

Adopted by the Extraordinary General Assembly of the PEFC Belgium
on 27 June 2012

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1. Objectives

The criteria for sustainable forest management defined for the Walloon Region contain the requirements for ensuring the economic, ecological and social functions of the forests.

The criteria includes management and performance requirements that are applicable at the Forest Management Unit (FMU) level or at the regional level to ensure that all requirements is achieved at the FMU level.

Upon examining the PEFC International standards, it appears that management standards in Belgium can only be met if they are drawn up concomitantly at two levels - regional and individual.

Regional requirements are reflected the targets set (Progress Plan), defined on the basis of an analysis of the discrepancies between the PEFC International standards and the forest management situation in the region: five-yearly analysis of the forest management situation in the Region (inventory), listing major problems in order of importance on the basis of the PEFC International standards and setting targets for improvement to be attained to resolve these problems.

The individual requirements correspond to a series of management practices that have to be implemented by all private or public forest owners wishing to be part of the PEFC regional certification process (Sustainable forest management charter). They are defined on the basis of all the PEFC International standards relevant to the types of management unit found in the Walloon Region.

Both levels define clear, objective-based and auditable requirements.

These requirements are completed by the interpretation guide in document PEFC B 3001 :2012 (Best Practices).

2. Scope of application

The Walloon standards were the first time adopted by the Forum on 20 February 2001. The Belgian Scheme and the regional standards were been adopted by PEFC Council on 25 February 2002.

The revised forest management standards use the PEFC International standards

These revised standards form an integral part of the Scheme adopted by the PEFC Belgium at its extraordinary General Assembly on 27 June 20012.

3. Normative references

PEFC ST 1003:2010 Sustainable Forest Management – Requirements
PEFC ST 1002:2010 Group Forest Management Certification - Requirements

4. PEFC Forest management standards for the Walloon Region

4.1. Progress Plan 2013 - 2018

Aim 1:

To establish a global plan for the sustainable forest management policy based on integrated information sources and multifunctional management plans.

Actions

- 1A Drawing up a regional forestry programme and putting this forward for adoption by the Walloon Government
 - 1B Providing decision-makers, managers and forest owners with an independent source of integrated alphanumeric and cartographic data.
 - 1C Continuing to work out development plans or integrated management documents
-

Aim 2:

To disseminate the concepts of sustainable forest management and sustainable development among the general public and public institutions.

Actions

- 2A Developing information campaigns on sustainable forest management for the general public and schools
 - 2B Developing campaigns to promote the use of wood for long-term purposes and information on the environmental benefits of such use
 - 2C Informing and training forest owners and managers in sustainable forest management.
 - 2D Promote exchanges of experience between certified owners
-

Aim 3:

To adapt the inheritance tax system to the specific constraints of sustainable forest management

Actions

Submit to the competent Ministry a proposal to amend the inheritance tax so that every owner of a forestry property located in the Walloon Region (including non-residents) may benefit from the inheritance and gift tax relief measure on the value of standing timber

Aim 4: To improve the balance between forest and large game

Actions

4A Renew the presentation to the relevant Minister of the regional action programme for the balance of forest game

4B Establish and implement the regional action programme over which the GT PEFC has control.

Aim 5: To ensure the follow-up and maintenance/enhancement of the health and vitality of forest ecosystems, taking account among other things of the impact of climate changes.

Actions

5A - Implement the recommendations of the forest-climate working group.

5B - Improving genetic diversity in new regenerations, with provenances well suited to the station

5C - Encourage the installation and maintenance of mixed stands in terms of age, structure and species.

5D – Updating the environmental file of species and the afforestation guide for forest stations in Wallonia.

Aim 6: To ensure better knowledge of the impact of the dissemination of allochthonous species and ecotypes and better control of their use

Actions

6A Participating in the identification of high-risk allochthonous species and ecotypes

6B Monitor the use of new species or non-native ecotypes and make owners aware of them

Aim 7: To identify the conservation objectives to be promoted for various key forest ecosystems and biotopes, including traditional management systems, in forestry as a whole

Actions

7A Identify and map high biological value habitats and in particular, identify the network of remaining ancient forests and to provide policy makers, forest owners and managers the maps of ancient forests

7B Identify the conservation goals for promoting the various forest ecosystems and key biotopes, including traditional management systems (coppice, coppice-with-stands, stands of old Austrian pines), in all forested areas

**Aim 8:
To improve the account taken of biodiversity in forestry practices**

Actions

8A Make owners and forest managers aware of the implementation of the Biodiversity Circular (public forests) and the Guide to Biodiversity (private forests)

8B Assess the socio-economic and environmental consequences of the application of the submitted forest biodiversity circular, Natura 2000 and the Forestry Code

