

PEFC N 04

Requirements for certification bodies and accreditation bodies

Organisation

Articles of Association for PEFC Norway

PEFC N 06
Procedures for development and auditing of Norwegian PEFC certification system

PEFC N 07
Instructions for notification of certification bodies

Forest certification

PEFC N 01
Norwegian PEFC certification system for sustainable forestry

PEFC N 02
Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard

PEFC N 03
Requirements for group certification

PEFC N 04
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Glossary and definitions

Traceability and logo usage

PEFC ST 2002:2013 Chain of Custody for forest based products - requirements

PEFC ST 2003:2012 Certification Body Requirements - Chain of Custody

PEFC ST 2001:2008
Logo usage rules

Foreword:

Revision of PEFC Norway's forest certification system

The PEFC forest certification system must be revised every five years, and PEFC Norway commenced the revision process on 13 May 2013 with an open invitation for input for the process and participation in a working committee.

The working committee has worked between October 2013 and January 2015 to revise the Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard and other standards included in the system.

The working committee was made up of representatives of the following organisations:

- United Federation of Trade Unions
- Association of Intermunicipal Outdoor Recreation Boards
- Norwegian Association of Heavy Equipment Contractors
- Norwegian Forest Owners' Association
- NORSKOG
- Statskog SF
- Norwegian Pulp and Paper Association
- Norwegian Sawmilling Industry

The Norwegian Environment Agency and the Norwegian Agriculture Agency were also represented by observers on the working committee.

Oslo, January 27th 2015.

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The official version of the document is in Norwegian, but it has also been translated into English. In cases of doubt, the Norwegian version takes precedence.

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1 Introduction

This document is part of the PEFC Norway certification system for sustainable forest management.

PEFC certification and auditing must be carried out by an objective and independent third party.

Certification organisations cannot be responsible for standard definition processes or for decisions linked with these processes.

The requirements are normative for certification organisations which carry out certification of sustainable forest management on individual properties and/or via group certification.

The documents PEFC N 01, PEFC N 02, PEFC N 03 and PEFC N04 are applicable for certification of forest management in compliance with the PEFC Norway certification system.

The international requirements laid down in the standard PEFC ST 2003:2012 Certification Bodies Requirements – Chain of Custody are applicable to PEFC traceability certification in Norway pursuant to PEFC's international requirements for traceability certification.

2 Scope

This document describes requirements for certification organisations which certify and inspect PEFC forest certification in Norway. The document also defines requirements for certification and accreditation procedures.

This document must be used in compliance with the PEFC Norway certification system for:

- a. Certification of sustainable forest management pursuant to Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard, PEFC N 02.
- b. Group certification of sustainable forestry pursuant to PEFC Norway's requirements for group certification, PEFC N 03.
- c. Logo usage in compliance with the international standard PEFC ST 2001:2008 – Logo Usage Rules – Requirements.

3 References

The following steering documents are included as references for requirements for certification organisations:

- a. Norwegian PEFC certification system for sustainable forestry – PEFC N 01
- b. Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard – PEFC N 02
- c. PEFC Norway's requirements for group certification of sustainable forestry – PEFC N 03
- d. PEFC Norway's requirements for certification bodies and accreditation bodies – PEFC N 04
- e. PEFC Norway's instructions for PEFC notification of certification bodies – PEFC N 07
- f. Glossary and definitions – PEFC N 05

- g. PEFC Logo Usage Rules – requirements – PEFC ST 2001:2008
- h. NS/EN ISO/IEC 17021:2011: Compliance assessment – Requirements for bodies offering auditing and certification of management systems
- i. IAF MD 1:2007: IAF Mandatory Document for the Certification of Multiple Sites Based on Sampling
- j. IAF MD 2:2007: IAF Mandatory Document for the Transfer of Accredited Certification of Management Systems

4 Definitions

This document uses definitions as described in PEFC N 05 – Glossary and definitions.

5 Requirements for certification bodies

5.1 Accreditation

Certification bodies which carry out forest certification must be accredited for this. Accreditation is issued by Norwegian Accreditation or corresponding accreditation bodies included in the agreement of the IAF (International Accreditation Forum) and/or EA (European cooperation for Accreditation) concerning mutual recognition.

5.2 PEFC Notification

Certification bodies which carry out forest certification in Norway pursuant to PEFC Norway's forest certification must be notified by PEFC Norway in accordance with PEFC N 07 – Instructions for notification of certification bodies.

5.3 Certification of sustainable forestry, including group certification

The criteria which qualify certification bodies to carry out forest certification are based on general norms for quality and environmental certification, as well as relevant expertise relating to forestry and the environment.

The certification body must:

- a. Meet the general criteria for certification bodies as defined in NS-EN ISO/IEC 17021, plus supplementary requirements defined in this standard.
- b. Have a good knowledge and understanding of PEFC Norway's certification system for sustainable forestry.
- c. Have the relevant expertise concerning forest management which includes economic, social and environmental aspects and the effects of forestry.

Professional forestry and environmental expertise will be documented in that the certification body will have experience in the field and/or personnel who possess this expertise as a result of training and relevant experience.

