

December 2012

Sustainable forest management - Requirements



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Document name: Sustainable forest management - requirements

Document No: PEFC PL ST 1003:2012

Approved by: PEFC Polska **Date:** 2012-12-19

Approved by: PEFC Council **Date:**

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1. Introduction

These standards have been developed by the PEFC Polska Council in an open, transparent, consultative and consensus-based process and including a broad range of stakeholders.

The standards form the basis of assessing the state of forest management for all forms of ownership for the certification process, which is conducted by an independent body under the PEFC scheme. They include defined certification criteria for both individual as well as regional forest areas. In particular, they serve to identify the object and scope of the audit and determine the status of compliance and forest management practices with the requirements of the certification scheme.

2. Main normative references

The criteria contained herein are in accordance with the following laws in force in Poland:

1. Act of 28 September 1991 on forests (Journal of Laws 1991, no. 101, item 444).
2. Act of 16 April 2004 on the protection of nature (Journal of Laws 2004, no. 92, item 880).
3. Act of 13 October 1995 - Law on hunting (Journal of Laws 1995, no. 147, item 713).
4. Act of 3 February 1995 on the protection of agricultural and forest lands (Journal of Laws 1995, no. 16, item 78).
5. Act of 6 July 2001 on the maintenance of the national character of the country's strategic natural resources (Journal of Laws 2001, no. 97, item 1051).
6. Act of 20 July 1991 on the Environmental Protection Inspectorate (Journal of Laws 1991, no. 77, item 335).
7. Act of 27 March 2003 on spatial planning and land use (Journal of Laws 2003, no. 80, item 717).
8. Act of 27 April 2001 - Law on environmental protection (Journal of Laws 2001, no. 62, item 627).
9. Act of 7 June 2001 on forest reproductive material (Journal of Laws 2001, no. 73, item 761).
10. Act of 14 February 2003 on amendments to the law on allocating agricultural land for afforestation and the Law on environmental protection (Journal of Laws 2003, no. 46, item 392).
11. Act of 26 June 1974 r. - Labour code (Journal of Laws 1974, no. 24, item 141).
12. International Labour Organization (ILO) No. 29 Forced Labour Convention, adopted in Geneva on 28 June 1930 (Journal of Laws 1959, no. 20, item 122).
13. ILO No. 87, Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, adopted in San Francisco on 9 July 1948 (Journal of Laws 1958, no. 29, item 125).
14. ILO No. 98, Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention adopted in Geneva on 1 July 1949 (Journal of Laws 1958, no. 29, item 126).
15. ILO No. 100, Equal Remuneration Convention, adopted in Geneva on 29 June 1951 (Journal of Laws 1955, no. 38, item 238).

16. ILO No. 105, Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, adopted in Geneva on 25 June 1957 (Journal of Laws 1959, no. 39, item 240).
17. ILO No. 111, Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, adopted in Geneva on 25 June 1958 (Journal of Laws 1961, no. 42, item 218).
18. ILO No. 138, Minimum Age Convention, adopted in Geneva on 26 June 1973 (Journal of Laws 1978, no. 12, item 53).
19. Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, prepared in Bonn on 23 June 1979 (Journal of Laws 2003, no. 2, item 17).
20. The Convention on Wetlands of international importance, especially as waterfowl habitat, prepared in Ramsar on 2 February 1971 (Journal of Laws 1978, no. 7, item 24).
21. Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of animals and plants threatened with extinction, prepared in Washington, D.C. on 3 March 1973 (CITES) (Journal of Laws 1991, no. 27, item 112).
22. Convention to conserve wild flora and fauna and their natural habitats, prepared in w Bern on 19 September 1979 (Journal of Laws 1996, no. 58, item 263).
23. Convention on Biological Diversity, prepared in Rio de Janeiro on 5 June 1992 (Journal of Laws 2002, no. 184, item 1532).
24. The European Landscape Convention, prepared in Florence on 20 October 2000 (Journal of Laws 2006, no. 14, item 98).
25. Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, prepared in Kyoto on 11 December 1997 (Journal of Laws 2005, no. 203, item 1684).
26. The Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters, prepared in Aarhus on 25 June 1998 (Journal of Laws z 2003, no. 78, item 706).
27. Act of 3 October 2008 on the provision of information about the environment and its protection, public participation in environmental protection and environmental impact assessments (Journal of Laws 2008, no. 199, item 1227).
28. Act of 13 April 2007 on the prevention of environmental damage and its repair (Journal of Laws 2007, no. 75, item 493).
29. Act of 18 July 2001 - the Law on water (Journal of Laws 2001, no. 115, item 1229).

The list includes only references (announcements) to the legislative acts from the Internet System of Legal Acts of the Chancellery of the Polish Sejm [Parliament]. References to later amendments can be found in the same system.

3. Scope, terms and definitions

Scope:

These requirements replace the document entitled "Polish Criteria and Indicators of Ongoing and Sustainable Forest Management for the purpose of Forest Certification" (PEFC Polska Council, Warsaw, 18.02.2005).

