

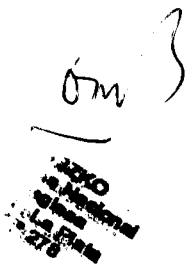
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ANNEX 2

IRAM 39805:2010. Sustainable Forest Management. Group certification.

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ARGENTINE STANDARD

**IRAM
39805**

First edition

2010-06-10

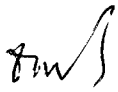
Sustainable forest management

Group certification



Reference Number:
IRAM 39805:2010

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Foreword

The Argentine Institute of Standardization and Certification (IRAM) is a private non-profit organization, the specific objectives of which are, in its character of Argentine Organization for Standardization, to establish technical standards, without limitations in scope, apart from being prone to knowledge and application of standardization as the base of quality, promoting activities of certification of products and systems of quality in companies to provide the consumer with safety.

IRAM is the representative of Argentina in the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), in the Pan American Standards Commission (Comisión Panamericana de Normas Técnicas – COPANT) and in the MERCOSUR Association of Standardization (Asociación MERCOSUR de Normalización – AMN).

This IRAM standard is the result of the technical consensus among the different sectors involved, which have intervened in the corresponding Standards setting forums through their representatives.

Index

	Page
1 SCOPE.....	5
2 NORMATIVE DOCUMENTS FOR CONSULTATION.....	5
3 DEFINITIONS.....	5
4 REQUIREMENTS FOR THE SETTING UP OF THE CERTIFICATION GROUP.....	6
5 REQUIREMENTS FOR THE FUNCTIONING OF THE CERTIFICATION GROUP.....	7
6 REQUIREMENTS FOR THE CHAIN OF CUSTODY OF THE CERTIFICATION GROUP.....	11
Appendix A (Informative) Certification group manual.....	13
Appendix B (Informative) Bibliography.....	16
Appendix C (Informative) Members of the standard setting forums.....	17

Sustainable forest management

Group certification

1 SCOPE

This standard specifies the requirements for group certification, destined to allow the certification of more than one management unit under a unique sustainable forest management certificate. It is applied to a unit which gathers a group of forest producers who agree on taking part in the certification group.

2 NORMATIVE DOCUMENTS FOR CONSULTATION

Every normative document mentioned below is essential for the application of this document.
When normative documents containing the year of publication are mentioned in the list, this means that that edition shall be applied, otherwise, the edition in force shall be applied, including all their changes.
IRAM 39801 – Sustainable forest management. Principles, criteria and indicators for the management unit.

3 DEFINITIONS

For the objectives of the present standard the following definitions are applied:

3.1 corrective action. Action taken to eliminate the cause of a detected nonconformity or other undesirable action.

NOTE 1. There may be more than one cause for a nonconformity.

NOTE 2. The corrective action is taken to prevent something from happening again, whereas the preventive action is taken to prevent something from happening.

3.2 preventive action. Action taken to eliminate the cause of a potential nonconformity or other potentially undesirable situation.

NOTE. There may be more than one cause for a potential nonconformity.

3.3 audit criteria. A set of policies, procedures or requirements.

NOTE. Audit criteria are used as reference against which the audit evidence is compared.

3.4 forest management audit criteria. A set of policies, procedures or requirements, such as the ones defined in IRAM 39801 and any other additional requirement within the sustainable forest management level, to which the forest auditor compares audit evidence gathered on the basis of the organization's forest management.

NOTE. Audit criteria are used as reference against which the audit evidence is compared.

3.5 document. Information and its means of support.

NOTE. The means of support can be paper; a magnetic, optic or electronic disc; a photograph or pattern sample or a combination of these.

3.6 certification group manager. A person responsible for the certification group management.

3.7 certification group. Legally constituted entity or organization which requests the certification on behalf of a group of forest producers who agree on taking part in the group.

NOTE 1. The certification group, as a legally constituted entity, is the certificate holder.

NOTE 2. The certification group can be an existing organization (a company, a private, a chamber or a sectorial association, a non-governmental organization, a governmental organization, a communal organization), or can be expressly formed for the certification process and it shall be the one in charge of signing agreements with the group members and with the certification entity.

3.8 certification group member. A physical or legal person (forest producer) who is responsible for the

management unit included in the certification group.

3.9 nonconformity. Failure to comply with a requirement.

3.10 certification group policy for sustainable forest management. Orientations and guidelines which govern the performance of the certification group in their forest resources sustainable management.

NOTE. The certification group policy for sustainable forest management provides a reference framework for the establishment of the certification group objectives.

3.11 forest producer. A physical or legal person responsible for the operations of the resource management and the forest company, as well as for the management structure and system, the planning and the field works.

3.12 procedure. A specified way to carry out an activity or process.

NOTE. The procedures can be documented or not.

3.13 program. An organized series of actions which tend to achieve particular objectives. It shall specify functions, responsibilities, processes, resources, deadlines and priorities.

3.14 record. A document which shows obtained results or provides evidence of performed activities.

3.15 forest worker. A worker who acts at the forest management unit, as a self-employed worker or with a direct work tie with the organization or with service provider companies.

3.16 management unit. A surface which is subject to sustainable forest management.

4 REQUIREMENTS FOR THE SETTING UP OF THE CERTIFICATION GROUP

4.1 General requirements

4.1.1 The certification group shall have a legally established name and entity which allows them to sign contracts with their own members and other organizations.

