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# Standard-setting – Requirements



**PEFC  
BENCHMARK  
STANDARD**

**PEFC Council**

ICC Building C1  
Route de Pré-Bois 20  
1215 Geneva 15  
Switzerland

**t** +41 22 799 45 40  
**f** +41 22 799 45 50  
**e** [info@pefc.org](mailto:info@pefc.org)  
[www.pefc.org](http://www.pefc.org)

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## Foreword

The PEFC Council (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes) is a worldwide organization promoting sustainable forest management through forest certification and labelling of forest-based products. A product with a PEFC claim and/or label offers assurance that raw materials used in the manufacture of that product originated in a sustainably managed forest.

The PEFC Council endorses national forest certification systems that comply with PEFC Council requirements. These systems are regularly evaluated.

This standard has been developed using an open, transparent, consultative and consensus-based process that included a broad range of stakeholders.

This standard cancels and replaces PEFC ST 1001:2010.

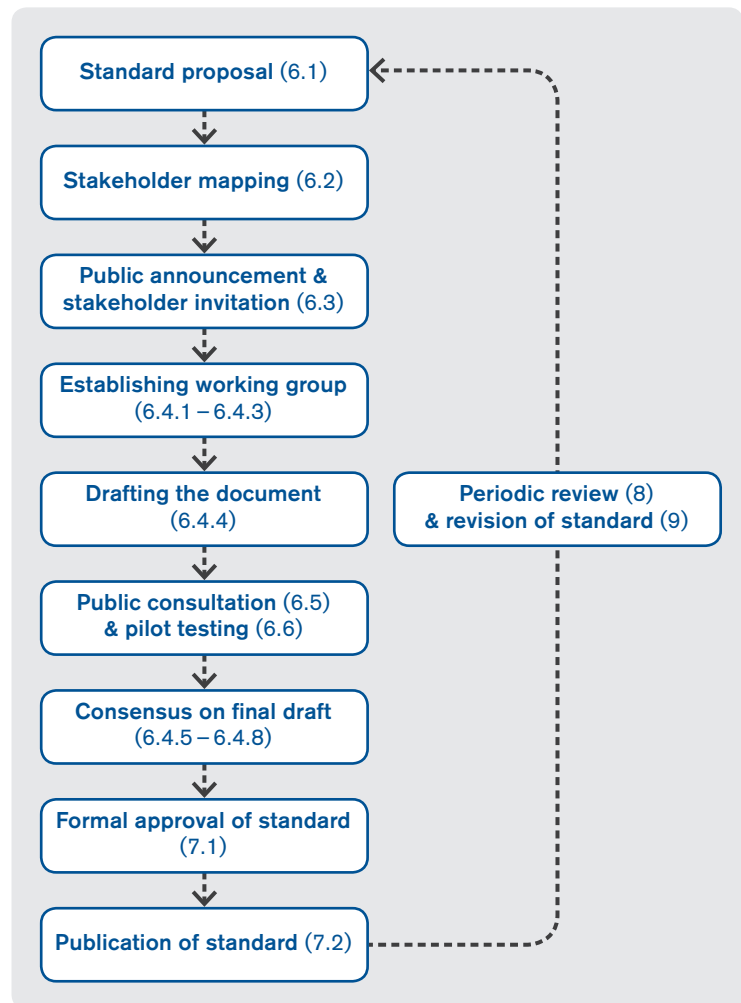
## Introduction

The PEFC Council endorses national forest certification systems for sustainable forest management. Forest conditions and their environmental, social, economic and historical aspects vary among different regions and countries. This standard enables each national standardizing body to develop standards, which are customized and made suitable for that country and its local situations.

Sustainable forest management is a holistic approach that takes into account ecological, social and economic criteria. Participation by national and local stakeholders who are affected by forest management is essential during development of a forest certification system and the determination of a definition of sustainable forest management. The standards development process (refer to Fig. 1) used by PEFC and its National Governing Bodies is open, transparent and based on consensus among a broad range of stakeholders.

This standard is based on ISO/IEC Guide 59 and Guide 2. In addition, the ISEAL *Code of Good Practice for Setting Social and Environmental Standards* was taken into consideration.