These requirements (criteria) for sustainable forest management apply to all forms of forest ownership, both at individual as well as regional levels of forest areas.

This document does not specify the minimum level or restrictions when determining compliance with the criteria of sustainable forest management. Determination of compliance is the responsibility of the certification body.

Definitions:

Forest

Land spanning at least 0.10 hectares with forest vegetation (cultivated forest) – trees, shrubs and forest undergrowth – or temporarily devoid of such growth (excluding auxiliary land related to forest management like roads etc.).

Note: The basis for this definition is the definition set forth in article 3 of the Act on Forests of 28 September 1991.

Forest plantation

A forest plantation is established by planting or seeding, mainly for the intensive production of wood.

Forest conversion

The direct human-induced conversion of forests to other types of land use.

Fundamental conventions of the International Labour Organization (ILO)

Eight conventions of the International Labour Organization (ILO 29, 87, 98, 100, 105, 111, 138 and 182) identified by the ILO's Governing Body as "fundamental" in terms of principles and rights at work: freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining; the elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labour; the effective abolition of child labour; and the elimination of discrimination in employment and occupation.

Genetically modified trees

Trees in which the genetic material has been altered in a way that does not occur naturally by mating and/or natural recombination, taking into account applicable legislation providing a specific definition of genetically modified organisms.

Note 1: The following techniques are considered as genetic modification resulting in genetically modified trees (EU Directive 2001/18/EC):

(1) recombinant nucleic acid techniques involving the formation of new combinations of genetic material by the insertion of nucleic acid molecules produced by whatever means outside an organism, into any virus, bacterial plasmid or other vector system and their

incorporation into a host organism in which they do not naturally occur, but in which they are capable of continued propagation;

(2) techniques involving the direct introduction into an organism of heritable material prepared outside the organism including micro-injection, macro-injection, and micro-encapsulation;

(3) cell fusion (including protoplast fusion) or hybridisation techniques where live cells with new combinations of heritable genetic material are formed through the fusion of two or more cells by means of methods that do not occur naturally.

Note 2: The following techniques are not considered as genetic modification resulting in genetically modified trees (EU Directive 2001/18/EC):

(1) in vitro fertilisation;

(2) natural processes such as: conjugation, transduction, transformation;

(3) polyploidy induction.

Forest resources

All of a forest's components that are able to be described quantitatively and which include biocenological elements, especially tree stands, undergrowth, game animals and its biotic components – soil and water.

Note: This definition is from a document entitled "National forest policies" (approved by the Council of Ministers on 22 April 1997, Ministry of Environmental Protection, Natural Resources and Forestry. Warsaw 1997).

4. Criteria for sustainable forest management

4.1. Criterion 1: Maintenance and appropriate enhancement of forest resources and their contribution to the global carbon cycle

4.1.1. Forest management planning shall aim to maintain or increase forest resources and enhance their quality in relation to the dominant function of forests.

A. Change in forest area (excluding land under forest management) in the past five years [ha] (an explanation shall be presented by the certified body if the total area decreased).

B. Change in forest area (excluding land under forest management) by age class in the past five years [ha].

4.1.2. Forest management shall comprise a cycle of inventory and planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and shall include an appropriate assessment of the social, environmental and economic effects of forest management operations. This mechanism shall form the basis for a cycle of continuous improvement to minimise or avoid negative effects.

Forest resources shall be inventoried and mapped, according to local and national conditions and in correspondence with the topics described in this document.

A. Proportion of forest area with a current forest management plan (or its equivalent) and its changes in the last 5 years (%).

4.1.3. Management plans (or their equivalents) shall be elaborated and periodically updated according to the requirements of national legislation.

4.1.4. Management plans (or their equivalents) shall include at least: a description of the state of the forest at the time of planning, long- and medium-term objectives, and the average allowable cut during the time of the plan's duration.

4.1.5. The forest management plans (or their equivalents) are publicly available.

A. Does the certified body make its forest management plan or its equivalent publicly available? Yes/No (the certified body provides proof of this).

4.1.6. Monitoring of forest resources and evaluation of their management shall be periodically performed and results taken into account during the planning process.

4.1.7. Responsibilities for sustainable forest management shall be clearly defined and assigned.

4.1.8. Forest management practices shall safeguard the quality and quantity of forest resources in the medium- and long-term by appropriately balancing harvesting and growth rates, and by preferring techniques that minimise direct or indirect damage to forest resources.

Appropriate forest management measures shall be taken to maintain or reach a level of the growing stock that is economically, ecologically and socially desirable.

A. The proportion of the total planned harvest (timber) in relation to the expected increase in volume from the current forest management plan or the proportion of planned harvest (timber) in relation to inventoried volume (the equivalent of the forest management plan) (%).

B. Did the harvested wood (volume) exceed the expected increase in volume or planned proportion of harvested wood (timber) in relation to the inventoried volume by more than 20% during the term of the current forest management plan (or its equivalent); if so, is it justified?

C. Changes in forest area (excluding land under forest management) that has not been renewed for five years in the last 5 years (ha) (the certified body shall present an explanation if the area has increased).

