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**Annex 4
ITA 1004**

*Description of PEFC Italy Certification
Scheme of Sustainable tree Plantation
Management*

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1. INTRODUCTION

This document describes the Italian PEFC Scheme (Programme for Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes) for the certification of Sustainable plantation Management (SPM).

Together with ITA 1003, the document serves as PEFC Italy's official reference for the certification of Sustainable plantation Management concerning the principles, targets, requirements for participation in the PEFC and following certification procedures.

ITA 1004 is a useful document for applicants of PEFC certification of SPM; ITA 1004-1 is the certification standard that describe, at national level Criteria and indicators that will be audited by CB; ITA 1003 describes operating procedure of certification, accreditation procedures of Certification Body by the National Accreditation Body, and requirements for SFM, SPM and CoC auditors.

1.1 Aims & Objectives of SPM certification scheme

This document can be applied to plantations and their owners/managers

1.2 Normative References

- PEFC Technical Document and its relative annexes (1 to 7);
- ITA 1004-1: "Criteria and indicators for Individual and Group certification of Sustainable plantation Management"
- ITA 1003 "CB Accreditation and Auditors Qualification of SFM, SPM and CoC;
- UNI CEI EN 45020:2007 Regulation and related activities – General Vocabulary;
- UNI EN ISO 19011:2003 Guidelines for quality and/or environmental management systems auditing;
- UNI CEI EN ISO/IEC 17021:2011 Conformity assessment - Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems
- EA - 7/02 ed. January 2000 EA Guidelines for Accreditation of Certification Body for Environmental Management System.

1.3 Definitions and Abbreviations

1.3.1 Definitions

- *Accreditation*: A procedure by which an authoritative body gives formal recognition that a body or person is competent to carry out specific tasks (UNI CEI EN 45020:2007).
- *Accreditation Body*: Body (in Italy, ACCREDIA) that manages and administers an accreditation system and issues the accreditation (UNI CEI EN 45020:2007).
- *Applicant*: Entity that signs the certification application (owner or his legal agent).
- *Audit*: Systematic, independent and documented activity to discover evidence and consider it objectively in order to document the extent to which the audit's criteria have been fulfilled (UNI EN ISO 9000:2000).
- *Audit Team*: One or more auditors who perform an audit (UNI EN ISO 19011:2003).
- *Auditor*: Person that has the competence to conduct an audit (UNI EN ISO 19011:2003).
- *Certification*: Procedure by which a third party gives a written assurance that a product, process or service conforms to specified requirements (UNI CEI EN 45020:2007).
- *Certification body*: An independent third party that assesses and certifies conformity (UNI CEI EN 45020:2007).
- *Chain of Custody*: All the changes of custodianship of forest based products, and products thereof, during the harvesting, transportation, processing and distribution chain from the forest to the end-use.
- *Conformity*: Fulfilment of a requirement (UNI EN ISO 9000:2000).
- *Criteria*: Aspects that are considered important and by which success or failure of stewardship can be judged. The role of criteria is to characterise or define the essential elements or set of

conditions or processes by which SPM may be assessed.

