

PEFC Denmark's

Requirement for certification and accreditation procedures



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1. Introduction

This document is a part of the Danish PEFC certification system for sustainable forest management (in the following referred to as “the Danish scheme”).

The requirements are normative for certification bodies, which are operating PEFC certification of sustainable forest management and/or group certification of sustainable forest management under the Danish scheme.

The document replaces “PEFC Denmark’s Guidelines for auditors and certification bodies – PEFC DK 005-2”.

2. Scope

This document specifies requirements for external auditors and certification bodies, which carry out PEFC certification under the Danish scheme. It also defines requirements for certification and accreditation procedures.

This standard is applied in accordance with the Danish scheme covering:

- Certification of sustainable forest management after PEFC Denmark’s Forest Management Standard, PEFC DK 001-3.
- Group certification of sustainable forest management after PEFC Denmark’s Requirements for group certification of sustainable forest management – PEFC DK 003-4.
- Logo usage in compliance with the international standard PEFC ST 2001:2008: PEFC Logo Usage Rules – Requirements.

3. References

PEFC Denmark’s Forest Management Standard – PEFC DK 001-3

PEFC Denmark’s Requirements for group certification of sustainable forest management – PEFC DK 003-4

PEFC Logo Usage Rules – requirements – PEFC ST 2001:2008

PEFC Denmark’s requirements for PEFC notification of certification bodies PEFC DK 006-2

Terms and definitions – PEFC DK 007-2

DS/EN ISO/IEC 17021:2011: Conformity assessment - Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems

IAF MD 1:2007: IAF Mandatory Document for the Certification of Multiple Sites Based on Sampling

IAF MD 2:2007: IAF Mandatory Document for the Transfer of Accredited Certification of Management Systems

4. Definitions

For the purposes of the Danish scheme, the relevant definitions given in “*Terms and definitions – PEFC DK 007-2*” apply.

5. Requirements for auditors

5.1 CERTIFICATION OF SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT - INCLUDING GROUP CERTIFICATION

The requirements for auditors used in certification audits of sustainable forest management and group certification of sustainable forest management, are based on the general auditing guidelines for management systems and supplemented with expertise from the sector. This applies both under certification audits, surveillance audits and re-certification audits.

The auditors must:

1. Fulfil the general criteria, as appropriate, for environmental auditors defined in DS/EN ISO/IEC 17021:2011: Conformity assessment - Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems, and
2. Have a good understanding of the Danish scheme with regard to sustainable forest management, and
3. Have in-depth knowledge on Danish forest management and administration and the rest of the elements encompassed by PEFC Denmark's Forest Management Standard.

At audits the certification body shall use a person with a professional expertise within forestry and forestry's environmental impact. This person shall have two years of practical experience with Danish forest management. Beside of that, at least one person with experience of certification procedure shall participate as well. The same person can handle both tasks.

Note: professional expertise within forestry and about the environmental impact of forestry can be documented for personnel with a relevant education and professional experience within forestry in relation to forest management. A Master of Forestry, Forest and Landscape Engineer, Biologist, Forest technician or similar all fall within the understanding of having a relevant education.

6. Requirements for certification bodies

6.1 ACCREDITATION

Certification bodies carrying out forest management certification and/or group certification of sustainable forest management shall be accredited to do this. The accreditation can be issued by the Danish Accreditation and Metrology Fund – DANAK, or by an equally acknowledged accreditation body, which has signed the multilateral agreement on mutual recognition developed by the European co-operation for Accreditation (EA) and is a member of IAF (International Accreditation Forum).

6.2 PEFC NOTIFICATION

Certification bodies carrying out forest management certification and/or group certification of sustainable forest management under the Danish scheme shall be PEFC notified by PEFC Denmark according to *"PEFC Denmark's requirements for notification of certification bodies PEFC DK 006-2"*.

6.3 CERTIFICATION OF SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT, INCLUDING GROUP CERTIFICATION

The qualification criteria for the certification bodies used in certification audits of sustainable forest management and group certification of sustainable forest management, are based on the "Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems" (DS/EN ISO/IEC 17021:2011), supplemented with specified requirements from PEFC Denmark and expertise within the sector.

The certification body must:

1. Fulfil the general criteria, as appropriate, for certification bodies defined in standard DS/EN ISO/IEC 17021:2011 and supplementary requirements defined in this standard, and
2. Use a documented method, according to which the forest management may be audited and certified (certification procedure), and
3. Have a good understanding of the Danish scheme, with regard to sustainable forest management.

6.4 SUPPLEMENTARY REQUIREMENTS TO DS/EN ISO/IEC 17021:2011

PEFC Denmark's supplementary requirements to DS/EN ISO/IEC 17021:2011 for certification bodies operating certification of sustainable forest management and group certification of sustainable forest management under the Danish system are specified as follows.

6.4.1 Registration and information

The certification body shall provide PEFC Denmark with information about all issued certificates according to the Danish scheme and changes concerning the validity and scope of these certificates. The certification bodies shall in this connection maintain and update documented records of all forest properties and group leaders certified by them under the Danish scheme.