4.1.9. Conversion of forests to other types of land use shall not occur unless in justified circumstances, where the conversion:

- a) is in compliance with publicly consulted national and regional policies and Polish legislation on land use and forest management;
- b) does not have significant negative effects on threatened (including vulnerable, rare or endangered) forest ecosystems, culturally and socially significant areas, important habitats of threatened species or other protected areas; and
- c) contributes to long-term conservation, economic, and social benefits.

A. Change in the area of forest land converted to other land use categories in the past five years (ha). Were the required legal procedures used in the process of changing the form of land use?

4.1.10. Converting land into forest land shall take into consideration increasing its ecological, social or economic value.

A. Changes in forested area in the past five years (ha).

B. Was the afforestation conducted in accordance with the local land use plan or zoning decision?

4.2. Criterion 2: Maintenance of forest ecosystem health and vitality

4.2.1. Forest management planning shall aim to shape the structure of a forest to ensure the continued sustainability of its biological wealth, regenerative capacity, vitality, health and ability to perform all the important safety, economic and social functions without harm to other ecosystems and to restore degraded forest ecosystems to the extent possible with available silviculture techniques.

A. Was the preparation of the forest management plan (or its equivalent) guided by the provisions of the Act on Forests? Yes/No (the certified body shall present the relevant clauses).

B. Does the certified body adhere to the principles of using the appropriate species composition for the type of habitat/microhabitat? Yes/No (the certified body shall present evidence of this).

4.2.2. Health and vitality of forests shall be periodically monitored, especially key biotic, abiotic and anthropogenic factors that potentially affect the health and vitality of forest ecosystems.

- A. Does the certified body monitor the threats mentioned above? Yes/No (the certified body shall present evidence of this).
- B. The area of tree stands damaged by game animals in each of the past five years (ha).
- C. The area of tree stands damaged by insects in each of the past five years (ha).
- D. The area of tree stands damaged by fungi in each of the past five years (ha).
- E. The area of tree stands damaged by fire in each of the past five years (ha).
- F. The area of tree stands damaged by wind and other abiotic factors in each of the past five years (ha).

4.2.3. Maintaining the health and vitality of forest ecosystems shall take into consideration the influence of biotic and abiotic factors, especially the gradation of insects and other naturally occurring disturbances, to the extent that these do not impair the sustainability of forest resources.

A. To the extent possible, have threshold values been established, above which the certified body will undertake actions to stabilize the forest's sustainability?

4.2.4. Forest management plans shall specify ways and means to minimise the risk of degradation and damage to forest ecosystems. Forest management planning shall make use of those tools set up to support these activities.

- A. Does the periodic business plan of the certified body (or its equivalent) include the methods and means used to minimise damage to forest ecosystems? Yes/No (the certified entity shall submit appropriate records).
- B. The area of tree stands protected against game animals in the past five years (ha).
- C. The area of tree stands where activities were undertaken to counteract harmful insects in the past five years (ha).
- D. The area of tree stands where activities were undertaken to counteract pathogenic fungi in the past five years (ha).
- E. Average area of single fires in each of the past five years (ha).

4.2.5. Forest management practices shall make the maximum use of natural generative processes of forests and use preventive biological measures to the extent possible and economically feasible. One shall strive to achieve and maintain adequate genetic, species and structural diversity to enhance the stability, vitality and resistance capacity of the forests to adverse environmental factors and to strengthen natural regulative mechanisms.

A. Does the certified body take advantage of the natural generative processes of forests? Yes/No (the certified body shall present evidence of this).

B. Does the certified body use preventive, biological methods, such as, e.g. refuge for animals? (the certified body shall present a list).

4.2.6. Lighting of fires shall be avoided in forests. This is only permitted if it is necessary for the achievement of the management goals of the forest management unit.

4.2.7. Appropriate forest management practices such as reforestation and afforestation with tree species suited to site conditions and the use of tending, harvesting and transport techniques that minimise tree and/or soil damage shall be applied. The spillage of oil during forest management operations or the indiscriminate disposal of waste on forest land shall be strictly avoided. Non-organic waste and litter shall be collected and stored in designated areas and removed in an environmentally-responsible manner.

A. The same indicator as in 4.2.1. B.

B. Does the certified body stipulate compliance with and monitor the required practices in contracts with companies carrying out the activities mentioned above? Yes/No (the certified body shall present the relevant clauses in such contracts).

C. Does the certified body have documents confirming the removal of garbage from forests?

4.2.8. The use of pesticides in forests shall be limited to situations where they are needed to maintain a forest's sustainability; appropriate alternative measures shall be used to protect the forest.

A. Does the certified body have procedures in place to assess the justification of using pesticides? Yes/No (the certified body presents such procedures).

B. Changes in tree stand area where pesticides were used in the past five years (ha).

C. Changes in the use of specific types of pesticides in the past five years (kg/ha).

D. Does the certified body use alternative measures to protect the forest? If so, what are they?

4.2.9. The use of pesticides containing active substances classified by the World Health Organization as Type 1A and 1B pesticides is allowed only in cases when the forest's sustainability is threatened.