**Figure 1: Overview of the standard-setting process and related clauses in this standard.**



## 1. Scope

This standard describes PEFC's requirements for standardizing bodies during their development, review and revision of standards for forest management and system-specific chain of custody standards relating to forest products.

## 2. Normative references

ISO Guides are normatively referenced in this standard. For dated references, only the cited edition applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO/IEC Guide 59, *Code of good practice for standardization*.

ISO/IEC Guide 2, *Standardization and related activities – General vocabulary*.

PEFC GD 1007, *Endorsement and Mutual Recognition of Certification Systems and their Revision*.

## 3. Terms and Definitions

In addition to the definitions stated in this section, the terms and definitions given in ISO/IEC Guide 2 are applicable for the purposes of this standard.

### 3.1 Consensus

General agreement characterized by the absence of sustained opposition to substantial issues by any important part of the concerned interests and by a process that involves seeking to take into account the views of all parties concerned and to reconcile any conflicting arguments.

**Note:** Consensus need not imply unanimity (ISO/IEC Guide 2).

### 3.2 Editorial changes

Changes to a system that do not alter the technical content.

**Note:** This can include clarifications, guidance and grammatical changes.

### 3.3 Enquiry draft

A proposed document that is available for public consultation.

### 3.4 Final draft

A proposed document that is available for formal approval.

### 3.5 Normative document

A document that provides rules, guidelines or characteristics for activities or their results.

**Note 1:** The term “*normative document*” is a generic term that covers such documents as standards, technical specifications, codes of practice and regulations.

**Note 2:** “*A document*” is to be understood as any medium with information recorded on or in it.

**Note 3:** The terms for different kinds of normative documents are defined considering the document and its content as a single entity (ISO/IEC Guide 2).

### 3.6 Publicly available

Generally accessible to the interested public in any form and without the need for a request.

**Note 1:** When information is available by request only, this is indicated explicitly in the document as available on request.

**Note 2:** Special consideration might be needed for disadvantaged stakeholders to ensure their access, e.g. providing hard copies to stakeholders identified as having no access to electronic media.

### 3.7 Revision

Introduction of all necessary changes to the substance and presentation of a normative document.

**Note:** The results of the revision are presented by issuing a new edition of the normative document (ISO/IEC Guide 2).

### **3.8 Review**

Activity of checking a normative document to determine whether it is to be reaffirmed, changed or withdrawn. (ISO/IEC Guide 2)

### **3.9 Stakeholder**

A person, group, community or organization with an interest in the subject of the standard.

### **3.10 Affected stakeholder**

A stakeholder who might experience a direct change in living and/or working conditions caused by implementation of the standard, or a stakeholder who might be a user of the standard and therefore is subject to the requirements of the standard.

**Note 1:** Affected stakeholders include neighboring communities, indigenous people, workers, etc. However, having an interest in the subject matter of the standard (e.g. NGOs, scientific community, and civil society) is not equal to being affected.

**Note 2:** A stakeholder who might be a user of the standard is likely to become a certified entity, e.g. a forest owner in the case of a forest management standard, or a wood processing enterprise in the case of a chain of custody standard.

### **3.11 Disadvantaged stakeholder**

A stakeholder who might be financially or otherwise disadvantaged by participating in the standard-setting process.

### **3.12 Key stakeholder**

A stakeholder whose participation is critical to the outcome of the standard-setting process.

### **3.13 Standard**

A document, established by consensus and approved by a recognized body that provides, for common and repeated use, rules, guidelines or characteristics for activities or their results, aimed at the achievement of the optimum degree or order in a given context.

**Note:** Standards should be based on the consolidated results of science, technology and experience, and aimed at the promotion of optimum benefits (ISO/IEC Guide 2).

### **3.14 Standardizing body**

Body that has recognized activities in standardization (ISO Guide 2).

**Note:** A standardizing body for a forest management system/standard is a body which is responsible for the development and maintenance of standards for the forest certification system. The standardizing body can be a PEFC National Governing Body or the standardizing body can be separate from the governance of the forest certification system.

