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**Endorsement of Control Systems for Forest  
Entrepreneurs**



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Official language of the document is German. When there is inconsistency between versions, the English version of the document as endorsed by the PEFC Council is the reference document.

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## Foreword

PEFC Austria (PEFC: Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes) is a national organisation with the purpose of facilitating sustainable forest management through sustainable forest management certification and labelling of wood products. Consumers can trust that products carrying the PEFC label are made of raw material from sustainably managed forests, from recycling and/or non-controversial sources. PEFC Austria is a work group responsible for the standard setting and the administration of the Austrian PEFC scheme.

PEFC Austria standards are developed within an open and transparent procedure based on consensus and supported by consultation of a variety of stakeholders. Since 1999, PEFC Austria is full member of PEFC International whose strict endorsement procedure guarantees international recognition.

To improve the readability, the male form is used for all denominations of persons. It refers to all genders.

## Introduction

PEFC Austria recognises control- or certification systems for forest entrepreneurs, which fulfil the requirements of Austrian PEFC Scheme, this includes regular audits of certified entities regarding the compliance with PEFC requirements. Forest owners, who are certified according the PEFC-Standard for Sustainable Forest Management in Austria deploy only those forest entrepreneurs, service providers and forest contractors, which have a valid document (certificate, confirmation of participation,...) of a control- or certification systems which is recognised by PEFC Austria (see PEFC AT ST 1001, 4c). This document describes the procedure of an endorsement process of a control- or certification system. Requirements for the use of forest machinery are outlined in PEFC AT ST 1001, Appendix 1. Endorsed control- or certification systems for forest entrepreneurs are published on the website of PEFC Austria (<http://www.pefc.at/>).

The term “shall” is used throughout this document to indicate those provisions that, reflecting the requirements that are mandatory. The term “should” is used to indicate guidance that, although not mandatory, is provided as a recognised means of meeting the requirements. The term “may” used throughout this standard indicates permission expressed by this standard whereas “can” refers to the ability of a user of this standard or to a possibility open to the user.

## 1 Scope

This document describes the process for the endorsement control- or certification systems for forest entrepreneurs through PEFC Austria.

## 2 Normative References

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies:

- PEFC AT ST 1001 PEFC-Standard for Sustainable Forest Management in Austria
- PEFC AT ST 1003 Group Forest Management Certifications according to the PEFC-System in Austria - Requirements

### **3 Definitions**

#### **3.1 Controll- and certification systems for forest entrepreneurs**

A set of requirements and procedures resulting in issuance of a document (e.g. certificate, confirmation of participation), which confirms the compliance with defined requirements for forest entrepreneurs, such as forest service providers and forest contractors, based on evaluation and controls made by independent third parties.

Note: These organisations are hereafter named operating systems.

### **4 Requirements for operating systems**

#### **4.1 Scheme governance and management**

4.1.1 The operating system shall be governed by a legal entity that has necessary competences.

4.1.2 The operating system shall be non-discriminatory, in principle it shall be accessible to all forest entrepreneurs operating within the geographical scope of the operating system.

4.1.3 The process of development and revision of the operating system's requirements shall be open to and shall involve forest entrepreneurs as the key materially and directly affected stakeholder. They should be informed about all changes.

4.1.4 The technical documents shall be regularly revised, no later than in in five years intervals. A revision shall also be required if applicable technical documents of PEFC Austria, especially PEFC AT ST 1001, Appendix 1 are changed.

4.1.5 The operating system shall comprise a complaint and dispute settlement process.

4.1.6 The technical documents of the operating system shall be publicly available in German.

4.1.7 PEFC Austria shall be informed about all changes in the operating system's technical documentation.

4.1.8 The operating system shall ensure that all issued certificates or other conformity assessment attestations are listed in a publicly available database. This shall also comprise every issuance, suspension, withdrawal and/or change in the certificate validity or scope.

4.1.9 In case where the operating system comprises of different parts, standards or versions thereof, which are not all endorsed by PEFC Austria, the entries in the database shall allow identification of those certificates that are covered by the scope of the endorsement by PEFC Austria.

#### **4.2 Requirements for forest entrepreneurs**

4.2.1 The requirements of the operating system shall cover all applicable requirements from the technical documents of PEFC Austria, especially PEFC AT ST 1001, Appendix 1.

4.2.2 In case where the forest entrepreneur uses the PEFC trademarks, the compliance with PEFC Trademarks Rules (PEFC ST 2001) shall be a part of the operating system's applicable requirements.

4.2.3 The requirements of the operating system shall require that in case where the work is outsourced to third party sub-contractors, the sub-contractors shall also follow the requirements of the operating system.