5.3.1 Termination of certificates

Certificate holders may terminate certificates in writing throughout the validity period. This termination will take effect from the time at which the certification organisation receives the termination in writing or from a date agreed by the parties.

5.3.2 Suspension and withdrawal of certificates

In the event of suspension or withdrawal of individual property certificates or group certificates, the certification organisation must notify PEFC Norway of this immediately.

6 Requirements for auditors

The certification organisation is responsible for ensuring that competent auditors are used who have relevant knowledge of the certification process and conditions linked with forest certification.

The certification organisation must have procedures for selection of auditors. The skills of auditors must be compliant with ISO 17021, Chapter 7 and they must have updated and satisfactory knowledge of the Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard.

Auditors must:

- a. Meet the requirements specified within the scope of accredited certification of management systems under ISO/IEC 17021 and the requirements for auditing of management systems specified in the standard NS-EN ISO 19011.
- b. Be fully conversant with the contents of the PEFC Norway certification system for sustainable forestry.
- c. Have the relevant expertise concerning forest management which includes economic, social and environmental aspects and the effects linked with active forestry. It is also considered important for this expertise to include knowledge of geographical variation.

Expertise and experience are important as the work will involve a large element of estimation.

To be able to check compliance with the Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard, the auditor must have a thorough knowledge of forestry and the effect of forestry on the environment.

When carrying out audits, a person/people with qualified and relevant forestry and environmental expertise must be used when checking compliance with the Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard.

Qualified forestry expertise involves, as a minimum, a bachelor's degree in forestry and four years of relevant practical experience of forestry or environmental administration linked with forestry. Qualified environmental expertise involves, as a minimum, a bachelor's degree in forest ecology/forest biology and four years of relevant practical experience of forestry or environmental administration linked with forestry.

7 Certification and audit procedures

Certification organisations must establish internal procedures for the implementation of certification and auditing of sustainable forestry, including group certification of sustainable forestry. The procedures must meet the requirements of NS-EN ISO/IEC 17021:2011 and the requirements for auditing of management systems as specified in the standard NS-EN ISO 19011. The certification bodies shall include relevant information from external parties (eg government agencies, organizations, etc.) as part of the audit evidence to determine the conformity with the Norwegian PEFC Forestry.

7.1 *Scope and arrangement of the certification organisation's audit on initial certification*

The procedure for audits is dependent on how the certificate holder is organised and what is included in the certificate.

It is assumed that the certificate holder's whole organisation for forest management and timber trade will be covered by the certificate. The certificate holder must include in his internal audit plans all elements of the organisation which are covered by the certificate and must establish a scheme involving follow-up of work carried out by subcontractors to ensure that timber suppliers are operating in compliance with the requirements in the Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard.

During its initial audit, the certification organisation must verify that the environmental management system is implemented and that it includes the conditions for which requirements are specified in PEFC and the Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard. It is also necessary to assess whether schemes involving follow-up of timber suppliers are sufficient. In this regard, it is important to verify that knowledge of forestry operations in accordance with ISO 14001 and the Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard is passed on to each individual supplier.

It must also be possible to verify that forestry operations pursuant to the Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard are undertaken in compliance with established requirements before any certificate is issued. Such verifications must be carried out randomly in the field and be sufficient to instil confidence in the fact that the certificate holder's system is functioning satisfactorily. The following conditions must be taken into account when selecting random checks:

- a. Number of district offices. If there are more than three, the scheme for multi-site operations (multi-location operations) as described in IAF MD 1 may be used.
- b. Geographical variations. Ensuring a representative sample of various geographical variations occurring for the certificate holder.
- c. Difficult geographical areas, roads, access, etc.
- d. Variations if different parties are responsible for forest management.
- e. Variations in types of forest management.
- f. Number of operations and their size.
- g. The certification body's experience of earlier certifications and the occurrence of errors.

The certification body must describe how the above conditions will be addressed.

7.2 Frequency and scope of the certification body's follow-up

The certification body shall annually, and with maximum 12-month intervals, conduct follow-up audits. The maximum period for recertification audits is five years.

ISO 17021, Chapter 9.3.2 describes in detail what conditions will normally be subject to verification during follow-up audits. Correspondingly, the requirements for recertification are described in Chapter 9.4.

Follow-up audits must also be based on the requirements specified in the Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard and the trade-off between economic, ecological and social targets in each individual requirement.

According to the requirements for follow-up, it is stated in ISO 17021, Chapter 9.3.2.2, that follow-up audits must be carried out at least once a year and that the date of the first follow-up audit after initial certification must be no more than 12 months from the last day of the stage 2 audit.

It is assumed that the certification body will implement measures in connection with appeals aimed at the certification body concerning the operations which are implemented by the certified party. Such measures may include new visits, document review and possibly, at the next stage, suspension and/or withdrawal. If the appellant does not have his case processed satisfactorily by the certification body, he can further the appeal to Norwegian Accreditation. The certification body is also obliged to ensure that certified organisations have records of all enquiries relating to ISO 14001, and that necessary measures are implemented (cf. ISO 17021, § 9.8.4).

