



PEFC - Promoting Sustainable Forest Management

PEFC Council

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## PEFC assesses Belarus certification scheme, invites comments

The Belarusian Association of Forest Certification was established in July 2005 with the aim of promoting sustainable forest management in Belarus and integrating the Belarusian national forest certification in the international PEFC Council framework. It is currently being assessed for endorsement by PEFC, a process that requires – and welcomes - comments and feedback by the public in order to ensure full compliance with the organisation's requirements.

“Stakeholders are engaged numerous times on the national as well as on the global level before PEFC can endorse it”, says Ben Gunneberg, Secretary General of the PEFC Council. “This ensures a scheme corresponds to the expectations and needs of interested parties within the framework of our international standards. Equally important, by gaining input from a wide variety of sources, we are confident that the assessment process is supported best available knowledge and expertise.

The public consultation process lasts for 60 days, after which the assessor will integrate the comments and submit the report to the independent Panel of Experts for review and comment before PEFC decides whether or to endorse the scheme.

Please submit your comments directly to the assessor latest by 22 August 2008.

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## **Editors Notes**

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### **PEFC (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes)**

PEFC is a framework for the assessment and endorsement of national forest certification systems 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 systems from all over the world, delivering hundreds of millions of tonnes of wood to the processing industry and then onto the market place from currently more than 200 million hectares of certified forests. This is an area which is larger than the combined forest area of all European Union member states. PEFC has strong grass roots support from many stakeholders including the forestry sector, governments, trade associations, trade unions and non-governmental organisations.

### **Forest Certification**

Forest certification is a process which provides an assurance to purchasers of wood and paper products that the wood used in the products comes from sustainably managed forest. It involves the certification of forests (Sustainable Forest Management certification) and the certification of the wood flow via processing, manufacturing and trading enterprises (Chain of Custody certification) to the final consumer.