- *Group (GR)*: In the case of the SPM Certification, an entity that gathers together several single owners and/or managers.
- *Group Certification*: Certification that is granted by an aggregation of several single owners and/or by an aggregation of several single managers.
- *Indicators*: Quantitative, qualitative or descriptive measures which when periodically evaluated and monitored show the direction of change (Intergovernmental Seminar on Criteria and Indicators for SFM).
- *Individual Certification*: Certification granted by a single owner or by a single manager (i.e. single forestry co-operative or in the case of more owners that completely and unambiguously delegates the management and the administration of forest resources).
- *Interested parties*: An individual or group of individuals with common interests concerned with or affected by the operation of an organisation (ISO 14004:1997).
- *Non-conformity*: The non-fulfilment of a requirement (UNI EN ISO 9000:2000).
- *Owner*: Any subject, public and/or private, that is proprietor or owner (including managers with appropriate delegation) in good faith.
- *Principles*: Fundamental rules which serve as a basis for reasoning and action. Principles are explicit elements of a goal such as SFM (PEFCC-TD).
- *Re-examination*: Activity that is carried out in order to verify the suitability, conformity and the efficacy of the measures taken towards reaching the established goals (UNI EN ISO 9000:2000).
- *Requirement*: Claim or expectation that can be expressed as an implicit obligation UNI EN ISO 9000:2000).
- *Responsible for the Audit Team*: An auditor of the audit team who is generally appointed Responsible for the Team (UNI EN ISO 19011:2003).
- *Renunciation*: Voluntary decision of the applicant (AZ, GR) or his members – in case of GR – to cease participation in a certification scheme.
- *Requirement*: Claim or expectation that can be expressed as an implicit obligation UNI EN ISO 9000:2000).
- *Responsible for the Audit Team*: An auditor of the audit team who is generally appointed Responsible for the Team (UNI EN ISO 19011:2003).
- *Revocation*: Withdrawal of the certificate by the CB.
- *Secretariat*: Secretariat PEFC Italy.
- *Suspension*: Temporary interruption of the certification procedure or in the certificate's validity.
- *Sustainable Development*: Meeting the needs of the present generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (ISO/TR 14061:1998).
- *Sustainable Plantation Management*: The stewardship and use of plantation in a way and at a rate that maintains their biodiversity, productivity, regeneration capacity, vitality and their potential to fulfil now and in the future, relevant ecological, economic and social functions, at local, national and global levels and does not cause damage to other ecosystems.
- *Third Party*: Person or Body that is recognised as independent from the involved parties in regard to a specific subject (UNI CEI EN 45020:1998).

1.3.2 Abbreviations

AB: Accreditation Body.

IN: Manager or owner that applies for the individual certification.

CB: Certification Body.

CA: corrective action

CoC: Chain of Custody.

GR: Association that applies for the group certification.

NC: Non-Conformity.

PEFC: Programme for Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes.

PEFCC: PEFC Council.

SPM: Sustainable Plantation Management.
TD: Technical Document

2. PEFC ITALY'S ELEMENTS

2.1 The certification schemes

The "PEFC Italy" system for plantation certification is divided in two schemes, which include:

- a) the SPM certification;
- b) the chain of custody certification of products deriving from SPM.

This change of custody begins with the sale of the plantation products (woody or non-woody) or of the transformed product. In case of uniquely manufacturing of raw materials coming from the certified forest, the owner or forest manager does not need CoC certification for declaring the products as certificated.

In case of purchasing and manufacturing of species and/or assortment different from the ones included in the certificated forest, the CoC Certification is mandatory if may occur the risk of mixing its own certificated material with "other material"

In these cases, the manufacturing processes must be appropriately described by procedures detailed in the SPM Manual.

In order to obtain the desired certification – SPM and/or CoC - the applicant must (as an individual or group), demonstrate to the best of its ability the fulfilment of requirements indicated in PEFC document, and once certification is achieved, their maintenance.

Compliance to legislation is a prerequisite in all certification schemes.

PEFC Italy controls and updates the certification requirements and standards in order to make suitable changes and/or integrations when dictated by new knowledge, at least every 5 years.

Periodic controls are an essential element of the PEFC's continual improvement process

2.2 The actors of PEFC system

The following actors have an active part in italian PEFC certification scheme :

- a) The applicants for certification,
- b) PEFC Italy,
- c) The Certification Bodies (CB),
- d) The Accreditation Bodies (AB).

2.2.1 The Applicants

The applicants are the candidates for certification.

The applicants are the following entities:

- 1) The legal agent of the Group (GR) or its delegate for the group certification
- 2) The Owner (IN), the manager or their delegates for the individual certification.

Legislative compliant is compulsory for the applicants who wish to start a certification process in accordance of both PEFC certification schemes.