### **3.15 Working draft**

Proposed document that is available generally for feedback or voting within a working group.

## 4. Standard-setting principles

The standard-setting process is governed by the key principles of:

- Stakeholder engagement – an opportunity for meaningful participation in the process that is open to all stakeholders through participation in working groups and public consultations.
- Balanced representation – no single stakeholder group should dominate or be dominated in the process. While each party is free to decide on its participation, the standardizing body makes an effort to ensure that all relevant stakeholder groups are represented and considers an appropriate gender balance.
- Consensus – standards are approved by consensus. Any sustained opposition to specific issues is resolved by means of dialogue whenever possible.
- Improvement – periodic review of a standard seeks continual improvement and to ensure the standard continues to meet expectations of stakeholders.
- Transparency – relevant documents are publicly available so interested parties can follow developments during and after the process.



## 5. Standardizing body

### 5.1 Standard-setting procedures

- 5.1.1** The standardizing body shall have written procedures for standard-setting activities describing:
- a) its legal status and organizational structure, including a body responsible for consensus-building (working group, refer to 6.4) and procedures for formal adoption of the standard (refer to 7.1),
  - b) procedures for keeping documented information,
  - c) procedures for balanced representation of stakeholders,
  - d) the standard-setting process,
  - e) the mechanism for reaching consensus, and
  - f) review and revision of standard(s)/normative document(s).
- 5.1.2** The standardizing body shall make its standard-setting procedures publicly available and shall review its standard-setting procedures regularly. The review shall consider feedback from stakeholders.

### 5.2 Documented information

- 5.2.1** The standardizing body shall keep documented information relevant to the standard-setting and review process. Evidence of compliance with the requirements of this standard and the standardizing body's own procedures includes:
- a) Standard-setting procedures,
  - b) Stakeholder identification mapping,
  - c) Contacted and/or invited stakeholders,
  - d) Stakeholders involved in standard-setting activities including participants in each working group meeting,
  - e) Feedback received and a synopsis of how feedback was addressed,
  - f) All drafts and final versions of the standard,
  - g) Outcomes from working group considerations,
  - h) Evidence of consensus on the final version of the standard(s),
  - i) Evidence relating to the review process, and
  - j) Final approval by the standardizing body.
- 5.2.2** Documented information shall be kept until completion of the next review or revision of the standard to which they refer. Otherwise the documented information must be kept for a minimum of five years after publication of the standard.
- 5.2.3** Documented information shall be available to interested parties upon request.

### **5.3 Handling of complaints and appeals**

**5.3.1** The standardizing body shall establish procedure(s) for dealing with any substantial and process complaints and appeals relating to its standard-setting activities. It must make procedure(s) accessible to stakeholders. Upon receipt of a complaint or appeal, the standardizing body shall:

- a) acknowledge receipt of the complaint or appeal to the complainant,
- b) gather and verify all necessary information to validate the complaint or appeal, evaluate the subject matter of the complaint or appeal impartially and objectively, and make a decision regarding the complaint or appeal, and
- c) formally communicate the decision on the complaint or appeal to the complainant and describe the handling process.

**5.3.2** The standardizing body shall establish at least one contact point for enquiries, complaints and appeals relating to its standard-setting activities. The contact point shall be easy to access and readily available.

## 6. Standard-setting process

### 6.1 Standard proposal

**6.1.1** For the creation of a new standard, the standardizing body shall develop a proposal including:

- a) the scope of the standard,
- b) justification of the need for the standard,
- c) a clear description of the intended outcomes,
- d) a risk assessment of potential negative impacts arising from implementing the standard, such as;
  - factors that could affect the achievement of the outcomes negatively,
  - unintended consequences of implementation,
  - actions to address the identified risks, and
- e) a description of the stages of standard development and their expected timetable.

**Note:** Guidance for development of a proposal and justification is given in ISO Directives, Part 1, Annex C and Annex SL (Appendix 1).

