

<i>Normative Document</i>	27 October 2006	
Rules for Standard Setting		Annex 2

Rules for Standard Setting

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1. OBJECTIVES

The document provides the rules for the standard setting process that a certification scheme applying for PEFC endorsement and mutual recognition shall fulfill. The rules guide standard setting and scheme development at national or sub-national levels.

2. SCOPE OF THE RULES FOR STANDARD SETTING

This document was adopted by the General Assembly of the PEFC Council on 22 November 2002 and amended on 29 October 2004, 28 October 2005 and 27 October 2006.

The document covers standard setting procedures for certification of sustainable forest management and chain of custody certification. The procedures are based on requirements of ISO Guide 59⁽¹⁾. These rules do not apply for the adoption of Annex 4 (*Chain of Custody of Forest Based Products – Requirements*) as a part of a national scheme.

3. STANDARD SETTING PROCESS FOR FOREST CERTIFICATION

3.1 Framework for Forest Certification

The PEFC Council requires that forest certification be carried out against national standards that are endorsed and mutually recognised by members of the PEFC Council.

3.2 Independence

The development of certification standards shall be independent from the certification or accreditation processes.

3.3 Levels for Standard Setting

The standard setting process may be carried out at national or at any sub-national level. PEFC National Governing Bodies co-ordinate the development of optional national and regional standards for a country.

The forest certification standards may be drafted to be applied in individual, group and / or regional certification.

3.4 Participatory Process

3.4.1 Forum for Standard Setting

The process of development of certification criteria shall be initiated by national forest owners' organisations or national forestry sector organisations having the support of the major forest owners' organisations in that country. All relevant interested parties will be invited to participate in this process. Their views will be documented and considered in an open and transparent way.

- A Forum (e.g., committee, council, working group) shall be created to which interested parties are invited to participate in the process. The invited parties should represent the different aspects of sustainable forest management and include, e.g. forest owners, forest industry, environmental and social non-governmental organisations, trade unions, retailers and other relevant organisations at national or sub-national level.
- Participation in the Forum shall be organised according to its respective consensus – building procedures which should provide for balanced representation of interest categories such as producers, buyers, consumers, etc.

- The interested parties' participation and views will be documented and considered in an open and transparent way.
- Formal approval of standards shall be based on evidence of consensus.

The Forum shall define its own written procedures based on the consensus principle which govern the methods used for standards development. Copies of the procedures shall be made available to interested parties upon request. Such written procedures shall contain an appeal mechanism for the impartial handling of any substantive and procedural complaints.

3.4.2 Transparency

The start of the standard setting process shall be communicated to the public. Information on the development process shall be distributed and discussed and final draft standards shall be available to all interested parties, e.g. by posting it on the Internet.

3.4.3 Consultation

National Consultation

The final draft standards are sent out for formal national consultation process. Consultation shall ensure that the views of interested parties are discussed.

The Forum shall give general information on the changes made as the result of a consultation process.

The minimum time for consultation is 60 days.

4. STANDARDS FOR CHAIN OF CUSTODY CERTIFICATION

4.1 Independence

The development of the chain of custody requirements shall be independent from the certification and accreditation processes. The chain of custody requirements shall be fully compatible with the PEFC Council requirements for the chain of custody certification defined in *Annex 4 (Chain of Custody of Forest Based Products - Requirements)*.

4.2 Participatory Process

4.2.1 Forum for Standard Setting

The process of development of national or sub-national chain of custody requirements shall be supported by the PEFC National Governing Body. The chain of custody requirements may be elaborated by the forum developing the forest certification criteria or by another group established especially for this purpose. All relevant interested parties shall be invited to participate in the process. The views shall be documented and considered in an open and transparent way.

- A Forum (e.g., committee, council, working group) shall be created to which interested parties are invited to participate in the process. The invited parties should represent the different aspects of sustainable forest management, wood procurement, processing and retailing.

- Participation in the Forum shall be organised according to its respective consensus – building procedures which should provide for balanced representation of interest categories such as producers, buyers, consumers, etc.
- The interested parties' participation and views shall be documented and considered in an open and transparent way.
- Formal approval of standards shall be based on evidence of consensus.

The Forum shall define its own written procedures based on the consensus principle which govern the methods used for standards development. Copies of the procedures shall be made available to interested parties upon request. Such written procedures shall contain an appeal mechanism for the impartial handling of any substantive and procedural complaints.

4.2.2 Transparency

The start of the standard setting process shall be communicated to the public. Information on the development process shall be distributed and discussed and the final draft standard shall be available to all interested parties, e.g. by posting it on the Internet.

4.2.3 Consultation

National Consultation

The final draft standards shall be sent out for formal national consultation process. The consultation shall ensure that the views of interested parties are discussed.

The Forum shall give general information on the changes made as the result of the consultation process.

The minimum time for consultation is 60 days.

5. PILOT TESTING

The first results on the testing of the final drafts for national/sub-national forest certification standards and their implementation arrangements shall be available and appropriate action taken to incorporate improvements or recommendations prior to submission of the scheme for the PEFC Council endorsement and mutual recognition.

A scheme specific chain of custody standard shall likewise be tested prior to submission for endorsement and mutual recognition.

In the case of the revision of the standards, experience gained from the application of the standards can substitute pilot testing.

6. REVIEW OF STANDARDS

6.1 Periodic Review

The certification standards and implementation arrangements shall be periodically reviewed in the light of new scientific knowledge and practical experience as continuous improvement is a goal of the PEFC Council. The procedures applied to endorse revised standards are presented in *Annex 7 (Endorsement and Mutual Recognition of National Schemes and their Revision)*.

The standards on forest and chain of custody certifications shall be reviewed at least every 5 years.

The revision procedures shall follow chapters 3 and 4 of this Annex. The scheme documentation shall indicate which organisation is responsible for initiating the revision work.

6.2 Revisions Induced by PEFC Council

When the PEFC Council revises the general PEFC requirements for standard setting and implementation, the appropriate consideration of the revisions induced by the PEFC Council in national standards shall be indicated to the Council by the PEFC National Governing Bodies according to specific instructions and procedures defined in *Annex 7 (Endorsement and Mutual Recognition of National Schemes and their Revision)*.

6.3 Amendments Induced by PEFC National Governing Bodies

When a PEFC National Governing Body takes an initiative prior to the periodic review to make changes to the endorsed and mutually recognised standards, the PEFC Council shall be informed of such revisions or amendments and they shall be assessed according to the procedures described in *Annex 7 (Endorsement and Mutual Recognition of National Schemes and their Revision)*.

⁽¹⁾ **ISO/IEC Guide 59:1994 Code of good practice for standardization**