2.2.1.1 Company (IN)

The Company must:

- a) Be the owner or manager of the plantation area;
- b) Have a management plan of intervention activities; start the process of certification, charging its legal agent to endorse and present the certification application;
- c) Pay the costs of the certification and its maintenance;
- d) Conform to the requirements dictated by the PEFC Italy certification scheme;
- e) Demonstrate that the forestry management activities are carried out both by employers and

external suppliers who respect the PEFC Italy fixed criteria;

- f) The whole of the plantations owned by a owner (or managed by a manager) must be certified, if these plantations are unified productive units;
- g) For SPM certification, produce an SPM handbook in which the various elements (see paragraph § 3.2) demonstrating the SPM in the candidate areas are elaborated;
- h) Collaborate with audits run by the CB;
- i) Maintain the certificate issued by the CB;
- j) Present formal application to PEFC Italy for the PEFC Logo usage;
- k) Update and maintain the register of certified areas (land register's location and concerned areas), sending it to PEFC Italy and the CB;
- l) Record and send to PEFC Italy and the CB eventual claims raised by the key players;
- m) Commit itself in the right usage of the certificate and of PEFC Logo;
- n) To organize meetings with external parties (e.g. government agencies, community groups, conservations organizations, etc.) to offer information regarding forest certification and to collect relevant information related to forest management, that will use, if appropriated.
- o) Made available to the public a summary of findings during certification audit (written by the CB) that includes the results regarding auditee's conformity with the forest management standard.

2.2.1.2 Group (GR)

GR is the organization which represents an owners group to the certification system.

The GR must:

- a) Pay the costs of the group certification and its maintenance, through collecting shares fixed by GR for the members;
- b) Start the process of group certification, charging its legal agent to endorse and present the certification application to a CB;
- c) produce an SPM handbook in which the various elements (see paragraph § 3.2) demonstrating the SPM in the candidate areas are elaborated;
- d) Arrange, update, and distribute the documentation, information and necessary forms to the owners of the group in order to facilitate a voluntary participation to the system;
- e) Inform the members and the key players in the certification of their rights and duties and initiate procedures which ensure the fulfilment of their own duties, check that the owners must respect the points of the paragraph 2.2.1.2.1;
- f) Full fill the CB's requests which will be submitted during the audits.;
- g) Maintain the certificate issued by the CB;
- h) Present formal application to PEFC Italy for the PEFC Logo usage;
- i) Draw up, update and maintain the individual assent applications of the owners, which are accompanied by obligation deed to PEFC Italy system requirements;
- j) Update and maintain the register of members participating in the certification (names, land register's location and concerned areas), and periodically send it to PEFC Italy and the CB, each new participant to the group certification will be included in the group certification only after the CB's surveillance audit;
- k) Consign to the owner a "group certification assent" certificate, in which the number and time the group certificate's validity, the vital information regarding the GR who obtained the certificate, and about the CB who issued it are indicated;
- l) If Non-Conformities (NC) are discovered, inform the owner and collaborate with the Corrective Action (CA), organizing a supplementary audit and providing suitable aid to the auditors;
- m) Enforce exclusion of owners who have not remedied the NC within the appropriate time limits and annul consequently the sublicense of the Logo usage and inform PEFC Italy and the CB;
- n) Record and send to PEFC Italy and the CB any claims eventually raised by the key players;
- o) to organize meetings with external parties (e.g. government agencies, community groups, conservations organizations, etc.) to offer information regarding forest certification and to collect relevant information related to forest management, that GR will use, if appropriated.

- p) made available to the public a summary of findings during certification audit (written by the CB) that includes the results regarding auditee's conformity with the forest management standard.