NOTE. The certification group as a legally established entity is the sustainable forest management certificate holder and is the one that signs the contract with the certification body.

4.1.2 The certification group shall define and document their objectives and scope.

NOTE 1. The certification group scope includes the whole area limited by the participating management units in the group certification.

NOTE 2. If the certification group or their members perform activities which are not included in the sustainable forest management certification, these do not oppose IRAM 39801.

4.1.3 The certification group members shall formalize their joining through a contract.

4.2 Certification group policy for sustainable forest management

4.2.1 The certification group shall define the certification group policy for sustainable forest management and shall make sure that:

- a) it is reached by consensus and known by every certification group member;
- b) it is documented, implemented and maintained;
- c) it includes a commitment to respect IRAM 39801's principles and criteria;
- d) it is actively communicated to forest workers and interested parties; and
- e) it is available to the public.

4.2.2 The certification group members shall agree to obey this policy in the membership contract or agreement to join the certification group.

4.3 Economic/financial resources

The certification group shall have a long term budget where it is specified how their functioning and administration



costs shall be financed.

NOTE. The financial planning has, at least, a 5-year horizon (certificate validity period).

5 REQUIREMENTS FOR THE FUNCTIONING OF THE CERTIFICATION GROUP

5.1 Obligations and responsibilities

5.1.1 General requirements

5.1.1.1 The certification group shall define and document the organizational structure and establish the obligations and responsibilities of each one of their components.

NOTE 1. A certification group formed by a few members can present a simple organizational structure and a certification group which has a lot of members can present various levels of responsibility or management with a wide variety of support personnel.

NOTE 2. Regardless of the complexity the organizational structure presents, it is always useful to have an organization chart containing the responsibilities of every position in the chart.

5.1.1.2 Every member of the certification group shall have an updated document which describes their obligations and responsibilities towards sustainable forest management of their resources and the obligations and responsibilities delegated to the certification group manager.

5.1.1.3 The members of the certification group shall receive information and training which is adequate to fulfill their obligations.

5.1.2 Obligations and responsibilities of the certification group.

5.1.2.1 The certification group shall at least:

- a) request the group certification;
- b) keep an updated record of the members of the certification group;
- c) communicate to the certification entity within a maximum of 30 days when a member joins or leaves the certification group;
- d) communicate to the certification group members their obligations and responsibilities;
- e) verify and assure that every member of the certification group meets the IRAM 39801 sustainable forest management requirements;
- f) define, verify and assure the compliance of the requirements of admission of new members and of expulsion of members;
- g) monitor and control the compliance of the management system requirements which govern the functioning of the certification group and the performance level of the forest management activities of the members;
- h) control the management system documentation of the certification group;
- i) provide the members with technical support and advice during the whole process of certification, audits and management of the certificate;
- j) guard and watch over the maintenance of the certification group certificate, issued by the certification body.

5.1.2.2 The certification group shall appoint a certification group manager and shall define their functions, responsibilities and management authority.

NOTE. The certification group manager is allowed to perform all the tasks which they are requested to perform by this standard or they are able to delegate some of them to other people of the certification group or to external consultants, keeping the corresponding records.

5.1.2.3 The certification group manager shall identify the training needs of the certification group members related to sustainable forest management and to the certification group management system. They shall provide the training or undertake other actions to meet these needs and shall keep the associated records.

5.1.3 Obligations and responsibilities of the certification group members

The certification group members shall at least:

a) sign a membership contract to join the certification group which includes at least the following points:

- a commitment to fulfill the principles, criteria and indicators of IRAM 39801;

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- the description of the obligations and responsibilities of the certification group manager and member related to forest management;
 - the authorization for the certification group manager's free access to the management units with monitoring and control objectives;
 - the respect of the decisions of the certification group manager in case of suspension or expulsion of a certification group member because of a serious mistake in the forest management performance;
 - the authorization for the certification body's access to perform the monitoring and certification audits;
 - b) specify and document the management units which request their inclusion within the certification group certification;
 - c) achieve and maintain the management levels required;
 - d) participate in the training activities established by the certification group manager;
 - e) request the necessary advice to the certification group manager.

5.2 Minimum requirements of the certification group management system.

5.2.1 General requirements

The certification group shall establish, document, maintain and improve a management system in accordance with the following requirements 5.2.2, 5.2.3, 5.2.4 and 5.2.5, which guarantees the correct implementation of this standard and assures its compliance.

NOTE: Within the certification group management system, the requirements which govern its correct functioning are defined.

5.2.2 Documentation

5.2.2.1 The management system documentation shall include at least:

- a) the policy and objectives of the certification group;
- b) the description of the application field which includes an updated map with the location and extension of the management units which make up the certification group;
- c) the structure of the certification group and the obligations and responsibilities of each one of its components;
- d) the description of the main elements of the system and their functioning, as well as the reference to related documents;
- e) every procedure required by this standard and those which determine the certification group manager as necessary to assure the correct certification group management;
- f) the records required by this standard.

NOTE. The documentation required by this standard, the description of the group functioning and all that essential information which contributes to the correct performance of the certification group members can be found summarized in a unique document called *Certification group manual*, like the one presented in appendix A.

5.2.2.2 The manager shall have an updated list of all the required documentation and a copy of every document, which includes the date of the latest revision.