**6.1.2** For the revision of a standard the proposal shall cover at least (a) and (e) of clause 6.1.1.

### 6.2 Stakeholder identification

**6.2.1** The standardizing body shall identify stakeholders relevant to the objectives and scope of the standard-setting activities by means of a stakeholder identification mapping exercise. It shall define which stakeholder groups are relevant to the subject matter and why. For each stakeholder group the standardizing body shall identify the likely key issues, key stakeholders, and which means of communication would be best to reach them.

**6.2.2** Identification of stakeholder groups shall be based on nine major stakeholder groups as defined by Agenda 21 of the *United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED)* in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. At least the following groups shall be included in the stakeholder mapping:

- forest owners,
- business and industry,
- indigenous people,
- non-government organizations,
- scientific and technological community,
- workers and trade unions.

Other groups shall be added if relevant to the scope of standard-setting activities.

**Note:** The full list of nine major stakeholder groups defined by Agenda 21 of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development consists of: (i) business and industry, (ii) children and youth, (iii) forest owners, (iv) indigenous peoples, (v) local authorities, (vi) non-government organizations, (vii) scientific and technological community, (viii) women, and (ix) workers and trade unions.

**6.2.3** The standardizing body shall identify disadvantaged stakeholders and key stakeholders and address any constraints to their participation in standard-setting activities.

**Note:** A stakeholder can be both a disadvantaged and a key stakeholder at the same time.

## 6.3 Public announcement of the process

**6.3.1** The standardizing body shall make a public announcement of the start of the standard-setting process and include an invitation to stakeholders to participate in the process. The announcement shall be made in a timely manner through suitable media, as appropriate, to give stakeholders an opportunity for meaningful contributions. The announcement and invitation shall include:

- a) overview of the standard-setting process,
- b) access to the proposal for the standard (refer to 6.1),
- c) information about opportunities for stakeholders to participate in the process,
- d) requests to stakeholders to nominate their representative(s) or themselves to the working group (refer to 6.4). The request to disadvantaged stakeholders and key stakeholders shall be made in a manner that ensures that the information reaches intended recipients and in a format that is easy to understand,
- e) explicit invitation and clear instruction on how to submit feedback on the scope and standard-setting process, and
- f) access to the standard-setting procedures.

**Note 1:** In a timely manner means (at the latest) four weeks before the first standard-setting activity is scheduled to occur.

**Note 2:** Through suitable media means at least through the standardizing body's website and by email and/or letter to identified stakeholders. Other media includes press releases, news articles, features in trade-press, information sent to branch organizations, social media, digital media, etc.

**6.3.2** The standardizing body shall review the standard-setting process based on feedback received in response to the public announcement.

## 6.4 Working group requirements

**6.4.1** The standardizing body shall establish a permanent or temporary working group or adjust the composition of an already existing working group based on nominations it received. Acceptance and refusal of nominations shall be justified in relation to the requirements for balanced representation of the working group, considerations of an appropriate gender balance, relevance of the organization, an individual's competence, an individual's relevant experience and resources available for standard-setting.

**6.4.2** The working group shall:

- a) have balanced representation and decision-making by stakeholder categories, relevant to the subject matter and geographical scope of the standard, where no single concerned stakeholder group can dominate, nor be dominated in the process, and
- b) include stakeholders with expertise relevant to the subject matter of the standard, those that affected by the standard, and those that can influence implementation of the standard. The affected stakeholders shall be represented in an appropriate proportion among participants.

**6.4.3** In order to achieve balanced representation, the standardizing body shall strive to have all identified stakeholder groups (refer to 6.2) represented. The standardizing body shall set targets for the participation of key stakeholders and proactively seek their participation by using outreach such as (but not limited to) personal emails, phone calls, meeting invitations etc.

**Note:** When a stakeholder group is not represented and key stakeholders cannot be encouraged to participate, the standardizing body may consider alternative options.