2.2.1.2.1 Members duties of the group certification

The members of the group certification must:

- a) Have a management plan of intervention activities
- b) Pay the association share to the GR (in order to economically sustain the GR and the costs of certification and maintenance);
- c) Indicate to the GR in written form, the plantation areas under management and which of these are candidates for certification; all the whole areas managed within the "group" must be certified;
- d) conform to the requirements dictated by the PEFC Italy certification scheme;
- e) Demonstrate that management activities are carried out both by employers and external suppliers who respect the PEFC Italy fixed criteria;
- f) Make available to the GR and CB all the documents and records necessary to conduct audits;
- g) Report to the GR, when requested, the plantation utilization and treatment for the certified areas;
- h) Confirm assent to the GR at least every five years;
- i) Communicate eventual waiver of the certification and the relative GR assent retraction at least two months in advance in order to allow to the GR agent to fulfil all obligations to the CB and PEFC Italy;

2.2.2 PEFC Italy

PEFC Italy is the association which represents the national governing body of the PEFC certification scheme. Its composition, its objectives and its function respect the mission established in the Articles of Association.

In addition to the scope of the mission elaborated in the articles of Association PEFC Italy:

- a) Arranges the development, adoption and rules modification relating to the SPM certification controls;
- b) Arranges the development, adoption and rules modification relating to the chain of custody for wood products;
- c) Draws up contracts with the GR and owners for the usage of PEFC Logo.

The Secretary is the Operation Body of PEFC Italy.

The Secretary is charged with coordinating the association's activities and deals with the execution of the association's resolutions.

In particular:

- a) Carries out the review of documents in accordance with PEFC Italy directives;
- b) Informs the applicants of lists of accredited CB's (ACCREDIA in Italy) and of list of CB's, which have applied for accreditation (to ACCREDIA, in Italy);
- c) Maintains and updates the register of certified members;
- d) Maintains and updates the register of owners participating in group certification;
- e) Maintains and updates the register of PEFC Logo users, and sends the information to the PEFC;
- f) Offers assistance to all applicants (IN, GR);
- g) represents the only entity delegated to provide exact (or precise) interpretation of the PEFC Italy's scheme, concerning issues related to the scheme and not to audits done by CB.

2.2.3 Bodies of Certification (CB) and Accreditation (AB)

The certification is implemented by CB's, independent and third party, which are accredited by a National Accreditation Body, member of IAF (for example ACCREDIA in Italy) for the SFM, SPM certification and the wood and non-wood products chain of custody. For all issues concerning

operative procedures see ITA 1003.

3. SUSTAINABLE PLANTATION MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATION

The scheme allows for applications for the two following types of certification:

- a) Individual certification;
- b) Group certification;

Candidate for the group certification the GR and for individual certification the Companies (IN).

The system management of the forest properties should take as example the logic and principles of the management systems adopted by Standardisation bodies (such as UNI EN ISO 14001, UNI EN ISO 9001, ...) following the point of major conformity with PEFC (for example aims, organizational structure, executive control).

The costs of the audit and certification are borne by the applicant.

3.1 Documents required for SPM certification

Documents which must be submitted by the applicant to the CB , are:

- a) The certification application duly completed and signed by the applicant and sent to the CB. The application contains information about the applicant including: title, name, certification type, address, contact person for relationship with the CB and the name of the consultant;
- b) In the case of submission by of a legal agent, the written authorization for the applicant to submit the application to the CB;
- c) The SPM Handbook, in which is illustrated the entire SPM picture, includes documents such as: managerial procedures, operating instructions and recording forms for the activities already implemented;
- d) In the case of application for group certification, the register of the owners participating in the application for certification;
- e) Any trademarks, either individual or collective, used by the applicant to commercialise the products produced from the plantation interested by SPM certification;
- f) Any other documents required by the CB for choosing the plan of samples for the certification audits.

3.2 Description of SPM documentation

The SPM documentation can consist of only one Handbook or a Handbook and many relating procedures. The SPM Handbook briefly describes the activities associated with producing the relevant supporting documents for SPM certification. The purpose of the handbook is to explain the owners' managerial choices in specific situations and to facilitate the SPM setting during the examination phase of the documentation by the CB (se point 3.4.1).