5.2.2.3 Each member of the certification group shall have an updated list of all the documentation required by them and a copy of every document, which includes the date of the latest revision.

5.2.3 Documentation control

5.2.3.1 The documents required by the certification group management system and by this standard shall be controlled.

5.2.3.2 The manager of the certification group shall establish, implement and maintain one or various procedures to:

- a) approve the documents in connection with their adaptation before their issuance and distribution;
- b) revise and update the documents when necessary and approve them again;
- c) assure that the changes and the present revision state of the documents are identified;
- d) assure that the relevant versions of the applicable documents are available to each certification group user;
- e) keep a distribution record of updated documents.

5.2.4 Internal audit

5.2.4.1 The certification group manager shall plan and implement a program of internal audits to evaluate the

conformity of the certification group management system with the requirements of this standard. The procedures of the audit program shall consider:

- a) the planning and elaboration of the audit calendar at intervals inferior to a year;
- b) the definition of intensity and the size of the sample to be audited;
- c) the verification of the conformity with this standard of all the requirements of the certification group management system and the compliance of the obligations and responsibilities of all the parties;
- d) the monitoring and control of the corrective actions implementation in the time prescribed;
- e) the selection of the appropriate audit teams and the appointment of functions and responsibilities;
- f) the conservation of the records of the audit program for 5 years.

5.2.4.2 The certification group manager shall plan and implement a program of internal audits to evaluate the performance of the forest management activities of the certification group members. The procedures of the audit program shall consider:

- a) the planning and elaboration of the audit calendar at intervals inferior to a year;
- b) at least an annual audit by a member of the certification group to their management unit;
- c) the evaluation of all the aspects of sustainable forest management and the conformity with the principles, criteria and indicators of IRAM 39801 which the certification group member is responsible for;
- d) the monitoring and control of the corrective actions implementation in the time prescribed;
- e) the selection of the appropriate audit teams and the appointment of functions and responsibilities;
- f) the conservation of the records of the audit program for 5 years.

5.2.5 Nonconformity, corrective action and preventive action

The certification group manager shall establish, implement and maintain one or various procedures to deal with real and potential nonconformities and take corrective and preventive actions. The procedures shall contain, at least, specifications for:

- a) the identification, description and correction of nonconformities;
- b) the description, identification of the responsible person and period of implementation of corrective and preventive actions;
- c) the investigation of nonconformities, determination of their causes and actions to prevent them from happening again;
- d) the record of corrective and preventive actions taken and their conservation for a period of 5 years;
- e) the revision of the efficiency of the corrective and preventive actions taken.

5.3 Admission of new members

5.3.1 General requirements

5.3.1.1 The certification group shall establish and document a procedure of admission of new members which assures that only the management units which fulfill the principles, criteria and indicators of IRAM 39801 are admitted in the certification group.

5.3.1.2 The procedure shall include all the requirements and activities which the member shall fulfill in order to be admitted and the way in which the admission decision is made.

5.3.2 Preadmission audit

5.3.2.1 The certification group manager shall perform an audit to each management unit which requests their membership before their admission to the certification group.

NOTE 1. The certification group manager is allowed to perform all the tasks requested by this standard or is able to delegate some of them to other people of the certification group or to external consultants, keeping the corresponding records.

NOTE 2. The correct selection of the auditor assures the objectivity and impartiality of the audit process.

5.3.2.2 The criteria of the preadmission audit shall include all the IRAM 39801 requirements. The verification list used in the audit shall be kept as a record.

5.3.2.3 The audit report shall contain a description of the management unit, management plan and its



implementation, products and performance estimate.

5.3.3 Admission

The admission of members shall be made conditional on:

- a) the implementation of corrective actions to the nonconformities detected in the preadmission audit;
- b) the verification of the efficiency of the corrective actions implemented; and
- c) the assumption and documentation of a long term commitment to belong to a certification group and manage their forest resources in accordance with the requirements of this standard.

5.4 Certification group resignation or expulsion

5.4.1 General requirements

The certification group shall establish and document a procedure of voluntary resignation to the certification group and shall establish and document a procedure of expulsion of members which assures that the management units which do not fulfill the requirements of this standard are suspended or expelled.

5.4.2 Voluntary resignation

The procedure of voluntary resignation to the certification group shall specify at least:

- a) the circumstances in which it is permitted to resign to the certification group;
- b) the obligations of the member who decides to resign to the certification group;
- c) the notification method of resignation to the certification group manager;
- d) the maintenance of relevant records;
- e) the communication to the certification body, the remaining members and the interested parties.

5.4.3 Expulsion and suspension

The procedure of expulsion and suspension from the certification group shall specify at least:

- a) the circumstances of suspension and expulsion from the certification group;

NOTE: The circumstances of expulsion and suspension are directly related to the characteristics/magnitude of the detected nonconformities (noncompliance of established requirements).

- b) the method of communication to the member about the suspension until the corrective actions are complete in order to eliminate the cause of the detected nonconformities;
- c) the method of communication to the member about their expulsion;
- d) the method of readmission in accordance with the requirements defined in 5.3.3 of the present standard;
- e) the maintenance of relevant records;
- f) the communication to the certification body, the remaining members and the interested parties.

5.5 Complaints

5.5.1 The certification group shall establish and document a procedure of treatment and resolution of third parties' complaints and of conflicts among the certification group members.