**Aim 9:
To improve the quality of work in the forest**

Actions

9A Set up a licensing system for forestry operators and entrepreneurs

9B Organising training and information programmes for forest workers on operating and working methods that guarantee sustainable management and safety at work

9C Promote the use of existing operating guidelines

9D Organising training programmes for owners/managers

9E Promote the use of biodegradable oils in the forest

**Aim 10:
To work to achieve greater horizontal and vertical integration of the various levels of
the forest-wood sector**

Action

10A Supporting a platform for the forest-wood sector

10B Ensuring coherent management of the carbon cycle in the wood sector

**Aim 11:
To improve accessibility for slow tourism in the forest**

Actions

11A Clarifying the status of paths and trails as well as their accessibility

11B Promoting consultation between owners and users with a view to improving the coherence of routes

11C Promote the education of and clear information to forest users

**Aim 12:
Forest production**

Actions

Make owners aware of the need to regenerate the forest after harvesting to maintain the timber production function

4.2. Charter for sustainable forest management in the Walloon Region (2013-2018)

I hereby request to participate in the PEFC regional forestry certification process implemented in Wallonia.

To this end, I undertake to:

1. Regulation

- Comply with the laws, decrees and regulations applicable to my forest.

2. Information – training

- take regular refresher courses on sustainable forest management
- refer to (and/or ensure its mandated manager refers to) the guide for the implementation of the PEFC charter, a copy of which I have received, as well as its regular updates;
- inform everyone involved in the management of my property (owner, manager, service providers, hunters) on a regular basis of the details of membership of the PEFC.
- Inform professional and non-professional forestry workers about safety at work.

3. Simple management document / Management plan

- **(specific to private forests)**, draw up a Simple Management Document and send a copy to the SRFB within a year of signing the charter. This will include, as a minimum, the information requested in the "PEFC Simple Management Document" which I read when I joined. A summary containing non-confidential parts of the Simple Management Document will be made available to the public on request to the SRFB in accordance with the procedure described in the help guide.
- **(specific to public forests)** draw up or have drawn up a forest management plan that is revised periodically, including at least the initial inventory of my forest property, taking into account the various functions of the forest, the identification of areas whose main role is to protect water and soil and to preserve its characteristic or rare facies, the determination and establishment of a hierarchy of objectives, and the planning of management actions in space and time. The management plan will be publicly available.

4. Appropriate sylviculture

- apply appropriate silvicultural measures so as to maintain the growing stock at a desirable level from an economic, ecological and social point of view.

5. Regeneration

- To ensure the quantity and quality of the forest resources, think through and carry out the most appropriate regeneration using natural regeneration and/ or by planting with species adapted to the biotope, in particular, by referring to the ecological species file. The sources used will be sufficiently varied and will have an entry in the Walloon Dictionary of recommended sources. Preference will be given to sources found in the Walloon Catalogue of Basic Materials and the sources will be archived in the management plan.
- take account of the presence of elite trees or stands on my property so as to consider seed harvesting there;
- not to use GMO or invasive species (included in List A of invasive species in Belgium) on my plantations.

6. Mix

- Diversify my forest by using a mixture of species (in groups, strips, clumps or plant by plant), ages and structures, provided that the conditions of the biotope and the structure of the property so permit, and preferring rare or companion species when undertaking clearances, sapling thinning and tree marking"

7. Inputs

- avoid the use of herbicides, fungicides, insecticides, except as determined by the Walloon government. For these exceptions, and including rodenticides, use them only as a last resort, and in the absence of satisfactory alternative methods. Avoid the use of pesticides within 12 metres of water courses, expanses of water and springs;
- avoid the use of fertilisers except in an appropriate matter and on the basis of a reliable soil analysis revealing the need to correct mineral imbalances hampering the good health of the stand;
- avoid the use of chemical fertilizers in my forest.

8. Wetlands

- Limit to periods of frost or "dry" soil (dried out enough), the movement of vehicles which compact the ground except on service access paths (references in the help guide)
- refrain from undertaking new drainage;
- renew my mature stands located on the banks of water courses or expanses of water with hardwood stands for a distance of 12 meters from the banks (with the exception of situations described in the help guide).

9. Other areas of particular biological interest

- conserve or even restore areas of particular biological interest (e.g. the edge of the forest, clearings, ponds and pools);
- identify ancient forests (defined in the help guide) and attach particular importance to my management. Refer to the management advice offered in the help guide.

In the guide: Restorations and transformations of ruined areas are permitted, drastic transformations are not recommended.

10. Dead wood and trees of biological interest

In hardwood stands, insofar as the characteristics of the property allow, maintain a network of dead wood in the forest (standing and /or on the ground), trees with hollows and old trees, within the required phytosanitary and safety limits.

- Preserve and designate
- -when cutting, at least one of these trees of over 125 cm in circumference per hectare
- and/or small islands of ageing or senescence representing 2% of the property.