### **4.3 Requirements for conformity assessment**

4.3.1 The operating system shall include requirements for conformity assessment of participating forest entrepreneurs, including requirements for impartiality, documented procedures, competences of auditors and records keeping.

Note: ISO 17021 or ISO 17065 may be taken as guidelines to develop the requirements for the operation system's conformity assessment procedures.

4.3.2 Conformity assessment of participating forest entrepreneurs shall be carried out by independent third parties.

4.3.3 The conformity assessment shall ensure that participating forest entrepreneurs shall be principally audited every year.

4.3.4 The operating system can define conformity assessment procedures for small forest entrepreneurs with auditing procedures that are alternative to requirement 4.3.3.. In this case, the operating system shall define corresponding eligibility criteria for small forest entrepreneurs, a sampling procedure as well as other elements ensuring compliance of participating forest entrepreneurs and confidence of the conformity assessment results. A sufficient frequency of controls shall be ensured.

Note: Sampling methodology applied by the PEFC group certification model provides a benchmark for the sufficient frequency of controls.

4.3.5 Information from customers of forest entrepreneurs, records of forest entrepreneurs and other information relevant to participating forest entrepreneurs shall be considered in course of the audits.

4.3.6 Certificates shall contain

- a) Name and address of the organisation to which the document is issued
- b) Name, address and logo of the operating system
- c) Scope of the certification
- d) Relevant standard or technical documents
- e) Identification code (certificate number)
- f) Date of issue and expiry date

4.3.7 In case where the operating system comprises of different parts, standards or versions thereof, which are not all endorsed by PEFC Austria, the certificates shall allow identification of whether the scope of the certification is covered by the endorsement by PEFC Austria.

4.3.8 The period of the validity of the certificates shall not exceed 5 years.

4.3.9 The certificates shall make reference to the latest version of the operating system standard(s) and technical documents. In case of materially important changes in the operating system's technical documentation, an updated version of the certificates shall be issued after an annual surveillance audit.

4.3.10 PEFC Austria shall be immediately informed about every issuance, suspension, withdrawal and/or change in the validity or scope of a certificate.

## **5 Endorsement of operating systems**

5.1 The operating system shall submit an application for the endorsement to PEFC Austria including its technical documentation and corresponding evidence regarding the compliance with the requirements of PEFC AT ST 1001 and PEFC AT PB 4006 (see Appendix 1 – Checklist for the Endorsement of Control Systems for Forest Entrepreneurs).

5.2 The PEFC Austria secretariat shall confirm the receipt of the application and shall evaluate the formal completeness of the submitted application and documentation.

5.3 An expert committee, which is assigned by PEFC Austria, shall evaluate the conformity of the operating system with the requirements of PEFC AT ST 1001 and PEFC AT PB 4006 (see Appendix 1) and shall draft an evaluation report including the results and a recommendation whether the operating system can be endorsed or not.

5.4 The applicant shall bear the costs for the evaluation.

5.5 The PEFC Austria general assembly shall make a decision on the endorsement of the operating system based on the evaluation report prepared by the expert committee.

5.6 The PEFC Austria secretariat shall issue the operating system with a contract regarding the endorsement of the operating system (Appendix 2). The contract provides that PEFC Austria recognises certificates of the operating system which are issued in compliance with the terms of the contract.

5.7 The endorsement contract can be terminated by both parties with three months' notice. The endorsement can be immediately suspended or terminated by PEFC Austria in case the operating system infringes on requirements of the contract.

5.8 The operating system has the right to use the PEFC trademarks free of charge for promotional purposes after the conclusion of a trademarks license contract, in compliance with the PEFC Trademarks Rules, based on the requirements of PEFC ST 2001 (User group D).

5.9 PEFC Austria shall inform the operating system about all changes in PEFC Austria's documentation relating to the endorsement of the operating system and the contract.

5.10 Any complaints and appeals relating to the endorsement of the operating system and the contract are governed by the complaint procedures and rules of arbitration of PEFC Austria (PEFC AT PB 4004).