5.5.2 The certification group manager shall appoint a person responsible for the treatment and management of complaints. When the complaints give rise to nonconformities, these shall be treated following the procedure defined in 5.2.5.

6 REQUIREMENTS FOR THE CHAIN OF CUSTODY OF THE CERTIFICATION GROUP

6.1 General requirements

6.1.1 The certification group shall establish, document, implement and maintain the chain of custody procedures which allow them to quantify, describe and control all the forest products elaborated by the certification group and the ones purchased from third parties by certification group members or by the certification group.

6.1.2 The certification group manager shall have the authority to implement the chain of custody procedures and is

the person responsible for their correct functioning.

6.2 Procedures for the chain of custody

The procedures of the chain of custody shall consider at least:

- a) the identification in a unique and precise way of the identity, source and origin of all the forest products elaborated by the certification group and the ones purchased from third parties by certification group members or by the certification group.
- b) the monitoring and control of the forest products elaborated within the certification group from their origin point until the place of transformation and/or sale;
- c) the monitoring and control of the forest products elaborated by third parties from their admission into the certification group until the place of transformation and/or sale;
- d) the verification that the certification group does not admit forest products coming from expelled or suspended members as certified material;
- e) the verification that the certification group does not admit forest products coming from controversial sources;
- f) the update of documents which describe all the forest products which the certification group can sell.

6.3 Records for the chain of custody

The certification group manager shall keep a record of at least:

- a) the estimate annual or periodic performance of the members of the certification group;
- b) every forest product elaborated by the certification group;
- c) the forest products purchased from third parties by members of the certification group or by the certification group and the data of the suppliers involved;
- d) every forest product negotiated by the certification group;
- e) every document involved in the transportation and transaction of forest products of the certification group.

Appendix A (Informative)

Certification group manual

A.1 Certification group manual

The certification group manual describes the functioning of the group and systematizes all the documentation required by this standard, at the same time it is a useful tool to inform the members about the functioning of the group, the obligations and responsibilities of the composing parties and of the certification processes and their requirements.

It is advisable that the manual is appropriate to the characteristics of the certification group members and that the level of documentation it contains is coherent with the size, scale and intensity of the forest operations involved.

A.2 Contents of the certification group manual

The points suggested below and their systematization are a guide for the elaboration of the certification group manual. It is advisable that every certification group identifies what information and what is their most appropriate order according to their idiosyncrasies:

1. Information about the certification group and their requirements:

- a) a certification group policy for sustainable forest management and requirements for forest sustainable management;
- b) the structure of the certification group and the obligations and responsibilities of their parties;
- c) rules for the integration, retirement and expulsion of the certification group members;
- d) characteristics of the preadmission audit and verification list used for the audit;

NOTE. The verification list used can be handed in to the candidates to allow them to perform a self evaluation and to verify if they are fulfilling all the certification group requirements before the preadmission audit is performed.

- e) details of the internal audit program of the certification group including preventive action requests, corrective action requests or corrective and preventive action requests and their monitoring;
- f) a procedure to be followed in case of third parties' complaints or if the member has a difficult situation with the certification group manager or other members;
- g) costs of integration and maintenance of the certification group and the expenses for any service provided by the certification group manager;
- h) rules to make the complaints associated to the certification.

2. Information about the certification process and the certification requirements:

- a) characteristics of the certification process, including the sampling system, so that certification group members understand why only some are visited by the certifier.
- b) requirement which allows the certifier to access the selected management unit at any time.

3. A practical guide for the compliance of the IRAM 39801 requirements:

- a) development and maintenance of management plans;
- b) development and implementation of conservation strategies;
- c) queries with the interested parties and treatment of complaints;
- d) maintenance of a forest inventory.

4. A list of laws, codes of good practice and guidelines to be complied by the certification group members;

- a) laws applicable to forest activity;

NOTE. A list or short summary of the main requirements of each law.

- b) recognized codes of good practice, technical documents of support and guidelines to obtain them.

NOTE 1. The handbook can indicate recognized technical documentation and applicable to the region like handbooks of good practice of official organizations, a list of pesticides approved by SENASA (SENASA is an organization responsible to guarantee and certify the health and quality of the agricultural, fishing and forest production), etc.

NOTE 2. The handbook can provide contact data of technological centers and official extension.

5. Chain of custody and rules on the use of the name and logo of the national certification system, the PEFC logo or both;

NOTE. PEFC stands for Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification

- a) a summary of the internal rules of the chain of custody;
- b) certification group rules for members who negotiate timber individually as certified;
- c) rules for the use of the logo of the national certification system, the PEFC logo or both;

6. Data of the identified service providers to perform the operations.

NOTE. Identification data of contractors who have been trained or tested to assure that their work complies the requirements specified by the certification group.

- a) details of the preferred contractor, including name, contact address or telephone number, operations performed and prices;
- b) details of any benefit or discount available/agreed for the certification group members;

NOTE. Some information used in the elaboration of appendix A (Informative) was obtained from Ruth Nussbaum. Group certification forests: a practical guide. ProForest, 2002.

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164
P
15
P
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Appendix B (Informative)

Bibliography

In this standard setting the following background has been taken into account:

IRAM – (INSTITUTO ARGENTINO DE NORMALIZACIÓN Y CERTIFICACIÓN) – ARGENTINE INSTITUTE OF STANDARDIZATION AND CERTIFICATION

IRAM 39800:2004 - Sustainable forest management. Vocabulary, terminology and definitions.