A. Does the certified body use of pesticides containing active substances classified by the World Health Organization as Type 1A and 1B pesticides? Yes/No (the certified body justifies their use).

4.2.10. Pesticides, such as chlorinated hydrocarbons whose derivatives remain biologically active and accumulate in the food chain beyond their intended use, and any pesticides banned by international agreement, shall be prohibited.

Note: “pesticides banned by international agreements” are defined in the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants 2001, as amended.

A. Does the certified body use the types of pesticides mentioned above? Yes/No.

4.2.11. During the use of pesticides, the instructions given by the pesticide producer shall be followed (from the product’s label) and be applied with the proper equipment and training.

A. Does the certified body provide training and medical tests for employees using pesticides? Yes/No (the certified shall present evidence of this).

B. Does the certified body ensure that its employees are provided with the proper equipment to apply pesticides? Yes/No (the certified shall present evidence of this).

C. Does the certified body stipulate compliance with the rules mentioned above in contracts with firms carrying out activities that use pesticides? Yes/No (the certified body shall present the relevant clauses in the contracts).

4.2.12. Fertilisers shall be used in a controlled manner and with due consideration for the environment.

A. Does the certified body have procedures in place to assess the justification of using fertilizers and determining their effect on the environment? Yes/No (the certified body presents such procedures).

B. Change in forest area (excluding auxiliary land related to forest management) where fertilizers and lime were used in the past five years (ha).

C. List of fertilizers used in the past five years (kg).

4.3. Criterion 3: Maintenance and strengthening of the productive functions of forests (wood and non-wood)

4.3.1. Forest management planning shall aim to maintain the capability of being able to benefit from all the functions of a forest on a sustainable basis.

A. The same indicator as in 4.2.1. A.

4.3.2. Forest management planning shall aim to achieve optimal economic performance taking into account available market studies and possibilities for new markets in connection with all relevant goods and services of forests.

A. Are the needs and possibilities for new markets in connection with all relevant goods and services of forests analysed in preparing the objectives for developing a certified body's periodic forest management plan? Yes/No (the certified body presents the appropriate sections of the plan).

4.3.3. Forest management plans (or their equivalents) shall take into account the different uses or functions of the managed forest area.

A. Do the forest management plans (or their equivalents) have various functions/uses distinguished for specific forest areas? Yes/No (the certified body presents the appropriate sections of the plan).

B. Do the objectives of the forest management plan (or its equivalent) adapt the way a forest is managed to the function it fulfils? Yes/No (the certified body presents the appropriate sections of the plan).

4.3.4. Forest management practices shall maintain and improve the forest resources and encourage a diversified output of goods and services over the long term.

A. The proportion of the value of non-wood products and services sold in relation to total sales income of the certified body for the past five years (PLN).

B. Does the certified body have contracts for the extraction of non-wood forest products for commercial purposes? Yes/No (the certified body presents copies of such contracts).

4.3.5. Activities related to forest management shall be carried out in a time and manner that does not limit the productive capacity of the forest. Damage to retained stands and trees, as well as degradation to the forest soil shall especially be avoided.

A. Does the certified body require that firms contracted for forestry activities also abide by these stipulations? Yes/No (the certified body presents the clauses of appropriate contracts).

B. Does the certified body have procedures implemented to evaluate the effect of planned work in the forest on the ecosystem? Yes/No (the certified body presents such procedures).

C. Does the certified body design, mark and use strip roads during logging?

4.3.6. Harvesting levels of both wood and non-wood forest products shall ensure sustainability in the long term, and optimum use shall be made of the harvested forest products.

A. Has the certified body adopted procedures to establish the harvesting levels of wood products?

B. Are the levels set out in the forest management plan (or its equivalent) for harvested wood exceeded by the certified body? Yes/No (the certified body shall present evidence of this).

C. Is the harvested wood classified in such a manner that allows it to be sold at the proper price? Yes/No (the certified body shall present evidence of this).

4.3.7. Where it is the responsibility of the forest owner/manager and included in forest management, the exploitation of non-wood forest products, including hunting and fishing, shall be monitored and controlled.

A. Does the certified body participate in the process of developing the hunting plan for the forest management area? (If so, please show how this is done.)

4.3.8. Adequate infrastructure such as roads, transport tracks or bridges shall be planned, established and maintained to ensure efficient delivery of goods and services while minimising negative effects on the environment.

A. Does the certified body have an analysis of the transportation infrastructure?

B. Is the transportation infrastructure in the certified body's forest area maintained as planned?

C. Does the certified body have procedures implemented to evaluate the effect of planned road infrastructure investments on the ecosystem? Yes/No (the certified body presents such procedures).

D. Changes in the indicator of forest road density for the past five years (km/ha).

E. The same indicator as in 4.3.5.C.

F. Does the certified body require such conduct in contracts with firms building and maintaining the infrastructure listed above? Yes/No (the certified body shall present the relevant clauses in the appropriate contracts).