5.11 The operating system shall pay fees to PEFC Austria if applicable (see PEFC AT PB 4005 Schedule of Fees).

## Appendix

### Appendix 1 – Checklist for the Endorsement of Control Systems for Forest Entrepreneurs

Question		YES/NO	Reference to application documents
<b>PEFC AT ST 1001, Appendix 1: Requirements for working in the forest</b>			
Nr.	Criterion		
1	Appropriate qualification of the employees including information about sustainable forest management according PEFC-criteria.		
2	Use of adequate safety equipment (Persönliche Schutzausrüstung PSA)		
3	Having First-Aid material on sight		
4	Usage of suitable equipment and machinery with functional safety equipment.		
5	Only biodegradable oils are used for the loss lubrication of chainsaw, processor and harvester chains		
6	Use of rapidly biodegradable hydraulic fluids Note: For existing machinery, which is run with mineralic hydraulic oils, additional arrangements need to be taken to avoid oil contaminations in case of incidents (vacuum pumps, increased amount of oil binding agents)		
7	Carry an oil binding system and a machine-adapted oil spill kit		
8	Driving is principally only permitted on logging trails, according 5.2.1.8		
9	Consideration of limitations through weather conditions for driving on forest soil		
10	Damages through harvesting should be avoided as possible. Wood hauling should be principally carried out sparing the forest stand, the water stand and ecological conditions as far as possible. Only those methods and machinery shall be used, according to the acknowledged rule of technology in forestry which are suitable for the application in forests.		
11	Before starting work the forest entrepreneur should ask the forest owner concerning possible constraints for forest operations.		
12	Harvesting of the assigned trees is done under consideration of the law (forest law, nature protection law) and considering measures to maintain and appropriately improve the biological diversity (relevance of dead wood (standing on ground), preserving old trees with ecological relevance (Veteranenbäume)).		
13	Pesticides should not be applied principally. Prevention shall be preferred. Biological, mechanical and physical measures are to be preferred to chemical ones.		
14	Compliance with labour protection regulations and collective agreement requirements (business registration, proof of insurance (social security, liability insurance))		
Question		YES/NO	Reference to



		application documents
<b>4.1 Scheme governance and management</b>		
4.1.1 The operating system shall be governed by a legal entity that has necessary competences		
4.1.2 The operating system shall be non-discriminatory, in principle it shall be accessible to all forest entrepreneurs operating within the geographical scope of the operating system.		
4.1.3 The process of development and revision of the operating system's requirements shall be open to and shall involve forest entrepreneurs as the key materially and directly affected stakeholder. They should be informed about all changes.		
4.1.4 The technical documents shall be regularly revised, no later than in five years intervals. A revision shall also be required if applicable technical documents of PEFC Austria, especially PEFC AT ST 1001, Appendix 1 are changed.		
4.1.5 The operating system shall comprise a complaint and dispute settlement process.		
4.1.6 The technical documents of the operating system shall be publicly available in German.		
4.1.7 PEFC Austria shall be informed about all changes in the operating system's technical documentation.		
4.1.8 The operating system shall ensure that all issued certificates are listed in a publicly available database. This shall also comprise every issuance, suspension, withdrawal and/or change in the certificate validity or scope.		
4.1.9 In case where the operating system comprises of different parts, standards or their versions which are not all endorsed by PEFC Austria, the entries in the database, shall allow identification of those certificates that are covered by the scope of the endorsement by PEFC Austria.		

Question	YES/NO	Reference to application documents
<b>4.2 Requirements for forest entrepreneurs</b>		
4.2.1 The requirements of the operating system shall cover all applicable requirements from the technical documents of PEFC Austria, especially PEFC AT ST 1001, Appendix 1.		
4.2.2 In case where the forest entrepreneur uses the PEFC trademarks, the compliance with PEFC Trademarks Rules (PEFC ST 2001) shall be a part of the operating system's applicable requirements.		
4.2.3 The requirements of the operating system shall require that in case work is outsource to third party sub-contractors, the sub-contractors also need to follow the requirements of the operating system.		

Question	YES/NO	Reference to
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		application documents
<b>4.3 Requirements for conformity assessment</b>		
4.3.1 The operating system shall include requirements for conformity assessment of participating forest entrepreneurs, including requirements for impartiality, documented procedures, competences of auditors and records keeping.  Note: ISO 17021-1 or ISO 17065 may be taken as guideline to develop the requirements for the operation system's conformity assessment procedures.		
4.3.2 Conformity assessment of participating forest entrepreneurs shall be carried out by independent third parties.		
4.3.3 The conformity assessment shall ensure that participating forest entrepreneurs shall be principally audited every year.		
4.3.4 (if applicable) The operating system can define conformity assessment procedures for small forest entrepreneurs allowing that provide an alternative to requirement 4.3.3. In this case, the operating system shall define corresponding limits for small forest entrepreneurs, a sampling procedure as well as other elements ensuring compliance of participating forest entrepreneurs. A sufficient frequency of controls shall be ensured.  Note: Sampling methodology applied by the PEFC group certification model provides a benchmark for the sufficient frequency of controls.		
4.3.5 Information from customers of forest entrepreneurs, records of forest entrepreneurs and other information relevant to participating forest entrepreneurs shall be considered in course of the audits.		
4.3.6 Certificates shall contain a) Name and address of the organisation to which the document is issued b) Name, address and logo of the operating system c) Scope of the certification d) Relevant standard or technical documents e) Identification code (certificate number) f) Date of issue and expiry date		
4.3.7 (if applicable) In case where the operating system comprises of different parts, standards or versions thereof, which are not all endorsed by PEFC Austria, the certificates shall allow identification of whether the scope of the certification is covered by the endorsement by PEFC Austria.		
4.3.8 The period of the validity of the certificates shall not exceed 5 years.		
4.3.9 The certificates shall make reference to the latest version of the operating system standard(s) and technical documents. In case of materially important changes in the operating system's technical documentation, an updated version of the certificates shall be issued after an annual surveillance audit.		
4.3.10 PEFC Austria shall be immediately informed about every issuance, suspension, withdrawal and/or change in the validity or scope of a certificate.		