IRAM 39801:2010 - Sustainable forest management. Principles, criteria and indicators for the management unit.

IRAM 39803:2009 - Sustainable forest management. Audits

IRAM-ISO 9001:2008 – Quality management systems. Requirements.

IRAM-ISO 14001:2005 – Environmental management systems. Use oriented requirements.

IRAM-ISO 14004:2005 – Environmental management systems. General guidelines concerning principles, systems and support techniques.

Nussbaum, Ruth. 2002. Group certification for forests: a practical guide. Forestry Research Programme, ProForest.
<http://www.proforest.net/objects/publications/GroupCert.pdf>.

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IRAM

Appendix C

(Informative)

Members of the standard setting forum

The setting of this standard has been in charge of the respective forums, composed in the following way:

Forest Management Commission (WG2)

Member

Ricardo BANCHS, Bachelor of Sciences
Facundo BERTOLAMI, Engineer
Sebastian BESSONART, Engineer
Natalia FRACASSI, Bachelor of Sciences
Adrián GONZÁLEZ, Bachelor of Sciences
Mrs. Ariana IACONIS
María Cecilia LI PUMA, Bachelor of Sciences
Fernando MENDIZABAL, Engineer
Mirta de los Ángeles MIÑO, Bachelor of Sciences
Damián OLEMBERG, Bachelor of Sciences
Jorge Nelson PARDÍAS, Bachelor of Sciences
Pablo PICCHIO, Engineer
Sabrina RODRÍGUEZ, Engineer
Jorge SCARPA, Engineer
María Aurora AGULLO, Bachelor of Sciences
Florencia CHAVAT, Engineer

Represents:

WILD FAUNA DEPARTMENT - NATIONAL SECRETARIAT FOR ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
FOREST DEPARTMENT - NATIONAL SECRETARIAT FOR ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
FOREST DEPARTMENT - NATIONAL SECRETARIAT FOR ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
EXPERIMENTAL AGRICULTURAL STATION DELTA DEL PARANÁ
- NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGY
EXPERIMENTAL AGRICULTURAL STATION DELTA DEL PARANÁ
- NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGY
FOREST DEPARTMENT - NATIONAL SECRETARIAT OF AGRICULTURE, LIVESTOCK, FISHERIES AND FOOD
WILD FAUNA DEPARTMENT - NATIONAL SECRETARIAT FOR ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
EDERRA S.A.
WOOD AND FURNITURE - NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGY
EXPERIMENTAL AGRICULTURAL STATION DELTA DEL PARANÁ
- NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGY
SPECIALIST GUEST
FOREST DEPARTMENT - NATIONAL SECRETARIAT FOR ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
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ARGENTINIAN FOREST ASSOCIATION / PAPEL PRENSA S.A.
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General Committee of Standards (G.C.S.)

Member

Vicente BIANCHI, Bachelor of Sciences
José M. CARACUEL, M.D.
Alberto CERINI, Bachelor of Sciences
Irene DASSO, M.D.

Member

Ricardo MACCHI, M.D.
Hugo D. MARCH, Technician
Ángel TESTORELLI, Technician
Raúl DELLA PORTA, Engineer

ms
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Traductora Pública Nacional
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Pcia. de Bs. As. La Plata
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* It corresponds to the National Supply Classification appointed by the National Cataloguing Service of the Defense Department.

Es traducción fiel del documento adjunto, escrito en idioma nacional, que he tenido a la vista, al cual me remito, y que he vertido al idioma inglés. La Plata, Buenos Aires, 10 de febrero de 2012.

ms

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Traductora Pública Nacional
en Lengua Ingles
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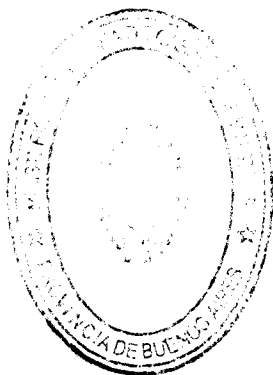
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respectivo Registro de Firmas.

DIRECCION TECNICA ALTA DE LA FUERZA

DE PARTAMENTO MASPACHA DE AUTOCORRECCION.

LA PLATA, BUENOS AIRES



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Firma Autorizada
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**ARGENTINE
STANDARD**

**IRAM
39805**

First edition

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Sustainable forest management

Group certification



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Index

	Page
1 SCOPE.....	5
2 NORMATIVE DOCUMENTS FOR CONSULTATION.....	5
3 DEFINITIONS.....	5
4 REQUIREMENTS FOR THE SETTING UP OF THE CERTIFICATION GROUP.....	6
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6 REQUIREMENTS FOR THE CHAIN OF CUSTODY OF THE CERTIFICATION GROUP.....	11
Appendix A (Informative) Certification group manual.....	13
Appendix B (Informative) Bibliography.....	16
Appendix C (Informative) Members of the standard setting forums.....	17

Sustainable forest management

Group certification

1 SCOPE

This standard specifies the requirements for group certification, destined to allow the certification of more than one management unit under a unique sustainable forest management certificate. It is applied to a unit which gathers a group of forest producers who agree on taking part in the certification group.

2 NORMATIVE DOCUMENTS FOR CONSULTATION

Every normative document mentioned below is essential for the application of this document.