4.4. Criterion 4: Maintenance, conservation and appropriate enhancement of biological diversity in forest ecosystems

4.4.1. Forest management planning shall aim to maintain, conserve and enhance biodiversity on genetic, species, ecosystem and landscape levels.

A. Does the certified body implement the objectives of the programme to conserve the genetic resources of forests in Poland? Yes/No (the certified body shall present a list of such objects and activities).

B. The same indicator as in 4.2.1.B.

C. Has the certified body introduced the rarer biocenotic species, native to the region? Yes/No (the certified body shall present evidence of this).

D. Does the certified body comply with the requirements of the regionalisation of natural and forest resources? Yes/No (the certified body shall present evidence of this).

E. Does the certified body take into account the specific needs of managing protection forests? Yes/No (the certified body shall present evidence of this).

F. Does forest management planning take into account and inventory naturally occurring water retention basins located in the forests (marshes, bogs, water ecosystems)?

G. Are there small water retention basins in the forest of the certified body? Yes/No (the certified body shall present evidence of this).

H. List of forest basic material

I. Does the certified body establish and maintain the structural elements of the forest that form the landscape (old groves, ecotones, over-mature trees, etc.)?

J. Do the forest management activities carried out have a negative effect on the status of protected and endangered species? Yes/No.

4.4.2. Inventorying forest resources shall take into account ecologically important forest areas (including areas set aside for nature conservation) containing significant concentrations of:

- a. protected, rare, sensitive or representative forest ecosystems (especially wetland habitats) and ecotone zones;
- b. areas containing endemic species and habitats of endangered species, as defined in recognised reference lists;
- c. endangered or protected genetic *in situ* resources.

Planning forest management activities shall take into account the conservation of the valuable natural resources in the areas mentioned above.

A. Does the certified body have an inventory of the resources mentioned above, and if so, is this inventory updated? Yes/No.

B. Are there instructions developed to preserve the above mentioned resources (plans/conservation activities, management guidelines)? Yes/No (if not, why – lack of such a need, beyond the competence of the certified body, etc.).

C. Change in the area of forest included in the Natura 2000 network in the past five years (ha).

D. Change in the area of forest nature reserves (including areas under strict protection) in the past five years (ha).

E. Change in the area of forest included in protected landscape areas in the past five years (ha).

F. Change in the area of forest landscape parks in the past five years (ha).

G. Change in the area of forest nature-landscape areas in the past five years (ha).

H. Change in the area of forest ecological use sites in the past five years (ha).

I. Natural monuments (registry number and changes that have taken place with respect to natural monuments in the past five years).

J. Change in the area of forest sites with documented non-living natural resources in the past five years (ha).

4.4.3. Protected and endangered plant, animal and fungus species shall not be exploited in a manner that is against the law.

A. Does the eventual exploitation of protected and endangered species comply with the law? Yes/No (the certified body shall present its permits).

4.4.4. Forest management shall ensure the regeneration of forest resources preferably through natural processes where this is possible and justified.

A. Changes in the proportion of naturally regenerating areas in relation to the general structure of regenerative processes in the past five years (%).

B. Does the certified body undertake activities to promote natural regeneration? (e.g. training, specific management activities).

4.4.5. For reforestation and afforestation, native species and local ecotypes that are well-adapted to habitat conditions shall be chosen. The only foreign species that can be introduced into the environment are those which are not listed in Polish law as endangering native species and habitats.

Note: The Convention on Biological Diversity Guiding Principles for the Prevention, Introduction, and Mitigation of Impacts of Alien Species that Threaten Ecosystems, Habitats or Species are recognised as the required guidance for avoidance of invasive species.

A. The proportion of regenerative material of native and local origin in relation to the total forest regenerative material used for reforestation and afforestation each year in the past five years (%).

B. Does the certified body introduce foreign species into the environment? Yes/No (the certified body presents a list of such species and the change in the area/proportion they represent in the past five years).

C. Is the introduction of the foreign species mentioned above in compliance with the law? Yes/No.

4.4.6. Afforestation activities that contribute to the improvement and restoration of ecological corridors shall be promoted.

A. Does the reforestation work conducted by the certified body take into account the requirements of programmes and/or agreements related to developing a network of ecological corridors in the country/region? Yes/No (the certified body presents these programmes/agreements and how they are implemented, for example, based on maps).

4.4.7. Genetically-modified trees shall not be introduced into the environment.

A. Does the certified body introduce genetically modified trees into the environment? Yes/No (the certified body shall present the characteristics of the regenerative material used in such situations).

4.4.8. Forest management practices shall, where justified, promote the structural diversity of forests, such as uneven-aged stands and mixed stands. Where appropriate, the practices shall also aim to maintain and restore landscape diversity.

A. Change in the proportion of area of mixed stands ($\leq 80\%$ of one species) in the total area of forests in the past five years (%).

B. Change in the proportion of single-storied class III stands and older age classes not counting undergrowth and/or saplings in the forest area in the past five years (%).

