

	CERTFOR CERTIFICATION SYSTEM		
	PROCEDURE FOR ADDRESSING COMPLAINTS		
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1. INTRODUCTION

The impact of activities related to the implementation and management of the Chilean Sustainable Forest Management Certification System (CERTFOR) is considerable, since these include the patrimony of the certified companies and their staff, as well as the nearby communities and stakeholders in general. In this context, and with the aim of protecting the rights of certified companies, neighbouring communities and stakeholders in general, this document defines the stages and actions to follow when a complaint is filed in relation to an aspect of the certification process and its application in time, or regarding the development and/or revision of CERTFOR standards.

2. OBJECTIVE

To establish communication mechanisms between the stakeholders and the different parties involved in the CERTFOR certification process and its application in time, and in the development and/or revision of CERTFOR standards, in order to provide guidelines regarding the reception, handling and resolution of complaints from stakeholders.

3. SCOPE

This procedure shall be applied by the certified companies, the certification bodies, the Instituto Nacional de Normalización (National Institute for Normalization) and CertforChile, each time a complaint is filed regarding any aspect related to CERTFOR's forest certification process.

This document also includes the requirements that CertforChile shall fulfil as the CERTFOR Standardization Body for the reception, handling and resolution of complaints regarding the development and/or revision of its standards.

This document was issued 6 January 2014 and is available for all interested parties. It will be updated by the National Secretariat of CertforChile when necessary.

4. NORMATIVE REFERENCES

The following reference documents are essential for the implementation of procedures described in this document. For all documents –with or without a date– the latest edition is applicable, including any amendment:

- DN-01-02: Procedure for the Development and Revision of CERTFOR Standards.
- PEFC ST 1001:2010: Standard Setting – Requirements.

5. PROCEDURES REGARDING COMPLAINTS RELATED TO CERTFOR'S CERTIFICATION PROCESS AND ITS APPLICATION IN TIME

A complaint is a formal expression of discontent made by any stakeholder, either a natural person or legal entity, when they feel directly affected by actions taken by certified companies.

It is the responsibility of the complaint's author to present written evidence that supports the complaint so that it can be checked as precise and correct.

CertforChile aims to ensure that each complaint receives proper attention by defining the sequential stages and actions to be applied in this document.

The procedure specified by CertforChile for attending complaints includes the following stages:

- a) The complaint shall be first presented to the **certified company** involved.
- b) The second instance of complaint is the relevant **certification body**.
- c) The third instance of complaint is the **Instituto Nacional de Normalización (INN)**.
- d) The final instance of complaint is **CertforChile**.

It is expected that any complaint formally accepted, that does not require field research, shall be resolved within a maximum period of 4 months, considering all the instances.

Regardless of how any complaint is settled, whoever filed it, the certified company involved, the relevant certification body, INN, and CertforChile will be required to pay their own expenses.

5.1. Complaint Filed to the Certified Company Involved

A complaint shall be filed, in the first instance, to the certified company, which shall proceed as follows:

- a) Handle the complaint according to its own procedures established for this purpose.
- b) Notify whoever filed the complaint that it has been received and is being handled in accordance with established procedures.
- c) Notify whoever filed the complaint about the settlement reached and the resulting actions.
- d) Inform whoever filed the complaint regarding the steps to be taken if this person is dissatisfied with the settlement reached. In other words, this party will have to report that the following instance of complaint is the relevant certification body, delivering information about the pertinent contact.

5.2. Complaint Filed to the Relevant Certification Body

A complaint can be handled by the relevant certification body only if it was previously filed to the certified company involved. Whoever presents the complaint shall prove that this requirement has been met. Once this requirement has been fulfilled, the certification body shall:

- a) Handle the complaint according to its own procedures established for this purpose.

- b) Notify whoever filed the complaint and the company involved that the complaint has been received and is being handled in accordance with established procedures.
- c) Notify whoever filed the complaint and the company involved about the settlement reached and the resulting actions.
- d) Inform whoever filed the complaint regarding the steps to be taken if this person is dissatisfied with the settlement reached. In other words, this party will have to report that the following instance of complaint is INN, delivering information about the pertinent contact.