11. Harvesting

- ensure a balance between the expansion of the forest and the cutting carried out there, provided that the size of the property so permits;
- use wood sales and exploitation specifications that may reduce damage to (1) the forest tracks (and if necessary their repair), (2) the remaining trees and stands, (3) the soils (use of suitable equipment, existing clearance paths and if necessary service access paths) and (4) to water courses; the specifications will stipulate the prohibition on abandoning exogenous waste, in particular packaging and hydrocarbons, and compliance with the forestry work safety recommendations;
- Present a reasoned request in advance to the Wallonia PEFC Working Group for any clear cut exceeding an area of 5 ha of softwood and 3ha of hardwood which it must accept.

- during clearance, adapt the cutting surfaces to the risks of soil erosion on inclines, destabilisation of neighbouring stands, rising water or impact on the landscape.
- Do not strip the soil's organic horizons and take a reasoned approach to gathering stumps, remains or small waste (leaves, small branches) so as not to degrade the soil balance (using the help guide).

12. Balance between forest and large game

- ensure balanced management between the forest and large game using all the resources available and that allows me to comply with my PEFC charter commitments

- I undertake to objectify the pressure of large game by the most appropriate means (such as setting up enclosures-exlosures, damage assessment of bark-stripping or regeneration) to measure the appropriateness of the populations in accordance with the ecosystem.

- In the absence of a balance, I undertake:
 - to define and communicate to the SRFB (private) or DNF (public), the causes of the imbalance and the measures taken in respect of the hunting permit to restore this balance:

 - provided that I am in control of it, to control populations of large game (or have them controlled) in particular,
 - through the application of the shooting plan for deer,
 - through the possibility of making a request for the game to be culled
 - by limiting the large game populations by setting a culling-target
 - Through the reasonable use of feeding and in the absence of conclusive results after 2 hunting seasons by banning it until the return to a balance

- When the balance is reached:
to improve the capacity for hosting wildlife through forestry enhancement and management actions, with a concern for the balance of the ecosystem. "

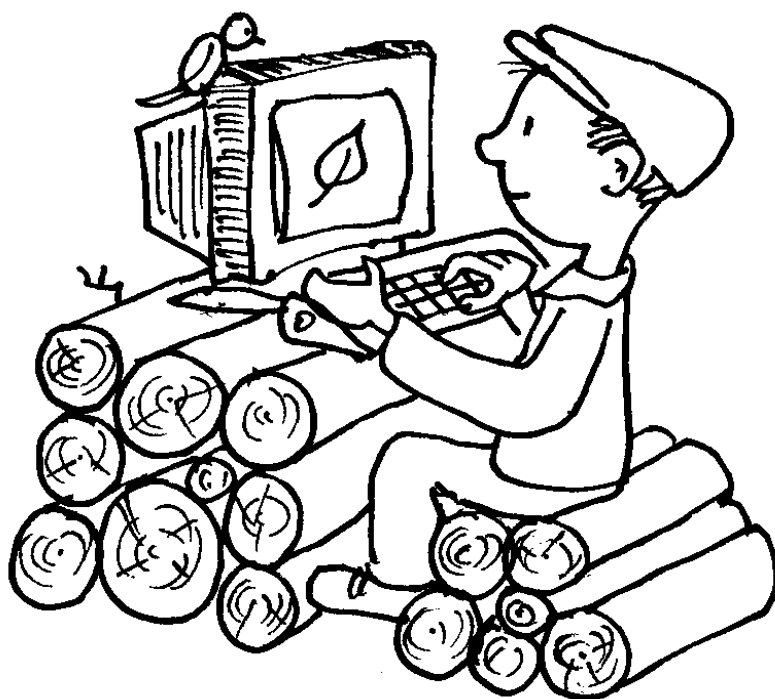
13. Socio-recreative forest

- avoid hindering or discouraging access to public forest paths crossing or bordering my property, except for temporary bans for safety reasons;
- authorise according to my terms access to private forestry tracks on my property for recreational leisure, cultural or educational purposes, and in the respect of forest ecosystems, in particular, where there is a clear advantage for safety or the creation of a slow non-motorised circuit.
- in addition to that which is provided for by law, not authorise the organisation of motorised recreational activities away from paths and trails;
- take account of elements of historical, cultural and landscape value in the management of my forest.

14. Audit and termination

- accept the visit of an auditor whose role will be to check that I am meeting my commitments;
- should I decide to terminate my membership of the PEFC, I am informed that I will only be able to rejoin PEFC subject to a favourable opinion from the PEFC Walloon Region Working Group.

*My Forest Simple
Management Document*



Forest.....

Drawn up on.....