The register shall as a minimum include the following information, which shall be sent to PEFC Denmark:

- **Individually certified forest properties:**
 - Information about owner
 - Name of the organisation (Forest district)
 - Certified area (ha)
 - Address
 - Zip code
 - City
 - Phone
 - E-mail
 - First and last name of the contact person
 - Certificate number
 - Date of issue of certificate
 - Date of expiry of certificate
- **Certified group leaders:**
 - Name of the organisation
 - First and last name of the contact person
 - Address (Contact person)
 - Zip code (Contact person)
 - City (Contact person)
 - Phone (Contact person)
 - E-mail (Contact person)
 - Certificate number
 - Date of issue of certificate
 - Date of expiry of certificate
 - Total certified area (ha)

6.4.2 Termination of certificates

The holder of the certificate may terminate the certificate any time during its validity. The termination takes effect immediately after the certification body has received the notice in writing.

6.4.3 Suspension and withdrawal of certificates

The certification body must immediately inform PEFC if a forestry certificate or group certificate is withdrawn or suspended.

6.4.4 Additional requirements to the certification process

The certification procedure described in section 6.5 is parallel to the requirements in ISO/IEC 17021:2011 with the following requirements in addition:

In section 6.5.4.: **Public consultation.** The relevant stakeholders shall be consulted previous to the evaluation of compliance with "PEFC Denmark's Forest Management Standard – PEFC DK 001-3", with a hearing period of at least 14 days. As a minimum requirement, the hearing shall be announced at the certification body's homepage. Relevant information received from external parties shall subsequently be included in the evaluation.

In section 6.5.4.: The certification report must include:

- A summary of the hearing of stakeholders
- A summary of the report that includes:
 - o Main data
 - o Policy and objectives for the property (only individually certified forest properties)
 - o Any deviations

The summary of the certification report shall be made available to the public by the certification body.

6.5. CERTIFICATION AND AUDITING PROCEDURES FOR CERTIFICATION OF FOREST MANAGEMENT, INCLUDING GROUP CERTIFICATION

The certification body shall establish internal procedures for sustainable forest management certification and auditing, including group certification of sustainable forest management, according to the Danish scheme.

The procedures shall fulfil the requirements in DS/EN ISO/IEC 17021:2011.

The certification process includes the following phases:

1. Agreement of certification
2. Review of documentation and preparation of the certification audit
3. Certification audit (voluntary pre-audit, if relevant)
4. Certification report
5. Decision on certification
6. Information to PEFC Denmark
7. Surveillance
8. Recertification

6.5.1 Agreement of certification

There shall be made a written agreement of certification. Relevant documentation shall after entering the agreement, be sent to the certification body.

6.5.2 Review of the documentation and preparation of the certification audit

The certification body shall analyse the provided material and evaluate whether the applicant fulfils the requirements for documentation or not.

The certification body prepares a plan for its further assessment activities. The certification body presents the plan for the forest owner/ group leader, who decides whether the process shall continue or not.

After this the certification body nominates a qualified audit team to assess the compliance with the certification criteria.

6.5.3 Certification audit – main audit

The certification audit shall include the following phases:

1. **Public consultation.** Before the conformity assessment with “*PEFC Denmark’s Forest Management Standard – PEFC DK 001-3*”, relevant external stakeholders shall be consulted, with a time limit of at least 14 days. The public consultation shall at least be announced at the certification body’s homepage. Relevant information from external parties shall subsequently be included in the assessment as appropriate.
2. **Initial meeting.**
3. **Collection of audit evidence.** The applicant’s forest management / activities shall be evaluated according to current standard(s). The audit team shall collect the necessary basis information for the assessment and evaluation of whether the forestry/ group leader fulfils the requirements. Compliance with “*PEFC Denmark’s Forest Management Standard – PEFC DK 001-3*” for group members in a group certification shall be based on sampling. The method of sampling shall follow the guidelines in IAF MD 1:2007.
4. **Evaluation of the audit evidence.** The certification body evaluates the conformity with the certification requirements and evaluates whether the forest owner/ group leader fulfils the requirements for certification or which nonconformities have to be discharged in order to comply with all the certification requirements. Guidance for handling of observations and deviations from “*PEFC Denmark’s Forest Management Standard – PEFC DK 001-3*” can be found in annex 1.
5. **Concluding meeting.** The audit team gives an oral and written summary of their observations to the applicant after the evaluation.
6. **Audit report.** The audit report and the report of deviations done by the audit team, follow the procedure for this stage set up by the certification body.

6.5.4. Certification report

The certification report shall as a minimum include the following elements:

- Identification of the audit team.
- The scope of the certification.
- The applicant's conformity with the certification requirements. Observations and deviations shall always be documented in the report.
- A summary of the public consultation.
- A executive summary of the report containing:
 - o Main data
 - o Policy and objectives for the property (only individually certified forest)
 - o Any deviations

The summary of the certification report shall be made available to the public by the certification body.

6.5.5 Decision on certification

The decision of whether or not to issue a certificate to the forest owner/ group leader will be made by the certification body. Those who make the certification decision are not allowed to participate in the audit.

