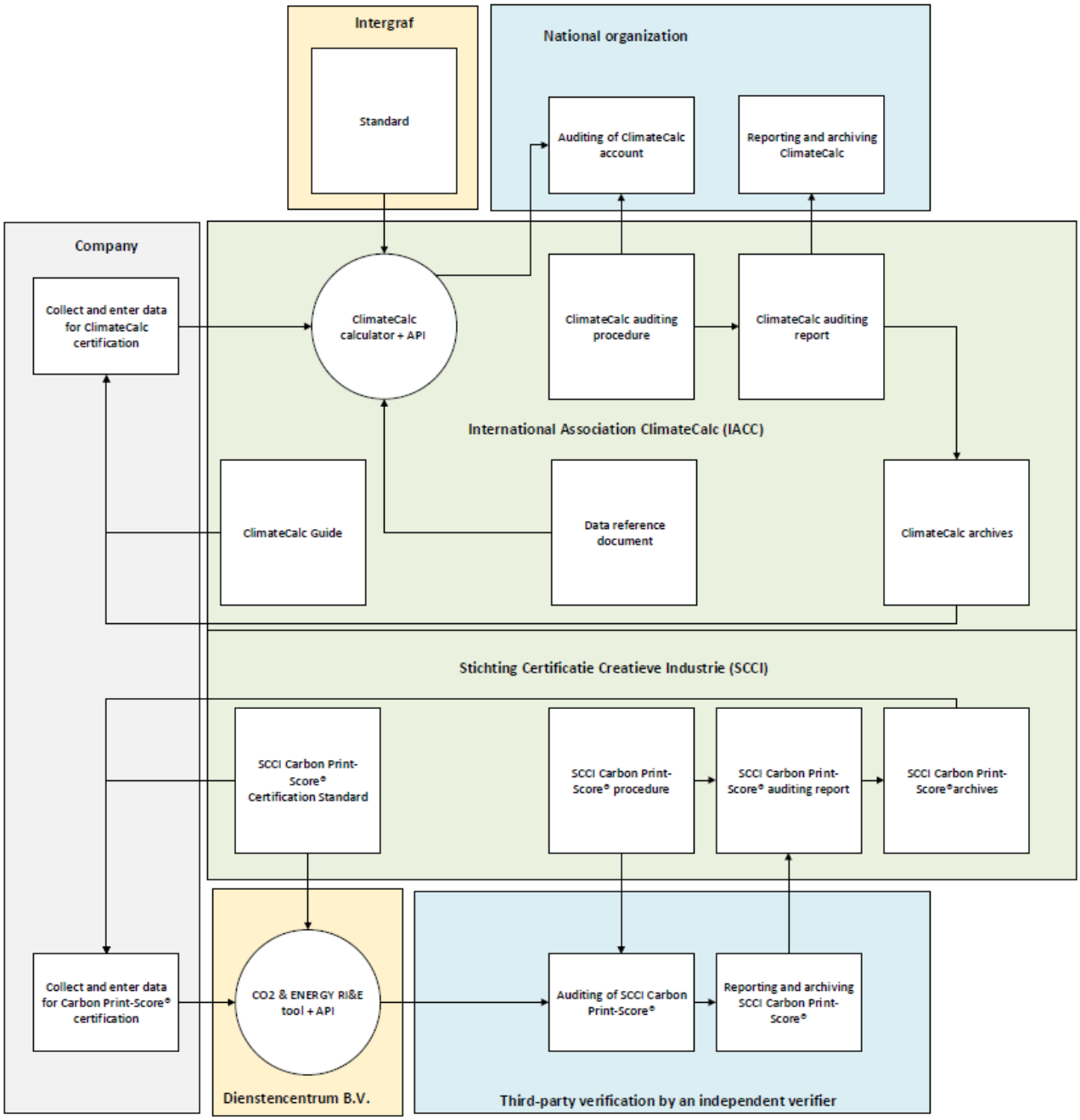
Annex A – Audit report

The company	
Company name:	
Address:	
Responsible for carbon account:	
Phone number:	
E-mail:	

Details about the audit	
Auditor:	
Company:	
Audited site:	
Activities and processes covered by the account:	
Number of employees category: *Categories: <10, 10-50, >50*	
Accounting period:	
Date for audit:	
ClimateCalc Certificate number:	
Carbon Print-Score® Certificate number (only recertification):	

Proposals for improvements of the carbon account	

Requirements for the carbon account		
1	ClimateCalc Certification valid and within scope:	Yes: ☐ No: ☐
	Describe:	
2	API/system integration assessed (if applicable):	Yes: ☐ No: ☐
	Describe:	
3	Substrates within scope:	Yes: ☐ No: ☐

	Describe:	
	Tick the printing Substrate types used in the company:	☐ Paper and cardboard ☐ Plastics ☐ Textiles ☐ Adhesive films ☐ Composite aluminium sandwich materials ☐ Other
4	Substrates outside scope (Others), excluded from the Carbon Print-Score®:	Yes: ☐ No: ☐
	Describe:	
5	Documentation complete and verifiable:	Yes: ☐ No: ☐
	Describe audit samples:	

Annex B – Explanatory chart