When normative documents containing the year of publication are mentioned in the list, this means that that edition shall be applied, otherwise, the edition in force shall be applied, including all their changes.

IRAM 39801 – Sustainable forest management. Principles, criteria and indicators for the management unit.

3 DEFINITIONS

For the objectives of the present standard the following definitions are applied:

3.1 corrective action. Action taken to eliminate the cause of a detected nonconformity or other undesirable action.

NOTE 1. There may be more than one cause for a nonconformity.

NOTE 2. The corrective action is taken to prevent something from happening again, whereas the preventive action is taken to prevent something from happening.

3.2 preventive action. Action taken to eliminate the cause of a potential nonconformity or other potentially undesirable situation.

NOTE. There may be more than one cause for a potential nonconformity.

3.3 audit criteria. A set of policies, procedures or requirements.

NOTE. Audit criteria are used as reference against which the audit evidence is compared.

3.4 forest management audit criteria. A set of policies, procedures or requirements, such as the ones defined in IRAM 39801 and any other additional requirement within the sustainable forest management level, to which the forest auditor compares audit evidence gathered on the basis of the organization's forest management.

NOTE. Audit criteria are used as reference against which the audit evidence is compared.

3.5 document. Information and its means of support.

NOTE. The means of support can be paper; a magnetic, optic or electronic disc; a photograph or pattern sample or a combination of these.

3.6 certification group manager. A person responsible for the certification group management.

3.7 certification group. Legally constituted entity or organization which requests the certification on behalf of a group of forest producers who agree on taking part in the group.

NOTE 1. The certification group, as a legally constituted entity, is the certificate holder.

NOTE 2. The certification group can be an existing organization (a company, a private, a chamber or a sectorial association, a non-governmental organization, a governmental organization, a communal organization), or can be expressly formed for the certification process and it shall be the one in charge of signing agreements with the group members and with the certification entity.

3.8 certification group member. A physical or legal person (forest producer) who is responsible for the

management unit included in the certification group.

3.9 nonconformity. Failure to comply with a requirement.

3.10 certification group policy for sustainable forest management. Orientations and guidelines which govern the performance of the certification group in their forest resources sustainable management.

NOTE. The certification group policy for sustainable forest management provides a reference framework for the establishment of the certification group objectives.

3.11 forest producer. A physical or legal person responsible for the operations of the resource management and the forest company, as well as for the management structure and system, the planning and the field works.

3.12 procedure. A specified way to carry out an activity or process.

NOTE. The procedures can be documented or not.

3.13 program. An organized series of actions which tend to achieve particular objectives. It shall specify functions, responsibilities, processes, resources, deadlines and priorities.

3.14 record. A document which shows obtained results or provides evidence of performed activities.

3.15 forest worker. A worker who acts at the forest management unit, as a self-employed worker or with a direct work tie with the organization or with service provider companies.

3.16 management unit. A surface which is subject to sustainable forest management.

4 REQUIREMENTS FOR THE SETTING UP OF THE CERTIFICATION GROUP

4.1 General requirements

4.1.1 The certification group shall have a legally established name and entity which allows them to sign contracts with their own members and other organizations.

NOTE. The certification group as a legally established entity is the sustainable forest management certificate holder and is the one that signs the contract with the certification body.

4.1.2 The certification group shall define and document their objectives and scope.

NOTE 1. The certification group scope includes the whole area limited by the participating management units in the group certification.

NOTE 2. If the certification group or their members perform activities which are not included in the sustainable forest management certification, these do not oppose IRAM 39801.

4.1.3 The certification group members shall formalize their joining through a contract.

4.2 Certification group policy for sustainable forest management

4.2.1 The certification group shall define the certification group policy for sustainable forest management and shall make sure that:

- a) it is reached by consensus and known by every certification group member;
- b) it is documented, implemented and maintained;
- c) it includes a commitment to respect IRAM 39801's principles and criteria;
- d) it is actively communicated to forest workers and interested parties; and
- e) it is available to the public.

4.2.2 The certification group members shall agree to obey this policy in the membership contract or agreement to join the certification group.

4.3 Economic/financial resources

The certification group shall have a long term budget where it is specified how their functioning and administration

costs shall be financed.

NOTE. The financial planning has, at least, a 5-year horizon (certificate validity period).

5 REQUIREMENTS FOR THE FUNCTIONING OF THE CERTIFICATION GROUP

5.1 Obligations and responsibilities

5.1.1 General requirements

5.1.1.1 The certification group shall define and document the organizational structure and establish the obligations and responsibilities of each one of their components.

NOTE 1. A certification group formed by a few members can present a simple organizational structure and a certification group which has a lot of members can present various levels of responsibility or management with a wide variety of support personnel.

NOTE 2. Regardless of the complexity the organizational structure presents, it is always useful to have an organization chart containing the responsibilities of every position in the chart.

5.1.1.2 Every member of the certification group shall have an updated document which describes their obligations and responsibilities towards sustainable forest management of their resources and the obligations and responsibilities delegated to the certification group manager.

5.1.1.3 The members of the certification group shall receive information and training which is adequate to fulfill their obligations.