- 6.4.4** Activities of the working group shall be organized in an open and transparent manner where:
- a) working drafts shall be available to all members of the working group,
  - b) all members of the working group shall be given meaningful opportunities to contribute to the development or revision of the standard and to provide feedback on working drafts, and
  - c) feedback and views given by any member of the working group shall be considered in an open and transparent way where the outcome of these considerations is recorded.
- 6.4.5** The decision of the working group to recommend the final draft for formal approval shall be taken on the basis of consensus. In order to determine whether there is any sustained opposition, the working group can utilize the following methods:
- a) face-to face meeting(s) where there is a verbal yes/no vote, a show of hands for a yes/no vote; a statement on consensus from the Chair when there are no dissenting voices or hands (votes); a formal ballot, etc.,
  - b) telephone conference meeting(s) where there is a verbal yes/no vote,
  - c) e-mail request to the working group for agreement or objection where the members provide a formal (written) response (vote), or
  - d) combinations of these methods.
- 6.4.6** Where a vote is used in decision-making, the standard-setting procedures shall determine and include decision-making thresholds that quantifies consensus. The threshold must be consistent with the consensus definition (refer to 3.1). However, a majority vote cannot override sustained opposition in order to achieve consensus.
- 6.4.7** When there is sustained opposition to a substantial issue, the issue shall be resolved using the following methods:
- a) finding a compromise through discussion and negotiation on the disputed issue within the working group,
  - b) finding a compromise through direct negotiation between the stakeholder(s) making the objection and other stakeholders with different views on the disputed issue,
  - c) additional round(s) of public consultation (if necessary) where further stakeholder input can help to achieve consensus on unresolved issues. The standardizing body determines the scope and duration of any additional public consultation.
- 6.4.8** When a substantial issue cannot be resolved and sustained opposition persists, the standardizing body shall initiate dispute resolution in accordance with its procedures for impartial and objective action.

## 6.5 Public consultation

**6.5.1** The standardizing body shall organize public consultation on the enquiry draft and shall ensure that:

- a) the start and the end dates of public consultation are announced in a timely manner through suitable media,

**Note:** *In a timely manner* means (at the latest) the day before the start of public consultation.

- b) a direct invitation to comment on the enquiry draft is sent to each stakeholder identified by stakeholder identification mapping (refer to 6.2) aiming for a balanced participation of stakeholder groups,
- c) invitations are sent to disadvantaged and key stakeholders by methods that ensure they reach recipients and are easy to understand,
- d) the enquiry draft is made publicly available,
- e) public consultation is for at least 60 days,
- f) all feedback is considered by the working group in an objective manner, and
- g) a synopsis of feedback is compiled for each material issue, including the outcome of considering the issue. The synopsis is made publicly available (e.g. on a website) and is sent to each stakeholder/party that gave feedback.

**Note:** For clarity the standardizing body's synopsis may aggregate responses on material issues where there was similar feedback from different stakeholders. However, best practice would be to publish each piece of original feedback and the response, to allow each stakeholder to identify its own feedback.

**6.5.2** For new standards the standardizing body shall organize a second round of public consultation lasting at least 30 days.

## 6.6 Pilot testing

The standardizing body shall organize pilot testing of new standard(s) to assess the clarity, auditability and feasibility of the requirements. The working group shall consider the outcome of pilot testing.

**Note:** Pilot testing is not required for revision of an existing standard when experience from its usage can substitute for pilot testing.

## 7. Approval and publication

### 7.1 Formal approval of standards

The standardizing body shall approve the standard(s)/normative document(s) formally when there is evidence of consensus among the working group.

### 7.2 Publication and availability of standards

**7.2.1** The formally approved standard(s)/normative document(s) shall be published and made publicly available at no cost within 14 days of approval, or as otherwise defined by the standardizing body.

**7.2.2** Standard(s) shall include:

- a) identification and contact information for the standardizing body,
- b) official language of the standard,
- c) a note that when there is inconsistency between versions, the English version of the standard as endorsed by the PEFC Council is the reference.
- d) The approval date and the date of next periodic review

**Note:** The date of next periodic review may be within a shorter period than five years based on (for example) stakeholder expectations or other foreseen developments.

**7.2.3** Printed copies shall be made available upon request at a price that covers no more than administrative costs (if any).

**7.2.4** The standardizing body shall make the development report (refer to PEFC GD 1007) publicly available.

## 8. Periodic review of standards

### 8.1 General

The standard(s)/normative document(s) shall be reviewed at intervals that do not exceed a five-year period. The review shall be based on consideration of feedback received during the standard's implementation and a gap analysis. If necessary, a stakeholder consultation shall be organized to obtain further feedback and input.