The SPM documentation, tailored to the needs of the applicant and its organization of reference, must give the following indications:

- Generality:
 - Motivation and goals of the document;
 - Any definitions and abbreviations;
 - Description of the applicant (organizational structure) and of the owners (including applications for individual certification made by a IN that manages - with special delegations - individual properties); information about existing planning instruments, any UN EN ISO 14001 certificates, any EMAS registration (Reg. (CE) 761/2001), forestry inventories, forestry typologies, any other relevant information;
 - Purpose and scope of application (type of application);
- SPM policy;
- registry of the applicable legislation (also list of the dispositions in force that are applicable in the belonging self-governing Region/Province)
- Terms of involvement for owners (expressly indicating any delegations to the applicant for

certification, including applications for individual certification by a IN that manages – with special delegations - individual properties);

- Implementation - with the data sources - of requirements for individual and group certification found in ITA 1004-1;
- SPM Improvement Programme relating to those indicators needing improvement in ITA 1004-1. The Improvement Programme must grant the improvement of one or more improvable indicators during the validity time of the certificate. Every certified entity will have to indicate in his manual the chosen improvable indicators to be implemented during the validity time of the certificate.. The Improvement Programme must indicate: the indicator's number, the final goal for the 5 year of certification's validity, the intermediate goals, the proposed action for achieving the goal; the estimated time for reaching intermediate and final goals; the human and financial resources allotted or proposed; the responsible party for achieving the final aim;
- Management of the NC and CA;
- Management of complaints (with relating registry), recourses and disputes;
- Management of internal controls carried out through the monitoring activities, internal audits and re-examination of the activities concerning SPM;
- Description of the record keeping system including document management and internal and external communications.

4. APPLICANT FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

4.1 Use of Certificate

For the Group Certification, the GR after the certification has been granted:

- a) Issues the members a "certificate of participation in the group certification", thereby entering them in the register of the members participating in the group certification;
- b) Submits these documents to PEFC Italy.

The Certificate of Participation includes the following declaration: "*[owner's information] manages his plantation in accordance with the criteria established by the PEFC Italy certification scheme, endorsed by the PEFC Council on _____. The property is part of the group [group's name] that is certified by [CB's name] with certificate n° _____ dated _____, in accordance with the criteria established by the PEFC Italy certification scheme.*"

The Certificate of Participation is valid from the date the voluntary commitment deed is signed and expires at the end of the certification's term of validity.

4.2 Usage of the PEFC Certification and Logo

Certificate holders may use the PEFC Logo together with the CB's Logo and with any individual or collective trademarks. For more details, please see ITA 1003.

4.3 Renunciation of Certification

For group certification, any GR withdrawing from PEFC certification triggers the revocation of the certification and the withdrawal of the sublicense for all further PEFC Logo usage.

For individual certification, renunciation of PEFC certification triggers the revocation of the certification and the withdrawal of the sublicense for all further PEFC Logo usage.

The renunciation of individual members of GR's is managed directly by the concerned GR; members renouncing participation are erased from the GR membership register.

Applicants and any members (for GR) renouncing participation must submit their decision in written form to PEFC Italy and to the CB.

5. RECOURSES, COMPLAINTS AND DISPUTES

5.1 Management of recourses against the CB

Every recourse must be managed in accordance with the procedures established by CB. These procedures must be accepted by the applicant when he gives the task to the CB.

PEFC Italy keeps records of all disputes and eventual recourses submitted by its members and by applicants for certification.

For all appeals of decisions made regarding recourse for disputes by PEFC Italy, PEFC Italy will appoint an examining committee to settle the dispute. The examining committee consists of three arbitrators:

- a) An agent appointed by PEFC Italy;
- b) An agent appointed by the appellant;
- c) An independent third party acting as president of the committee appointed jointly by both parties to the dispute. In the case that the parties cannot agree on the appointment of the president of the committee, the appointment will be made by President of the Court of the District where the arbitration will take place.

Any questions arising from eventual disputes not addressed by this paragraph will be referred to Title VIII of the Civil Procedure Code.

