
Implementation Levels of the Forest Certification System

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1. Introduction

This standard is part of a series of seven Finnish PEFC forest certification standards. The series follows the SMS standard series drafted in 1997 and 1998 and FFCS standard series drafted in 2002 and 2003. Finnish PEFC standard series will be implemented after the endorsement of the PEFC Council taking into consideration the timelines of the transition periods.

Other standards of the Finnish PEFC standard series cover vocabulary, criteria, certification procedures and criteria setting.

PEFC Finland manages the Finnish PEFC standard series and owns the standards.

2. Purpose and Scope of Application

This English translation is based on the original Finnish PEFC forest certification standard PEFC FI 1001:2009 that was approved by the PEFC Finland on 20.4.2009. The Finnish original standard applies in case of interpretational dispute.

The original Finnish standard and its English and Swedish translations are available from PEFC Finland website or upon request.

The standard includes the requirements for the implementation arrangements for group certification on the levels of a forestry centre or a forest management association and for certification of forest holdings of individual owners.

The standard shall be used together with either standard PEFC FI 1002:2009 or standard PEFC FI 1003:2009.

3. References

This standard is used together with other standards belonging to the Finnish PEFC forest certification system:

- PEFC FI 1000:2009; Forest Certification Vocabulary
- PEFC FI 1001:2009; Implementation Levels of the Forest Certification System
- PEFC FI 1002:2009; Criteria for Group Certification; Level of a Forestry Centre or a Forest Management Association
- PEFC FI 1003:2009; Criteria for Certification; Level of Forest Holdings of Individual Owners
- PEFC FI 1004:2009; Regional Committees of Forest Certification
- PEFC FI 1005:2009; Qualification Criteria for Certification Bodies and Certification Procedures
- PEFC FI 1006:2008; Standard Setting Process for Forest Certification

4. Terms and Definitions

The terminology on PEFC certification in Finland is included in standard PEFC FI 1000:2009; Forest Certification Vocabulary.

5. Implementation Levels of Forest Certification

5.1 Standard Implementation and Requirements for an Applicant

Certification can be implemented on three levels; as a group certification on a forestry centre level, as a group certification on a forest management association level or as certification of forest holdings of individual owners.

5.2 Certified Forest Area

The focus of forest certification is on forest management in certified forest area.

Area of certified forests includes the total area of production forests (forestland, low productive forestland, wasteland and other forest land) owned by participants in group certification. In forest owner specific certification the certified area covers the area of forest property.

Certification covers forest owner's estate(s) as a whole.

Protected forests which are not in forestry use are not included in certified forests areas.

5.3 Group certification on the Level of a Forestry Centre or a Forest Management Association

The standards applied include PEFC FI 1002:2009 (Criteria for Group Certification; Level of a Forestry Centre or a Forest Management Association) and PEFC FI 1001:2009 (Implementation Levels of the Forest Certification System)

5.3.1 Applicant Organization and Decision Making

Forest owners' union is the applicant for the certification on the level of a forestry centre. In case there are more than one union operating in the area of a forestry centre, the applicant is the union that has most forest owners as members.

Forest management association is the applicant for the certification on the level of a forest management association.

Forest owners' union decides in its official meeting, with a 2/3 majority, on the application of a certificate on the level of a forestry centre. A forest management association wishing to participate in certification has to decide on its participation, with a 2/3 majority, before the official meeting of forest owners' union.

In certification on the level of a forest management association the decision to apply for a certificate is made by the council of the forest management association with a 2/3 majority.

Intentions to apply for a certificate and related decisions shall be documented in the invitations and minutes of the meetings that make decisions on the matter.

The applicant represents the group of participants on issues related to application and validity of a certificate as pointed out in section on "Participation".

5.3.2 Participation in Certification on the Level of a Forestry Centre

In addition to the applicant (Forest Owners' Union), other forest owners' unions operating in the area can participate in the application for a certificate.

In addition to the applicant, the following parties may participate in regional certification: forest owners, forestry development and advice organisations, forestry operators, trade unions representing forestry workers and experts, and other bodies promoting PEFC forest certification.