1. General information

Forest (name):	Municipality(s):	Province(s):	Area (ha)

Owner(s)

Last Name, First
Name:

Address
:

Telephone:

Mobile

Fax:

e-mail :

Forest manager:

Last Name, First
Name:

Address
:

Telephone:

Mobile

Fax:

Date of Forest Management Plan writing _____

Area covered by the Forest Management Plan: _____ Forest ha

Note: This area may be approximate because there are discrepancies between cadastral and topographic maps (different measurement systems).

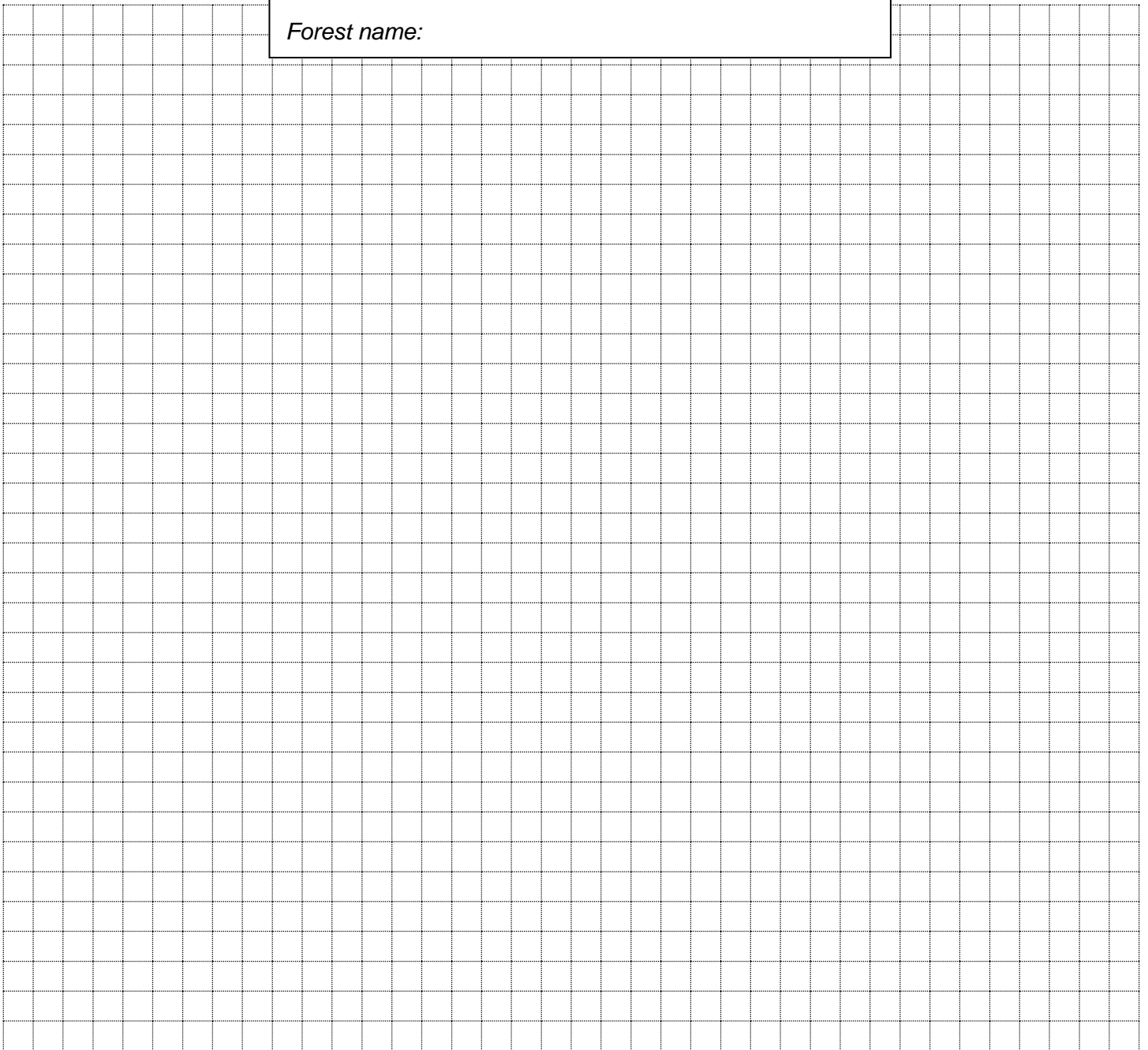
Brief history of the property

3. Map of division into compartments

3 a. Plan

Note: A topographic map (ideally 1/10,000 and minimum 1/25,000), a cadastral map or your own map can be used to create the parcel plan. Indicate the north, the scale, and provide a legend if symbols are used.

Forest name:



4. Management principles

Note: These include the general cutting and regeneration principles of the property as well as all general and exceptional work. These are the main principles for which your forest management is carried out, now and in the future. These principles can, of course, evolve over time.

Average number of m³ cut annually:m³

Cutting principles

Regeneration principles *(parcel number optional)*

Other general work planned