5.1.2 Obligations and responsibilities of the certification group.

5.1.2.1 The certification group shall at least:

- a) request the group certification;
- b) keep an updated record of the members of the certification group;
- c) communicate to the certification entity within a maximum of 30 days when a member joins or leaves the certification group;
- d) communicate to the certification group members their obligations and responsibilities;
- e) verify and assure that every member of the certification group meets the IRAM 39801 sustainable forest management requirements;
- f) define, verify and assure the compliance of the requirements of admission of new members and of expulsion of members;
- g) monitor and control the compliance of the management system requirements which govern the functioning of the certification group and the performance level of the forest management activities of the members;
- h) control the management system documentation of the certification group;
- i) provide the members with technical support and advice during the whole process of certification, audits and management of the certificate;
- j) guard and watch over the maintenance of the certification group certificate, issued by the certification body.

5.1.2.2 The certification group shall appoint a certification group manager and shall define their functions, responsibilities and management authority.

NOTE. The certification group manager is allowed to perform all the tasks which they are requested to perform by this standard or they are able to delegate some of them to other people of the certification group or to external consultants, keeping the corresponding records.

5.1.2.3 The certification group manager shall identify the training needs of the certification group members related to sustainable forest management and to the certification group management system. They shall provide the training or undertake other actions to meet these needs and shall keep the associated records.

5.1.3 Obligations and responsibilities of the certification group members

The certification group members shall at least:

a) sign a membership contract to join the certification group which includes at least the following points:

- a commitment to fulfill the principles, criteria and indicators of IRAM 39801;

- the description of the obligations and responsibilities of the certification group manager and member related to forest management;
- the authorization for the certification group manager's free access to the management units with monitoring and control objectives;
- the respect of the decisions of the certification group manager in case of suspension or expulsion of a certification group member because of a serious mistake in the forest management performance;
- the authorization for the certification body's access to perform the monitoring and certification audits;
- b) specify and document the management units which request their inclusion within the certification group certification;
- c) achieve and maintain the management levels required;
- d) participate in the training activities established by the certification group manager;
- e) request the necessary advice to the certification group manager.

5.2 Minimum requirements of the certification group management system.

5.2.1 General requirements

The certification group shall establish, document, maintain and improve a management system in accordance with the following requirements 5.2.2, 5.2.3, 5.2.4 and 5.2.5, which guarantees the correct implementation of this standard and assures its compliance.

NOTE: Within the certification group management system, the requirements which govern its correct functioning are defined.

5.2.2 Documentation

5.2.2.1 The management system documentation shall include at least:

- a) the policy and objectives of the certification group;
- b) the description of the application field which includes an updated map with the location and extension of the management units which make up the certification group;
- c) the structure of the certification group and the obligations and responsibilities of each one of its components;
- d) the description of the main elements of the system and their functioning, as well as the reference to related documents;
- e) every procedure required by this standard and those which determine the certification group manager as necessary to assure the correct certification group management;
- f) the records required by this standard.

NOTE. The documentation required by this standard, the description of the group functioning and all that essential information which contributes to the correct performance of the certification group members can be found summarized in a unique document called *Certification group manual*, like the one presented in appendix A.

5.2.2.2 The manager shall have an updated list of all the required documentation and a copy of every document, which includes the date of the latest revision.

5.2.2.3 Each member of the certification group shall have an updated list of all the documentation required by them and a copy of every document, which includes the date of the latest revision.

5.2.3 Documentation control

5.2.3.1 The documents required by the certification group management system and by this standard shall be controlled.

5.2.3.2 The manager of the certification group shall establish, implement and maintain one or various procedures to:

- a) approve the documents in connection with their adaptation before their issuance and distribution;
- b) revise and update the documents when necessary and approve them again;
- c) assure that the changes and the present revision state of the documents are identified;
- d) assure that the relevant versions of the applicable documents are available to each certification group user;
- e) keep a distribution record of updated documents.

5.2.4 Internal audit

5.2.4.1 The certification group manager shall plan and implement a program of internal audits to evaluate the

conformity of the certification group management system with the requirements of this standard. The procedures of the audit program shall consider:

- a) the planning and elaboration of the audit calendar at intervals inferior to a year;
- b) the definition of intensity and the size of the sample to be audited;
- c) the verification of the conformity with this standard of all the requirements of the certification group management system and the compliance of the obligations and responsibilities of all the parties;
- d) the monitoring and control of the corrective actions implementation in the time prescribed;
- e) the selection of the appropriate audit teams and the appointment of functions and responsibilities;
- f) the conservation of the records of the audit program for 5 years.

5.2.4.2 The certification group manager shall plan and implement a program of internal audits to evaluate the performance of the forest management activities of the certification group members. The procedures of the audit program shall consider:

- a) the planning and elaboration of the audit calendar at intervals inferior to a year;
- b) at least an annual audit by a member of the certification group to their management unit;
- c) the evaluation of all the aspects of sustainable forest management and the conformity with the principles, criteria and indicators of IRAM 39801 which the certification group member is responsible for;
- d) the monitoring and control of the corrective actions implementation in the time prescribed;
- e) the selection of the appropriate audit teams and the appointment of functions and responsibilities;
- f) the conservation of the records of the audit program for 5 years.