C. The same indicator as in 4.4.1. I.

4.4.9. When justified and in compliance with current law, traditional management practices that have created valuable ecosystems shall be supported on appropriate sites.

4.4.10. Tending and harvesting operations shall be conducted in a way that does not cause lasting damage to ecosystems.

A. Does the certified body require that contracted firms carrying out the activities mentioned above comply with such practices? Yes/No (the certified body shall present the appropriate contract clauses).

B. Does the certified body have oversight procedures implemented to control the execution of the tasks conducted by contracted firms? Yes/No (the certified body shall present such procedures).

4.4.11. Infrastructure shall be planned and constructed in a way that maximally limits damage to ecosystems, especially to rare, sensitive or representative ecosystems and genetic reserves, and that takes migration patterns into consideration.

A. Does the certified body have planned or implemented infrastructure investments within the boundaries of the ecosystems mentioned above and their components? Yes/No (the certified body shall provide evidence to verify the response to this question, e.g. maps).

B. If such investments are planned or being implemented, does the certified body have procedures in place to evaluate their effect on the above mentioned ecosystems and their components? Yes/No (the certified body shall present such procedures).

C. Does the certified body require that contracted firms carrying out activities comply with such practices? Yes/No (the certified body shall present the appropriate contract clauses).

4.4.12. With due regard to management objectives and legal requirements, measures shall be taken to limit excessive pressure of game animal populations endangering forest regeneration and growth as well as on biodiversity.

A. The same indicator as in 4.2.4.B.

B. The same indicator as in 4.2.2.B.

C. Does the certified body conduct activities to limit damage caused by game animals?

4.4.13. Standing and lying dead wood, old groves and special rare, native tree and shrub species shall be left to safeguard biological diversity, taking into account the potential effect on the health of tree stands and human safety in areas where people especially frequent.

A. Do the elements mentioned above exist in the tree stands of the certified body? Yes/No

4.5. Criterion 5: Maintenance and appropriate enhancement of protective functions in forest management (notably soil and water)

4.5.1. Forest management planning shall aim to maintain and enhance the protective functions of forests, protect against soil erosion, protect water resources and protect against the adverse effects of water.

A. Proportion of protective forest in relations to total forest area (%).

4.5.2. Protection forests shall be inventoried and forest management plans (or their equivalents) shall take full account of these areas.

A. Proportion of specific categories of protection forests in relation to total forest area (%)

B. Does the certified body comply with the principles of managing protection forests? Yes/No (the certified body shall present evidence of this).

4.5.3. Special care shall be given to silvicultural operations on soils and in areas prone to erosion. Proper measures shall be taken to prepare the soil.

A. Have areas threatened by erosion been identified?

B. Are the principles of conducting silvicultural operations in such areas required and used by the certified body?

4.5.4. Special care shall be given to forest management practices in forest areas with water protection functions to avoid adverse effects on the quantity and quality of water resources. Inappropriate use of chemicals or other harmful substances or inappropriate silvicultural practices influencing water quality in a harmful way shall be avoided.

A. Are the principles of conducting silvicultural operations in protected water resource areas required and used by the certified body?

B. Does the certified body comply with the principles of using chemicals in protected water resource areas?

4.5.5. Construction of roads, bridges and other infrastructure shall be carried out in a manner that minimises bare soil exposure, avoids the excessive introduction of soil into watercourses and water basins while preserving their natural level and function. Proper road drainage facilities shall be installed and properly maintained.

A. Does the certified body have technical documentation for infrastructure construction and does it include the legally required environmental impact assessment?

B. Does the certified body monitor the state of its infrastructure and conduct necessary maintenance work?

4.6. Criterion 6: Maintenance of other socio-economic functions and conditions

4.6.1. Forest management planning shall aim to respect the multiple functions of forests, give due regard to the role of forestry in rural development, and especially consider the situation in the labour market.

A. Does the process of developing a forest management plan (or its equivalent) provide the opportunity for society to present its comments and needs in terms of the functions and uses served by the forest? Yes/No (the certified body shall present evidence of this).

B. Does the certified body cooperate with authorised institutions to support the local labour market? Yes/No (the certified body shall present evidence of this).

C. Does the forest management plan (or its equivalent) take into account the local spatial management plan and other local ordinances?

D. Does the certified body participate in the process of spatial planning with the appropriate local government authorities?

4.6.2. Forest management shall promote the long-term health and well-being of local communities.

- A. Does the certified body comply with the principles of forest sustainability?
- B. Change in the number of employees working for the certified body in the past five years.
- C. Change in the number of businesses providing services to the certified body in the past five years.
- D. Does the certified body meet its local financial obligations in a timely manner?
- E. Does the certified body set aside wood to be sold in the local community? (change in the proportion of retail wood sales in relation to total wood sales in the past five years (%)).

4.6.3. Property rights and land tenure arrangements shall be clearly defined, documented and established for the relevant forest area. Likewise, customary and traditional use of the given forest area shall be respected in accordance with current law.