A certificate is issued to the applicant when a positive decision on certification has been made.

6.5.6 Information to PEFC Denmark

The certification body shall inform PEFC Denmark about all issued forest management and group certificates and changes concerning validity and scope of these certificates

6.5.7 Surveillance audit

The certification body shall carry out surveillance audits of certified forest properties and group leaders at least once a year during the validity of the certificates to verify continued compliance with the requirements in the Danish scheme. The surveillance audit has to be carried out in accordance with point 6.5.3 – 6.5.4, with the exception of requirements to carry out the public consultation. Neither is the same intensity as under a main audit required. Though for surveillance audits of group leaders it is required that all parts of the management system are audited at least once during the certificates period of validity.

The certified forest owner/group leader shall immediately inform the certification body about any changes in the management or procedures relating to documentations or registrations of data implemented by the certified forest property or group leader in order to make a plan for corrective actions.

6.5.8 Recertification

Recertification shall be carried out following point 6.5.1 – 6.5.5.

6.6 INFORMATION ON THE CERTIFICATES

The certificates shall as a minimum contain information about:

- Name and address of the forest property/group leader
- Reference to the relevant standard
- Scope
- Date of issue
- Date of expiry (validity period)
- Certificate number
- Name and accreditation number of the certification body
- Accreditation symbol of the relevant accreditation body

6.6.1 Reference to the standard

The following reference to the standards shall be applied:

Individual certification of sustainable forest management:

“PEFC Denmark’s Forest Management Standard – PEFC DK 001-3”

Group certification of sustainable forest management:

“PEFC Denmark’s Requirements for group certification of sustainable forest management – PEFC DK 003-4” and “PEFC Denmark’s Forest Management Standard – PEFC DK 001-3”

7. Requirements for accreditation bodies

The accreditation shall be issued by an accreditation body, which is a part of the European co-operation for Accreditation (EA) and/or the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) and has signed the agreement of mutual recognition.

Annex 1: Guidance for handling of observations and deviations from “PEFC Denmark’s Forest Management Standard”

The intention of this instruction is to clarify which corrective actions could be taken towards group certified forest owners, when deviations from PEFC Denmark’s Forest Management Standard are observed.

Preconditions

Observations and deviations from the current PEFC Denmark Forest Management Standard for certified forest properties shall be recorded under external audits.

No corrective actions can be demanded for deviations caused by circumstances not controlled by the owner e.g. actions from the group leader, results from expropriation or military activities.

Guidance

It is in general necessary for certification bodies to keep in mind that forests are biological systems evolving only slowly and that forests are production sites being substituted only every 50-150 years. Furthermore, the site-specific soil conditions and climate conditions along with specific stand conditions are crucial to what actions may seem reasonable in silvicultural management.

The forest management shall be evaluated in the light of the following:

- The general guidelines for the forest management - PEFC Denmark’s Forest Management Standard (chapter 6)
- The specific criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management - PEFC Denmark’s Forest Management Standard (chapter 7)
- The individual objectives defined for the individual forest property

In the cases where the forest property develops in a “wrong” direction in relation to one or several issues, it shall be evaluated in the formulated certification report whether this development can be explained from the current circumstances on the property and whether the development is acceptable.

Observations and deviations shall be handled as follows:

1. Observations

Observations are registered conditions at the property, which do not comply with the Forest Management Standard but do not deviate considerably or result in a significant risk of affecting the environment negatively. It should be evaluated whether the observed conditions are reasonably substantiated in special conditions on the property.

If the observation cannot be substantiated as stated, it is pointed out for the forest owner in written form and is included in the audit report.

Observations can turn into deviations.

2. Minor deviation

A minor deviation is a deviation, which implies that an indicator is evolving in a decidedly negative direction or that certain conditions in the management are in conflict with the Forest Management Standard in general or where earlier registered observations have not been dealt with in an adequate way.

It should be evaluated whether the deviation is satisfactory substantiated by specific conditions on the property. Deviations shall be included in the audit report.

A minor deviation is handled through the procedures for handling deviations set up by the certification body.

The minor deviation will be upgraded to a major deviation if the minor deviation is not followed up by corrective actions before the specified deadline.

3. Major deviation

A major deviation is a deviation where the certification body can point out a management of the forest that is violating the foundation and contents of PEFC Denmark's Forest Management Standard or when earlier written commands have not been followed up.

The certification body cannot issue a certificate if a major deviation is pointed out and the condition is not reasonably substantiated.

Deviations must be included in the audit report.

If the deviation is pointed out at a surveillance audit or during re-certification, the certification body shall give the owner a written injunction about a corrective action with a deadline within 3 months. If the deviation has been observed repeatedly, the certification body shall suspend the certificate until the corrective action has been executed.

If the corrective action has not been executed or the deviation is directly inconsistent with PEFC Denmark's Forest Management Standard, conditions for withdrawal of the certificate exist. The forest owner receives written communication about the presence of the conditions for withdrawal of the forest certification agreement. The owner of the forest is requested to explain the criticised circumstances within two months. If the explanation is considered unsatisfactory, the agreement of certification is withdrawn in a written communication to the forest owner.