All disputes and eventual recourses against the CB are managed according to the procedures elaborated in the Code above.

5.2 Complaints management

PEFC Italy maintains records of all complaints:

- a) By and between owners;
- b) By and between GR's and their members in the case of group certification;
- c) By and between applicants and third parties not included in point 2.2.

Complaints must be submitted in written form and signed by the complainant: the complainant's representative forwards a copy of the complaint to PEFC Italy.

For all these complaints, PEFC Italy will appoint the examining committee to settle the dispute (see 5.1). This committee arbitrates in disputes arising among the above mentioned parties, if these are not agreed on at a group level and not on the disputes related to the certification process.

If the committee cannot solve the grievances, involved parties may take the case to Civil Court (Title VIII of the Civil Procedure Code).

If the complaint concerns relating aspects to what is included in the PEFC Italy rules, the interested part of the complaint send a copy also to CB that – after a positive judgement - starts a supplementary audits.

If the owners, GR complain with the CB, the CB must notify it to PEFC Italy and to the AB.

6 STANDARD SETTINGS AND RE-ENDORSEMENT

PEFC Italy, acting as a standardizing body, will develop and periodically revise its forest management standard, according to PEFC ST 1001-2010. In appendix 1 are described the actions that are implemented to respect the requirements of PEFC ST 1001-2010. If in this document are missing some of the prescribed requirements, the document PEFC ST 1001-2010 is taken as reference.

6.1 PEFC Italy as Standardising body

6.1.1 PEFC Italy has written procedures for standard-setting activities describing:

- (a) its status and structure, including a body responsible for consensus building and for formal adoption of the standard

- (b) the record-keeping procedures,
- (c) the procedures for balanced representation of stakeholders,
- (d) the standard-setting process,
- (e) the mechanism for reaching consensus, and

Note: Where a vote is used as a part of decision-making procedures, the standard-setting procedures include decision-making thresholds that are considered to achieve the consensus and that are consistent with the consensus definition.

- (f) revision of standards/normative documents.

6.1.2 PEFC Italy makes its standard-setting procedures publicly available and regularly reviews its standard-setting procedures including consideration of comments from stakeholders.

6.1.3 PEFC Italy keeps records relating to the standard-setting process providing evidence of compliance with the requirements of PEFC ST 1001-2010 and the standardising body's own procedures. The records are kept for a minimum of five years and shall be available to interested parties upon request.

6.1.4 PEFC Italy establishes a permanent or temporary working group/committee responsible for standard-setting activities. The working group/committee will:

- (a) be accessible to materially and directly affected stakeholders,
- (b) have balanced representation and decision-making by stakeholder categories relevant to the subject matter and geographical scope of the standard where single concerned interests shall not dominate nor be dominated in the process, and
- (c) include stakeholders with expertise relevant to the subject matter of the standard, those that are materially affected by the standard, and those that can influence the implementation of the standard. The materially affected stakeholders shall represent a meaningful segment of the participants.

6.1.5 PEFC Italy establishes procedures for dealing with any substantive and procedural complaints relating to the standardising activities which are accessible to stakeholders. Upon receipt of the complaint, PEFC Italy will:

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

6.1.6 PEFC Italy establishes at least one contact point for enquiries and complaints relating to its standard-setting activities. The contact point will be made easily available.

6.2 Standard-setting process

6.2.1 PEFC Italy identifies stakeholders relevant to the objectives and scope of the standard-setting work.

Note: The stakeholder mapping operation includes: defining which interest sectors are relevant and why, and for each sector what are likely to be the key issues, who are the key stakeholders, and what means of communication will best reach them.

6.2.2 PEFC Italy identifies disadvantaged and key stakeholders. PEFC Italy addresses the constraints of their participation and proactively seek their participation and contribution in the standard-setting activities.