- A. Does the certified body have clear legal rights to the land it owns or manages?
- B. Change in the proportion of area managed by the certified body to which it has clear legal rights in relation to the total area in the past five years (%).

4.6.4. Adequate public access to forests shall be provided in compliance with respect for ownership rights and restrictions to access as the result of current law, taking into account the effects on forest resources and ecosystems, as well as compatibility with other functions of the forest.

- A. Has the certified body introduced restrictions to public access to forests in the past five years? Yes/No (the certified body shall provide a list of such occurrences with justifications).

4.6.5. Sites with historical, cultural or spiritual significance shall be protected and are managed in a way that takes due regard of the significance of the site.

- A. List of the above mentioned sites in the area of the certified body.

4.6.6. Forest management operations shall take into account all socio-economic functions, especially the recreational function and the aesthetic values of forests by maintaining, for example, varied forest structures. This shall be done, however, in a way and to an extent that does not lead to serious negative effects on forest resources.

- A. Change in the list of tourism, recreational and educational infrastructure in the area of the certified body over the past five years.

B. Does the certified body develop a diversified forest structure (vertical, horizontal, species, age, etc.)? Yes/No (the certified body shall present evidence of this).

C. The same indicator as in 4.4.1.F.

D. The same indicator as in 4.4.1.I.

4.6.7. Forest owners and managers, forestry service employees and forestry contractors shall be provided with appropriate information and encouraged to keep up-to-date through continuous training on sustainable forest management as a precondition for all proper management planning and practices described in this document.

A. Does the certified body ensure that permanent employees and contracted workers have the appropriate qualifications for the given position they are hired for? Yes/No (the certified body shall present evidence of this – approved procedures for employee recruitment and contracting forestry work).

B. Does the certified body organise periodic training on sustainable forest management and related topics to increase the knowledge and competencies of its employees at every professional level? Yes/No (the certified body shall present evidence of this).

4.6.8. Forest management practices shall make the best use of local forest-related experiences and knowledge of forest owners, local government authorities, local community residents and NGOs.

A. Does the process of developing the forest management plan (or its equivalent) enable forest owners, local government authorities, local community residents and NGOs to make comments and proposals on forest management? Yes/No (the certified body shall present evidence of this).

4.6.9. Forest management activities of the certified body shall provide education, as well as effective communication and consultation with local people and other stakeholders on sustainable forest management. Appropriate mechanisms shall be provided for responding to complaints and resolving disputes relating to forest management between forest managers and local people.

A. Does the certified body conduct educational activities for society about the forest? (change in the number of employees providing educational activities and the number of persons participating in educational activities in the past five years).

B. Does the certified body make it possible for persons to place complaints or make comments related to its forest management activities? Yes/No (the certified body shall present evidence of this).

C. Does the certified body have procedures in place for responding to the complaints or comments mentioned above? Yes/No (the certified body shall present such procedures).

4.6.10. Forestry work shall be planned, organised and performed in a manner that enables health and accident risks to be identified and all reasonable measures to be applied to protect workers from work-related risks. Workers shall be informed about the risks involved with their work and about preventive measures.

A. Does the certified body organise training on health and safety at work? Yes/No (the certified body shall present evidence of this).

B. Does the certified body implement procedures to protect the safety of full-time and seasonal or part-time employees? Yes/No (the certified body shall present such procedures).

4.6.11. Working conditions shall be safe, and training in health and safety at work shall be provided to all those assigned to a task in forest operations.

A. Have persons assigned to a task in forest operations attended training in health and safety at work? Yes/No (the certified body shall present information on this issue).

B. Do persons carrying out tasks in forest operations comply with health and safety at work principles?

C. Does the certified body conduct an analysis of the work-related risks of each job?

D. Change in the number of work-related accidents during forest operations in the past five years and the cause of the accidents (the certified body shall present a list).

E. Does the certified body conduct activities to prevent occupational diseases and monitor their incidence? (change in the number of persons becoming ill with an occupational disease in the past five years).

4.6.12. Forest management shall comply with fundamental International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions.

A. Have there been cases of the certified body violating labour law?

B. Has the certified body discriminated in hiring and professional advancement practices?

4.6.13. Forest management shall also be based on the results of scientific research. The certified body shall contribute to the development of science and data collection related to sustainable forest management.

A. Does the certified body work with academic centres in research activities? Yes/No (the certified body shall present evidence of this).

4.7. Criterion 7: Compliance with legal requirements

4.7.1. Forest management shall comply with legislation, especially laws related to: forest management practices; nature and environmental protection; property ownership, tenure and land-use rights for indigenous people; health, health and safety at work issues; and the payment of charges and taxes.

A. Have there been cases of the certified body violating national or international laws? Yes/No

B. Does the certified body comply with financial obligations required by law in a timely manner? Yes/No (the certified body shall present evidence of this).

C. Does the certified body abide by its internal regulations? Yes/No (the certified body shall present evidence of this).

4.7.2. The certified body shall guarantee the proper protection of the forest from such activities as the theft of wood, poaching, illegal logging, illegal land use, arson, and other illegal activities.