5.3. Complaint Filed to INN

A complaint can be handled by INN only if it was previously filed to the relevant certification body. Whoever presents the complaint shall prove that this requirement has been met. Once this requirement has been fulfilled, INN shall:

- a) Handle the complaint according to its own procedures established for this purpose.
- b) Notify whoever filed the complaint, the certified company involved and the relevant certification body that the complaint has been received and is being handled in accordance with established procedures.
- c) Notify whoever filed the complaint, the certified company involved and the relevant certification body about the settlement reached and the resulting actions.
- d) Inform whoever filed the complaint regarding the steps to be taken if this person is dissatisfied with the settlement reached. In other words, INN will have to report that the final instance of complaint is CertforChile, delivering information about CertforChile's National Secretariat.

5.4. Complaint Filed to CertforChile

A complaint can be handled by CertforChile only if it was previously filed to INN. Whoever presents the complaint shall prove that this requirement has been met. Once this requirement has been fulfilled, CertforChile shall:

- a) Handle the complaint according to its own procedures established for this purpose.
- b) Notify whoever filed the complaint, the certified company involved, the relevant certification body and INN that the complaint has been received and is being handled in accordance with established procedures.
- c) Notify whoever filed the complaint, the certified company involved, the relevant certification body and INN about the settlement reached and the resulting actions.
- d) Keep records of all the complaints received regarding the process of certification and its application in time. Records shall be kept for a minimum of five years and will be made available to stakeholders requesting them.
- e) Settle the complaint received within a maximum period of four weeks.

6. PROCEDURES REGARDING COMPLAINTS RELATED TO THE DEVELOPMENT AND/OR REVISION OF CERTFOR STANDARDS

Complaints regarding substantive and procedural issues related to the process of development and/or revision of CERTFOR standards shall be resolved directly by CertforChile, which shall follow the stages described below:

6.1. Reception of Complaints

CertforChile shall receive all complaints from stakeholders related to its standardization processes. The contact point will be the National Secretariat of CertforChile, who may be contacted by means of the following options:

- a) Stakeholders who prefer to file a complaint verbally shall call the following telephone number +56 2 23341092, corresponding to the National Secretariat of CertforChile.
- b) Stakeholders who prefer to file a complaint via e-mail shall write to the following e-mail address: info@certforchile.org.

c) Stakeholders who prefer to file a complaint online shall access the website www.certfor.org, and go to a link identified as “Re-Homologación” (Re-Endorsement) which will feature an option called “Sugerencias/Reclamos” (Suggestions/Complaints). They can then use this option to enter their personal information and the respective complaint.

6.2. Confirmation of the Reception of Complaints

Once a complaint has been received, CertforChile shall confirm its reception to whoever filed the complaint within a period of one week.

6.3. Handling of Complaints

CertforChile shall collect and verify all information required in order to validate complaints, objectively and impartially assess the subject of the complaint, and then make a decision in this regard.

Complaints related to standardization procedures will be handled by a team of three members of CertforChile’s Assembly who have stated that they are willing to evaluate and make a decision regarding this type of complaints. The members of the team will be randomly selected at the beginning of the standardization process. In order to ensure impartiality, these members cannot belong to CertforChile’s Superior Council. If necessary, external persons suited for the job will be asked to support decisions regarding complaints.

The Technical Committee shall be responsible for evaluating complaints referred to standard contents and making a decision in this regard.

Complaint settlement time shall not exceed four weeks.

6.4. Communication of the Resolution

CertforChile shall formally notify to whoever filed the complaint as to the decision made and actions taken with regard to the complaint.

6.5. Records

CertforChile shall keep all records related to complaints received during the process of development and/or revision of CERTFOR standards. These records shall be kept for a minimum of five years and be made available for CERTFOR's re-endorsement process, as well as for stakeholders who request them.