## Appendix 2 – Endorsement contract

### ***Contract for the Endorsement of Control Systems for Forest Entrepreneurs***

#### **Between**

(1) **PEFC Austria**, Marxergasse 2, 4. floor, 1030 Vienna

and

(2) **<Name>**, <Street>, <City>  
representing the operating system <name of the control system>

<Name> is an organisation endorsed by PEFC Austria operating a control system for forest entrepreneurs (here-in-after “the control system”) in compliance with the requirements of PEFC AT ST 1001 and PEFC AT PB 4006. On the basis of this endorsement, PEFC Austria recognises certificates or another conformity assessment attestations issued against the control system that was evaluated and endorsed by PEFC Austria.

The following is agreed between the above parties:

#### **§ 1 Resources:**

The latest editions of the following documents (see [www.pefc.at](http://www.pefc.at)) are part of this contract:

1. PEFC AT ST 1001 PEFC-Standard for Sustainable Forest Management in Austria
2. PEFC AT PB 4004 Complaint Procedure and Rules of Arbitration
3. PEFC AT PB 4005 Schedule of Fees
4. PEFC AT PB 4006 Endorsement of Control Systems for Forest Entrepreneurs

#### **§ 2 Obligations of the operating system**

The operating system is obliged:

1. to operate the control system in compliance with the system documentation submitted to and evaluated by PEFC Austria and in compliance with the applicable requirements of PEFC AT ST 1001 and PEFC AT PB 4006.
2. To provide PEFC Austria with any changes to the endorsed control system and apply for their endorsement by PEFC Austria.
3. to provide PEFC Austria immediately and truthfully with information on every certificate or another conformity assessment attestation that is covered by this endorsement and inform of any changes to previously issued certificates within the range of data as specified by PEFC Austria.
4. to pay PEFC Austria the quarterly a fee according to PEFC AT PB 4005 for every certificate another conformity assessment attestation issued based on an invoice issued by PEFC Austria, if applicable. The amount of fee can be changed during the validity of this contract. Any change in the rates will take effect the year following that in which PEFC Austria has informed the operating system, in writing, of the change. The information regarding the notification fees requested from the certificate holders will be disclosed to

PEFC Austria within 14 days after each quarter.

5. to agree with the publication of their contact details and other information - as specified by PEFC Austria – in an internet database run by PEFC Austria or another organisation appointed by PEFC Austria.

### **§ 3 Obligations of PEFC Austria**

1. PEFC Austria recognises the certificates or another conformity assessment attestations issued against the control system in compliance with this contract.
2. PEFC Austria informs the operating system about all changes in the PEFC Austria's documentation relating to the endorsement of the control system and this contract.

### **§ 4 Contract termination**

1. Either party may terminate the contract with three-month prior notice provided in writing and by registered letter to the last known address.
2. PEFC Austria can immediately suspend or terminate the contract in case the control system infringes on requirements of the contract.
3. No fee is refunded by PEFC Austria to the operating system in case of temporary suspension or termination of the contract.
4. PEFC Austria is not obliged to pay compensation for any costs or other damages which any temporary suspension or termination causes to the operating system.

### **§ 5 Validity**

The contract validity is determined by PEFC AT PB 4006. The contract enters into force as soon as it has been signed by both parties.

### **§ 6 Complaints and appeals**

Any complaints and appeals relating to the endorsement of the operating system and the contract are governed by the complaint procedures and rules of arbitration of PEFC Austria (PEFC AT PB 4004).

### **§ 7 Governing Law - Jurisdiction**

Any disputes arising out of this agreement shall be finally and exclusively settled by the courts of Vienna.

Vienna, \_\_\_\_\_, (date)\_\_\_\_\_

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PEFC Austria

Notified certification body