



Promoting sustainable forest management

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First PEFC system in periodic review 5 year evaluation of Finnish Forest Certification

Finland's forest certification system FFCS is undergoing the regular periodic revision process all PEFC endorsed schemes have to undergo every 5 years. The objective of the assessment is to review the certification system in the light of new scientific knowledge and practical experience in a continuous improvement process. At the same time all amendments that were made to the PEFC Council Technical Documents since FFCS's initial endorsement in 2000 have to be incorporated into the standard.

The review process follows the same strict and rigorous standards and procedures that certification systems seeking endorsement currently have to fulfill. The appointed independent consultant FORM International will therefore fully assess the existing Finnish Forest Certification System FFCS. Part of the assessment is a public consultation period in which the general public is invited to make comments on the certification system to be reviewed.

The independent consultant will consider the received public comments in its assessment together with those of the PEFC General Assembly members. The consultant's final report will then form the basis for the final decision of the PEFC General Assembly members whether or not to endorse the revised FFCS scheme. If approved, the scheme will be mutually recognized for another 5 years by all PEFC Council member schemes worldwide and an official announcement will be made on the PEFC Council website.

Mr Ben Gunneberg, Secretary General of the PEFC Council said: "I invite all interested parties to review the existing FFCS scheme on our website at www.pefc.org and send any comments directly to FORM International by 3 January 2005."

The standard can be reviewed under:

http://www.pefc.org/internet/html/members_schemes/4_1120_59/5_1246_313/5_1123_1047.htm

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press release



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Editors Notes

Forest Certification

Forest certification is a process which provides an assurance mechanism to purchasers of wood and paper products that the wood used in the products comes from sustainably managed forest. Sustainably managed forests are those whose management implements performance standards based on internationally agreed environmental, social and economical requirements.

Finnish Forest Certification System

The beginning of Finland's national forest certification system FFCS dates back to 1996. After an intense development process the FFCS certification system was finally adopted in 1999 and 2000 throughout the country. Today 22 million hectares of Finnish Forest are certified to FFCS equivalent to 95 per cent of all forests in Finland. The certified forests are owned by a total of 311,500 forest owners. Further information on the Finnish Forest Certification System can be found at the FFCS website <http://www.ffcs-finland.org/eng/index.htm>.

PEFC (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes)

PEFC is a framework for the mutual recognition of credible national or regional forest certification schemes that have been developed based on internationally recognised requirements for sustainable forest management. Since its launch in 1999, PEFC has become the largest forest certification umbrella organisation covering national schemes from all over the world, delivering hundreds of millions of tonnes of wood to the processing industry and then onto the market place from over 52 million hectares of certified forests. PEFC has strong grass roots support from many stakeholders including the forestry sector, governments, trade associations, trade unions and non-governmental organisations.

press release