6.2.3 PEFC Italy makes a public announcement of the start of the standard-setting process and include an invitation for participation in a timely manner on its website and in suitable media as appropriate to afford stakeholders an opportunity for meaningful contributions. The announcement and invitation will include:

- (a) information about the objectives, scope and the steps of the standard-setting process and its timetable,
- (b) information about opportunities for stakeholders to participate in the process,
- (c) an invitation to stakeholders to nominate their representative(s) to the working group/committee. The invitation to disadvantaged and key stakeholders shall be made in a manner that ensures that the

information reaches intended recipients and in a format that is understandable,

- (d) an invitation to comment on the scope and the standard-setting process, and
- (e) reference to publicly available standard-setting procedures.

6.2.4 PEFC Italy reviews the standard-setting process based on comments received from the public announcement and establishes a working group/committee or adjusts the composition of an already existing working group/committee based on received nominations. The acceptance and refusal of nominations will be justifiable in relation to the requirements for balanced representation of the working group/committee and resources available for the standard-setting.

6.2.5 The work of the working group/committee will be organised in an open and transparent manner where:

- (a) working drafts shall be available to all members of the working group/committee,
- (b) all members of the working group shall be provided with meaningful opportunities to contribute to the development or revision of the standard and submit comments to the working drafts, and
- (c) comments and views submitted by any member of the working group/committee shall be considered in an open and transparent way and their resolution and proposed changes shall be recorded.

6.2.6 PEFC Italy organises a public consultation on the enquiry draft and ensures that:

- (a) the start and the end of the public consultation is announced in a timely manner in suitable media,
- (b) the invitation of disadvantaged and key stakeholders shall be made by means that ensure that the information reaches its recipient and is understandable,
- (c) the enquiry draft is publicly available and accessible,
- (d) the public consultation is for at least 60 days,
- (e) all comments received are considered by the working group/committee in an objective manner,
- (f) a synopsis of received comments, including the results of their consideration, is publicly available, for example on PEFC Italy website.

6.2.7 PEFC Italy organises pilot testing of the new standards and the results of the pilot testing will be considered by the working group/committee.

Note: Pilot testing is not required in case of revision of a standard where experience from its usage can substitute for pilot testing.

6.2.8 The decision of the working group to recommend the final draft for formal approval will be taken on the basis of a consensus. In order to reach a consensus the working group/committee can utilise the following alternative processes to establish whether there is opposition:

- (a) a face-to face meeting where there is a verbal yes/no vote, show of hands for a yes/no vote; a statement on consensus from the Chair where there are no dissenting voices or hands (votes); a formal balloting process, etc.,
- (b) a web-conference meeting where there is a verbal yes/no vote,
- (c) an e-mail meeting where a request for agreement or objection is provided to members with the members providing a written response (a proxy for a vote), or
- (d) combinations thereof.

6.2.9 In the case of a negative vote which represents sustained opposition to any important part of the concerned interests surrounding a substantive issue, the issue will be resolved using the following mechanism(s):

- (a) discussion and negotiation on the disputed issue within the working group/committee in order to find a compromise,
- (b) direct negotiation between the stakeholder(s) submitting the objection and stakeholders with different views on the disputed issue in order to find a compromise,
- (c) dispute resolution process.

6.2.10 Documentation on the implementation of the standard-setting process will be made publicly available.

6.2.11 The standardising body will formally approve the standards/normative documents based on evidence of consensus reached by the working group/committee.

6.2.12 The formally approved standards/normative documents will be published in a timely manner and made publicly available.

6.3 Revision of standards/normative documents

6.3.1 The standards/normative documents will be reviewed and revised at intervals that do not exceed a five-year period.

6.3.2 The revision will define the application date and transition date of the revised standards/normative documents.

6.3.3 The application date will not exceed a period of one year from the publication of the standard. This is needed for the endorsement of the revised standards/normative documents, introducing the changes, information dissemination and training.

6.3.4 The transition date will not exceed a period of one year except in justified exceptional circumstances where the implementation of the revised standards/normative documents requires a longer period.