The organisations that may take part in certification on the level of a forestry centre include, among others:

- forest management associations as members of a forest owners' union;
- forest owners as members of a forest management association;
- other private forest owners and community forest owners that are not members of a forest management association belonging to a forest owners' union (these are, among others, forest industry enterprises, municipalities, parishes and Metsähallitus);
- forest management associations as actors in the field of forestry and as forestry development and advice organisations;
- forestry centres as actors in the field of forestry and as forestry development and advice organisation;
- wood procurement and forest industry enterprises as actors in the field of forestry;
- machine, transport and forest service entrepreneurs as actors in the field of forestry or as members of their regional/national organisation and;
- trade unions representing forestry workers and experts.

5.3.3 Participation in Certification on the Level of a Forest Management Association

In addition to the applicant, the following parties may participate in regional certification: forest owners, forestry development and advice organisations, forestry operators, trade unions representing forestry workers and experts, and other bodies promoting PEFC forest certification.

The organisations that may take part in certification on the level of a forest management association include, among others:

- forest owners as members of a forest management association;
- other private forest owners and community forest owners that are not members of a forest management association (these are, among others, forest industry enterprises, municipalities, parishes and Metsähallitus);
- forestry centre as an actors in the field of forestry and as a forestry development and advice organisation;
- wood procurement and forest industry enterprises as actors in the field of forestry;
- machine, transport and forest service entrepreneurs as actors in the field of forestry or as members of their regional/national organisation and;
- trade unions representing forestry workers and experts.

5.3.4 Authorisations to the Applicant

Forest owners, their organisations and other organisations enrolling for certification shall authorise the applicant to make agreements related to certification within the framework of the statutes of the certification council in the region.

5.3.5 Enrolment

Forest owners' unions, forest management associations, entrepreneur organisations, and other organisations shall enrol for certification by informing the applicant on their decision on participation.

Forest owners that are not members of a forest management association but enrol in certification shall submit a signed notification of their participation to the applicant.

Entrepreneurs that participate in certification as non-members of their organisation shall submit a signed notification of their participation to the applicant.

Enrolment for certification implies that the certification body contracted by the applicant and its auditors verifying the conformity to the standard have a mandate to conduct audits in the forests and organisations of the enrolled bodies.

5.3.6 Maintenance of Registers

The applicant is responsible for maintaining lists of bodies enrolled for certification.

If authorised by the applicant, a forest management association participating in certification can maintain a list of those forest owners that participate in certification on the grounds of their membership in the association.

An organisation in the field of forestry whose members (e.g. machine, transport and forest service entrepreneurs) participate in certification on their organisation's decision can maintain a list of its members participating in certification, if authorised by the applicant.

The applicant can, if needed, provide information on bodies enrolled for certification.

5.3.7 Commitment

The parties enrolled for certification shall comply with the standard requirements to the level of receiving a certificate and maintain compliance to ensure the continuous validity of the certificate.

When operating in certified forests, organisations participating in certification shall procure services from entrepreneurs that are participating in certification. Entrepreneurs not participating in forest certification can be contracted temporarily to perform short-term and occasional tasks in certified forests.

Organisations, whose members participate in certification based on their organisation's decision, shall inform their members on the participation, on the obligations it entails, and on the procedures of withdrawing from the decision.

A forest owner participating in certification has the responsibility of assuring the conformity to the standard requirements when contracting persons or companies that have not enrolled for certification.

5.3.8 Management of Group Certification

An applicant represents the group of parties participating in certification in matters related to the application and validity of the certificate. It also provides information on the validity and coverage of the certificate and on audit results to PEFC Finland.

The applicant convenes a regional forest certification committee that adopts statutes which are compatible with the model regulations drafted by PEFC Finland, and also approves of the document on the responsibilities and content of data collection.

5.4. Certification of Forest Holdings of Individual Owners

The standards applied are PEFC FI 1003:2009 (Criteria for Certification of Forest Holdings of Individual Owners) and PEFC FI 1001:2009 (Implementation Levels of the Finnish Forest Certification System).

In certification of forest holdings of individual owners, a forest owner or a group of them apply for certification for the forests it/they own or manage.

5.4.1 Applicant

The applicant is an individual forest owner, or either an individual or a legal person authorised by a group of forest owners.

Certification covers forest owner's estate(s) as a whole.

5.4.2 Enrolment

In certification of forest holdings of several owners, each forest owner shall submit an authorisation to the applicant representing the group on matters related to certification.

5.4.3 Commitment

The parties enrolled for certification shall comply with the standard requirements to the level of receiving a certificate, and maintain compliance to ensure the continuous validity of the certificate.

5.4.4 Information

The applicant shall inform PEFC Finland on the issuance of the certificate, on potential changes in its validity and on its possible withdrawal.