According to the Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard, when carrying out their follow-ups the certification bodies must implement random verifications of forestry operations to a sufficiently wide extent. Of the forestry operations to be verified, it is also necessary to select locations where the certificate holder himself has carried out verifications in order to make sure that this work has been carried out in a satisfactory manner. This is in addition to standard auditing of whether the management system is maintained and functions according to its purpose. The table below states the minimum number of random checks during follow-up audits:

Annual felling (1000 m ³)	< 500	500-999	1000-1499	>1500
Min. random checks during follow-up audits	5	7	9	10

Follow-up audits must also include verification of how forest areas are managed at various stages between two felling operations in order to check whether this is compliant with the requirements in the Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard.

7.3 Public certification report

A summary of the certification body's audit report must be prepared and published after each certification, recertification and follow-up audit. The summary must be prepared by the certification body and include:

- a. A description of the organisation and operation certified.

- b. The scope and date of the completed audit.
- c. A general description of conclusions and improvements that can be made.
- d. A summary of non-conformances and observations linked with the practising of the Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard for sustainable forestry.
- e. A description of how relevant information from external parties is handled.
- f. The summary must not include tasks of an internal nature or of significance to the business operations of the certified organisation.

The certificate holder must make the summary publicly accessible and place it on a website if he has one. The certification body or certificate holder must send the summary to PEFC Norway for publication on the PEFC website.

8 Certificate text

Certificates issued must clearly describe what activities are included in the certification and whom they include. The standards stated in Chapter 8.1 must be referred to. The following must appear on the certificate:

"Forest management in compliance with the Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard for Sustainable Forestry."

8.1 References on the certificate

The following references must be used on the certificate:

For individual forest certification: Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard – PEFC N 02

For group certification: Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard – PEFC N 02 and

PEFC Norway's requirements for group certification – PEFC N 03.

Reference must also be made to NS-EN ISO 14001:2004 in both cases.

It must appear that the certification has been carried through in compliance with the Norwegian PEFC forest certification system for sustainable forestry.

The certificate shall bear an accreditation symbol of the relevant accreditation body.

9 Criteria for reactions in the event of serious errors and defects

The certification body must have procedures for notifying PEFC Norway of all new certificates, amendments to certificates, suspension and withdrawal of certificates.

The certification body's criteria for reactions in the event of serious errors and defects are regulated in ISO 17021, Chapter 9.6 for system certification. The certification body must have procedures for suspension, withdrawal and amendment of the validity of certificates. The certification body must ensure that the certificate holder is familiar with criteria for reactions in the event of serious errors and defects, and make sure that the certificate is regularly informed of findings which may be of significance to the validity of the certificate.

If there is a dispute concerning the interpretation of standards and requirements, this may be brought to PEFC Norway; see PEFC N 01 Chapter 11.

If audits or other information reveal persistent and serious breaches of the requirements for the forest management system despite written information from the certification body, the certification bodies will undertake an assessment of the degree of severity and the scope of the non-conformance and, on the basis of this, implement one of the following measures where necessary:

- Suspension of certificate
- Withdrawal of certificate

The certificate holder must receive written notification of the measure and, where appropriate, allow an opportunity to rectify the defect before implementing suspension or withdrawal.

Both measures mean that the certificate holder no longer has a valid certificate.

Please see also Chapter 7.4 of PEFC N 03 (Requirements for group certification), which describes guidelines for processing of certification discrepancies among forest owners with group certification agreements.

9.1.1 Suspension of certificate

The certificate can be suspended, i.e. rendered invalid, for a limited period, normally up to 3 months. There are two main reasons for suspension:

- 1) Satisfactory corrective measures for specified non-conformances in accordance with steering documents are not implemented within specified deadlines;
- 2) Directly as a consequence of a persistent minor breach or gross individual breach of statutory requirements within the certified unit.

When assessing whether the certificate is to be suspended, it is necessary to differentiate between whether gross individual breaches of statutory requirements are due to obvious defects in the certificate holder's procedures and follow-up of the same, or purely down to human error on the part of the forest owner, a contractor or employee. In the latter case, the reactions must be aimed at the party responsible for the gross breach of statutory requirements.

The suspension will be revoked when the certificate holder has implemented satisfactory corrective measures and these have been confirmed by means of an audit of the certification body. Suspension and revocation of suspension must be reported immediately to PEFC Norway and be made publicly accessible.

9.1.2 Withdrawal of certificate

The certificate may be withdrawn when, for example, necessary corrective measures on suspension are not made within specified deadlines, when essential requirement elements in the standards are no longer practised or are often deviated from by the certified unit, and on repetition of gross breaches of statutory requirements at the certified unit.

Written notification will be submitted with requirements for the return of all copies of certificates. Certification will cease to apply and notification of the withdrawn certificate will be sent immediately to PEFC Norway and the relevant databases.

If the organisation wants a new certificate, the certification process has to be completed as for initial certification.

10 Requirements for accreditation bodies

The accreditation body must be a member of the European Cooperation for Accreditation (EA) and/or the International Accreditation Forum (IAF). The accreditation body must also have implemented procedures described in ISO/IEC 17011:2004 and other documents recognised by the EA and IAF.