


cerfoar - Technical Document

ANNEX 09


PG 03.02. Consultation procedure to the interested parties that shall implement certification bodies during forest management audits

 Sistema Argentino de Certificación Forestal	Code	PG 03.02
GENERAL PROCEDURE	Date of approval	2013 08 05
Consultation to the interested parties during the SFM audits	Pages	2 de 6

CONSULTATION PROCEDURE TO THE INTERESTED PARTIES THAT SHALL IMPLEMENT CERTIFICATION BODIES DURING FOREST MANAGEMENT AUDITS.

CONTENTS

1 OBJECTIVE	3
2 SCOPE	3
3 CONSULTATION TO THE INTERESTED PARTIES.....	3
3.1 Identification of the interested parties.....	4
3.2 Communication of the beginning of the forest management certification process to the interested parties.	4
3.3 Consultation with the interested parties during the initial certification audit and the recertification one.	5
3.4 Assessment of the information provided by the interested parties	5
3.5 Record of consultations and the information provided by the interested parties	5
3.6 Incorporation of the information provided by the interested parties to the audit report.	6
3.7 Consultation with the interested parties during the surveillance audit	6

 Sistema Argentino de Certificación Forestal	Code	PG 03.02
GENERAL PROCEDURE Consultation to the interested parties during the SFM audits	Date of approval	2013 08 05
	Pages	3 de 6

1 OBJECTIVE

This procedure establishes the requirements that shall be fulfilled by the Certification Bodies to develop the consultation to the interested parties during the initial certification audits and the recertification and surveillance audits for the conformity assessment process of forest management with the requirements of *IRAM 39801* and *IRAM 39805 both* in force

2 SCOPE

This General Procedure has been approved by the Board of Directors of cerfoar Association and it is applied for all notified cerfoar's Certification Bodies that carry out sustainable forest management audits as established by the Argentine Forest Certification System.

3 CONSULTATION TO THE INTERESTED PARTIES


The evidence of the forest management audits shall include relevant information provided by the interested parties to determine conformity with the sustainable forest management standards as established by the Argentine Forest Certification System.

NOTE: The sustainable forest management standards established by the Argentine Forest Certification System that shall be applicable are: *IRAM 39801* and *IRAM 39805*, in force.

The Certification Bodies shall perform, during the certification process, a consultation to the interested parties who can provide relevant information regarding the compliance of the assessed management unit or units (entity applying for certification) with legal, environmental, social and economic requirements as established in *IRAM 39801* and / or *IRAM 39805* standards, in force.

The consultation process to the interested parties shall include the following steps:

1. identification of the interested parties relevant to the management unit or units to be assessed;
2. communication, to the identified interested parties, of the beginning of the certification assessment and its characteristics;
3. consultation with the interested parties during the initial certification audit, surveillance audit and the recertification one;
4. assessment of the information provided by the interested parties;
5. record of the consultations and the information provided by the interested parties;
6. addition of the comments done by the interested parties to the certification and surveillance reports.

 Sistema Argentino de Certificación Forestal	Code	PG 03.02
GENERAL PROCEDURE	Date of approval	2013 08 05
Consultation to the interested parties during the SFM audits	Pages	4 de 6

3.1 Identification of the interested parties

The Certification Body shall have (develop and document) effective procedures to identify the interested parties who can provide relevant information for the assessment of the audited organization and/or which may be capable of contacting the Certification Body with other interested parties.


NOTE The range of consulted interested parties corresponds to the scale, size and scope of the impacts of the forest management being assessed (applicable national and local authorities, organizations or unions of forestry workers, representatives of indigenous people and local communities, non-governmental organizations working in relation to social and environmental aspects of forest management at a local or national level, contractors serving the forest operation, among others.)

3.2 Communication of the beginning of the forest management certification process to the interested parties.

At least 30 days before the initial certification audit – Second Stage -, the Certification Body shall inform the identified interested parties that it will carry out the forest management assessment implemented by the entity applying for certification to be certified in conformity with IRAM 39801 and/or IRAM 39805 standards, in force.