A. Does the certified body have a unit devoted to preventing, detecting and combating offenses and crimes that destroy the forest? Yes/No.

B. Number of confirmed cases of forest destruction in the past five years?

Appendix 1: Guidelines for the interpretation of the criteria in the case of plantation of trees

Requirement	Interpretation for forest plantations
<p>4.1.1. Forest management planning shall aim to maintain or increase forest resources and enhance their quality in relation to the dominant function of forests.</p> <p>4.2.1. Forest management planning shall aim to shape the structure of a forest to ensure the continued sustainability of its biological wealth, regenerative capacity, vitality, health and ability to perform all the important safety, economic and social functions without harm to other ecosystems and to restore degraded forest ecosystems to the extent possible with available silviculture techniques.</p> <p>4.2.5. Forest management practices shall make the maximum use of natural generative processes of forests and use preventive biological measures to the extent possible and economically feasible. One shall strive to achieve and maintain adequate genetic, species and structural diversity to enhance the stability, vitality and resistance capacity of the forests to adverse environmental factors and to strengthen natural regulative mechanisms.</p> <p>4.3.3. Forest management plans (or their equivalents) shall take into account the different uses or functions of the managed forest area.</p> <p>4.4.1. Forest management planning shall aim to maintain, conserve and enhance biodiversity on genetic, species, ecosystem and landscape levels.</p> <p>4.6.6. Forest management operations shall take into account all socio-economic functions, especially the recreational function and the aesthetic values of forests by maintaining, for example, varied forest structures. This shall be done, however, in a way and to an extent that does not lead to serious negative effects on forest resources.</p>	<p>The requirements 4.1.1, 4.2.1, 4.2.5, 4.3.3, 4.4.1 and 4.6.6 cannot be applied to individual forest stands in the case of plantation forestry and shall be considered at a higher (regional) scope within the entire forest management unit, where stands of fast growing trees are complemented by buffer zones and set-aside areas dedicated to environmental, ecological, cultural and social functions.</p> <p>In order to enhance landscape and biodiversity values, water and soil protection, the size and distribution of buffer zones and conservation set-aside areas shall be included in the preparatory stage of establishing the forest plantation. Decisions shall be based on social, environmental and ecological assessments, and the assessments shall be reviewed for subsequent production cycles.</p>
<p>4.1.9. Conversion of forests to other types of land use shall not occur unless in justified circumstances where the conversion:</p>	<p>The requirement for the “conversion of forests to other types of land use” means that forest plantations established by a forest</p>

	conversion after 31 December 2010 in other than “justified circumstances” do not meet the requirement and are not eligible for certification.
4.3.6. Harvesting levels of both wood and non-wood forest products shall ensure sustainability in the long term, and optimum use shall be made of the harvested forest products.	In the case of plantation forestry, nutrient off-take shall be considered with increased importance and shall be an important part of both the planning and management stages of the production cycle.
<p>4.4.2. Inventorying forest resources shall take into account ecologically important forest areas (including areas set aside for nature conservation) containing significant concentrations of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. protected, rare, sensitive or representative forest ecosystems (especially wetland habitats) and ecotone zones; b. areas containing endemic species and habitats of endangered species, as defined in recognised reference lists; c. endangered or protected genetic <i>in situ</i> resources. <p>Planning forest management activities shall take into account the conservation of the valuable natural resources in the areas mentioned above.</p>	The requirement presented in 4.4.2 shall primarily be addressed at the stage of establishing a forest plantation. The areas specified in the requirement shall form a part of the buffer zones and set-aside areas, which are dedicated to environmental, ecological, cultural and social functions.
<p>4.4.5. For reforestation and afforestation, native species and local ecotypes that are well-adapted to habitat conditions shall be chosen. The only foreign species that can be introduced into the environment are those which are not listed in Polish law as endangering native species and habitats.</p> <p>4.4.8. Forest management practices shall, where justified, promote the structural diversity of forests, such as uneven-aged stands and mixed stands. Where appropriate, the practices shall also aim to maintain and restore landscape diversity.</p> <p>4.4.9. When justified and in compliance with current law, traditional management practices that have created valuable ecosystems shall be supported on appropriate sites.</p> <p>4.4.13. Standing and lying dead wood, old groves and special rare, native tree and shrub species shall be left to safeguard biological diversity, taking into account the</p>	The requirements 4.4.5, 4.4.8, 4.4.9 and 4.4.13 do not usually apply to plantation tree stands and shall be understood to be primarily taking place in buffer zones and set-aside areas, which are dedicated to environmental, ecological, cultural and social functions.

potential effect on the health of tree stands and human safety in areas where people especially frequent.	
4.4.5. For reforestation and afforestation, native species and local ecotypes that are well-adapted to habitat conditions shall be chosen. The only foreign species that can be introduced into the environment are those which are not listed in Polish laws as endangering native species and habitats.	Evaluating the impact of “introduced foreign species” shall be understood as having especially significant importance for plantation tree stands and shall be an important part of both the planning and management stages of the production cycle.