### 8.2 Feedback mechanism

**8.2.1** The standardizing body shall establish and maintain a permanent mechanism for collecting and recording feedback on a standard. This mechanism shall be accessible on the website of the standardizing body and/or PEFC National Governing Body with clear directions for providing feedback.

**Note:** Feedback can be sent in various formats: comments, requests for clarification and/or interpretation, complaints, etc.

**8.2.2** All feedback received through all channels, including meetings, training courses, etc. shall be recorded and considered.

### 8.3 Gap analysis

**8.3.1** At the start of a review, the standardizing body shall evaluate the standard against appropriate PEFC International standards, national laws and regulations, and other relevant standards to identify potential gaps in the standard.

**8.3.2** The standardizing body shall consider the latest scientific knowledge, research and relevant emerging issues.

### 8.4 Stakeholder consultation

**8.4.1** Where the feedback and the gap analysis do not identify a need to revise the standard, the standardizing body shall organize stakeholder consultation to determine whether stakeholders see a need for revising the standard. The standardizing body shall include the gap analysis in the stakeholder consultation.

**8.4.2** At the start of a review, the standardizing body shall update the stakeholder identification mapping (refer to clause 6.2).

**8.4.3** The standardizing body shall organize:

- a) a public consultation period of at least 30 days (following the requirements of clause 6.5.1) and/or,
- b) stakeholder meetings.

**8.4.4** The standardizing body shall announce the review in a timely manner (refer to 6.3).



## **8.5 Decision-making**

- 8.5.1** Based on the feedback received during the period of a standard's implementation, the outcome of the gap analysis and the consultations, the standardizing body shall decide whether to reaffirm the standard or whether a revision of the standard is necessary.
- 8.5.2** The decision shall be made at the highest decision-making level of the standardizing body
- 8.5.3** Where the decision is to reaffirm a standard, the standardizing body shall provide a justification for the decision and make the justification publicly available.
- 8.5.4** Where the decision is to revise the standard, the standardizing body shall specify the type of revision (normal or editorial revision).

## 9. Revision of standards

### 9.1 Normal revision

Procedures for revision of standard(s)/normative document(s) shall conform to those stated in section 6.

A normal revision can occur at the periodic review, or between periodic reviews, but does not include editorial revisions and time-critical revisions.

### 9.2 Editorial revision

Editorial revisions can be made without triggering the normal revision process. The standardizing body shall approve the editorial changes formally and publish an amendment or a new edition of the standard.

### 9.3 Time-critical revision

**9.3.1** A time-critical revision is a revision between two periodic reviews using a fast-track process.

**9.3.2** A time-critical revision can be conducted only in the following situations:

- a) Change in national laws and regulations affecting compliance with PEFC International requirements
- b) Instruction by PEFC International to comply with specific or new PEFC requirements within a timescale that is too short for a normal revision.

**9.3.3** The time-critical revision shall follow these steps:

- a) The standardizing body shall draft the revised standard,
- b) The standardizing body may consult stakeholders, but it is not mandatory,
- c) The revised standard shall be approved formally at the highest appropriate decision-making level of the standardizing body,
- d) The standardizing body shall explain the justification for the urgent change(s) and make the justification publicly available.

### 9.4 Application and transition of revised standards

**9.4.1** A revision shall define the application date and transition period of the revised standard(s)/normative document(s).

**9.4.2** An application date shall not be more than one year after the publication of the standard. This allows time for endorsement of the revised standard(s)/normative document(s), introduction of change(s), information dissemination and training.

**9.4.3** The transition period shall not exceed one year. The standardizing body may determine a longer period when justified by exceptional circumstances.

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**PEFC Council**

ICC Building C1  
Route de Pré-Bois 20  
1215 Geneva 15  
Switzerland

**t** +41 22 799 45 40

**f** +41 22 799 45 50

**e** [info@pefc.org](mailto:info@pefc.org)

[www.pefc.org](http://www.pefc.org)