The notice shall include at least the following information:

- a) Company name/applicant forest owner and location(s) of the management unit or units to be assessed;
- b) Scope of the initial certification audit or the recertification audit;
- c) Composition of the audit team;
- d) Stages and audits schedule (short description of the certification process and tentative agenda):
 - Public consultation before the field audit (in situ)
 - Field audits (in situ)
 - Consultation to the local interested parties
 - Closure Meeting
 - Elaboration of a preliminary report
 - Certification Decision
- e) Request of information about the management unit or units being assessed and other interested parties. At this point the Certification Body shall inform interested parties:
 - That they have the opportunity to present their contributions and points of view publicly or confidentially to the audit team,
 - The options available to present their observations and points of view (via mail and/or e-mail, by phone and/or fax, interviews with the audit team before, during or immediately after the field audit, among others.)

 Sistema Argentino de Certificación Forestal	Code	PG 03.02
GENERAL PROCEDURE	Date of approval	2013 08 05
Consultation to the interested parties during the SFM audits	Pages	5 de 6

- That the information provided, unless otherwise requested, will be handled confidentially and with the sole purpose of being used in the assessment process of forest management and to make a certification decision.

f) Certification Body contact people

The Certification Body shall ensure that there is an adequate opportunity for the interested parties to comment, directly, about their defined contact people.

3.3 Consultation with the interested parties during the initial certification audit and the recertification one.

During the field assessment, as part of the initial certification audit or the recertification audit, the audit team shall consult the identified local interested parties, directly involved, related and/or affected by forest management activities of the management unit being assessed.

NOTE Consultation with local interested parties may include among others, individual and group interviews with local residents, landowners adjacent to the management unit under assessment, local authorities and representatives, direct and indirect workers, companies that provide service, external consultants directly involved, among others.

The Certification Body shall establish a methodology of communication appropriate to the singularities of the interested parties involved/identified.

3.4 Assessment of the information provided by the interested parties

The Certification Body shall have a procedure for an objective assessment of the information provided by the interested parties, so that this affects the certification decision only to the extent that they provide some evidence of conformity or nonconformity of the management forest assessed with cerfoar standard requirements for forest management.


The procedure shall include at least an explanation of how the information provided by the interested parties has been tested or confirmed.

NOTE The information provided by the interested parties is binding with the certification decision only where this is present accompanied by relevant evidence.

3.5 Record of consultations and the information provided by the interested parties

The Certification Body shall carry out the record of, at least, the following information:

- a) names and contact details of people and organizations consulted on the applicant's conformity with the applicable requirements of IRAM 39801 and/or IRAM 39805 in force;
- b) notes on all the information received orally;
- c) copies of all correspondence and/or written observations received;

 Sistema Argentino de Certificación Forestal	Code	PG 03.02
GENERAL PROCEDURE	Date of approval	2013 08 05
Consultation to the interested parties during the SFM audits	Pages	6 de 6

- d) notes or other information showing how the information received has been tested or confirmed;
- e) explanation of how the contributions made by the interested parties were interpreted or taken into account in making the certification decision.

3.6 Incorporation of the information provided by the interested parties to the audit report.

The Certification Body shall incorporate in the public reports of the initial certification audit, recertification audits and surveillance audits a systematic detailed of the information provided by the interested parties and a description of the implemented follow-up measurements.

3.7 Consultation with the interested parties during the surveillance audit

The Certification Body shall perform the consultation to the interested parties needed during the surveillance assessments in order to collect evidence of the audit so as to check the conformity of the audited forest management (entity applying for certification) with the certification requirements.

The consultation and confidentiality procedures of the information shall adjust to the same requirements defined for certification and recertification audits in sections 3.3, 3.4, 3.5 and 3.6.

The comments of the interested parties received after the initial certification audit or recertification audit shall be registered and assessed in the next surveillance audit, unless it is given as a formal complain or it indicates a serious breach (mayor non conformity) that requires an immediate corrective action.