



Promoting sustainable forest management

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28 April 2006  
Luxembourg

## PEFC Austria scheme undergoes further revision

At its meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2006, the PEFC Council Board of Directors decided not to recommend re-endorsement of the Austrian Forest Certification Scheme to the General Assembly due to some remaining issues identified during the re-assessment of the scheme.

The Board has decided to limit the validity of the current endorsement of the Austrian forest certification system to 30<sup>th</sup> November 2006, with the condition that no forest management certification or recertification takes place until the scheme is fully re-endorsed.

Mr Ben Gunneberg, Secretary General of the PEFC Council, said "The Board's decision allows adequate time for stakeholders in Austria to make the necessary amendments to the system at national level and for the re-endorsement process to be completed at international level. The decision of course has no implications for the validity of the Austrian PEFC Chain of Custody certificates, which are all issued against the international PEFC Chain of Custody standard."

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## Editors Notes

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### 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 forests. Sustainably managed forests are those whose management implements performance standards based on internationally agreed environmental, social and economical requirements.

### 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 187 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