5.2.5 Nonconformity, corrective action and preventive action

The certification group manager shall establish, implement and maintain one or various procedures to deal with real and potential nonconformities and take corrective and preventive actions. The procedures shall contain, at least, specifications for:

- a) the identification, description and correction of nonconformities;
- b) the description, identification of the responsible person and period of implementation of corrective and preventive actions;
- c) the investigation of nonconformities, determination of their causes and actions to prevent them from happening again;
- d) the record of corrective and preventive actions taken and their conservation for a period of 5 years;
- e) the revision of the efficiency of the corrective and preventive actions taken.

5.3 Admission of new members

5.3.1 General requirements

5.3.1.1 The certification group shall establish and document a procedure of admission of new members which assures that only the management units which fulfill the principles, criteria and indicators of IRAM 39801 are admitted in the certification group.

5.3.1.2 The procedure shall include all the requirements and activities which the member shall fulfill in order to be admitted and the way in which the admission decision is made.

5.3.2 Preadmission audit

5.3.2.1 The certification group manager shall perform an audit to each management unit which requests their membership before their admission to the certification group.

NOTE 1. The certification group manager is allowed to perform all the tasks requested by this standard or is able to delegate some of them to other people of the certification group or to external consultants, keeping the corresponding records.

NOTE 2. The correct selection of the auditor assures the objectivity and impartiality of the audit process.

5.3.2.2 The criteria of the preadmission audit shall include all the IRAM 39801 requirements. The verification list used in the audit shall be kept as a record.

5.3.2.3 The audit report shall contain a description of the management unit, management plan and its

implementation, products and performance estimate.

5.3.3 Admission

The admission of members shall be made conditional on:

- a) the implementation of corrective actions to the nonconformities detected in the preadmission audit;
- b) the verification of the efficiency of the corrective actions implemented; and
- c) the assumption and documentation of a long term commitment to belong to a certification group and manage their forest resources in accordance with the requirements of this standard.

5.4 Certification group resignation or expulsion

5.4.1 General requirements

The certification group shall establish and document a procedure of voluntary resignation to the certification group and shall establish and document a procedure of expulsion of members which assures that the management units which do not fulfill the requirements of this standard are suspended or expelled.

5.4.2 Voluntary resignation

The procedure of voluntary resignation to the certification group shall specify at least:

- a) the circumstances in which it is permitted to resign to the certification group;
- b) the obligations of the member who decides to resign to the certification group;
- c) the notification method of resignation to the certification group manager;
- d) the maintenance of relevant records;
- e) the communication to the certification body, the remaining members and the interested parties.

5.4.3 Expulsion and suspension

The procedure of expulsion and suspension from the certification group shall specify at least:

- a) the circumstances of suspension and expulsion from the certification group;

NOTE. The circumstances of expulsion and suspension are directly related to the characteristics/magnitude of the detected nonconformities (noncompliance of established requirements).

- b) the method of communication to the member about the suspension until the corrective actions are complete in order to eliminate the cause of the detected nonconformities;
- c) the method of communication to the member about their expulsion;
- d) the method of readmission in accordance with the requirements defined in 5.3.3 of the present standard;
- e) the maintenance of relevant records;
- f) the communication to the certification body, the remaining members and the interested parties.

5.5 Complaints

5.5.1 The certification group shall establish and document a procedure of treatment and resolution of third parties' complaints and of conflicts among the certification group members.

5.5.2 The certification group manager shall appoint a person responsible for the treatment and management of complaints. When the complaints give rise to nonconformities, these shall be treated following the procedure defined in 5.2.5.

6 REQUIREMENTS FOR THE CHAIN OF CUSTODY OF THE CERTIFICATION GROUP

6.1 General requirements

6.1.1 The certification group shall establish, document, implement and maintain the chain of custody procedures which allow them to quantify, describe and control all the forest products elaborated by the certification group and the ones purchased from third parties by certification group members or by the certification group.

6.1.2 The certification group manager shall have the authority to implement the chain of custody procedures and is

the person responsible for their correct functioning.

6.2 Procedures for the chain of custody

The procedures of the chain of custody shall consider at least:

- a) the identification in a unique and precise way of the identity, source and origin of all the forest products elaborated by the certification group and the ones purchased from third parties by certification group members or by the certification group.
- b) the monitoring and control of the forest products elaborated within the certification group from their origin point until the place of transformation and/or sale;
- c) the monitoring and control of the forest products elaborated by third parties from their admission into the certification group until the place of transformation and/or sale;
- d) the verification that the certification group does not admit forest products coming from expelled or suspended members as certified material;
- e) the verification that the certification group does not admit forest products coming from controversial sources;
- f) the update of documents which describe all the forest products which the certification group can sell.

6.3 Records for the chain of custody

The certification group manager shall keep a record of at least:

- a) the estimate annual or periodic performance of the members of the certification group;
- b) every forest product elaborated by the certification group;
- c) the forest products purchased from third parties by members of the certification group or by the certification group and the data of the suppliers involved;
- d) every forest product negotiated by the certification group;
- e) every document involved in the transportation and transaction of forest products of the certification group.

Appendix A (Informative)

Certification group manual

A.1 Certification group manual

The certification group manual describes the functioning of the group and systematizes all the documentation required by this standard, at the same time it is a useful tool to inform the members about the functioning of the group, the obligations and responsibilities of the composing parties and of the certification processes and their requirements.

It is advisable that the manual is appropriate to the characteristics of the certification group members and that the level of documentation it contains is coherent with the size, scale and intensity of the forest operations involved.

A.2 Contents of the certification group manual

The points suggested below and their systematization are a guide for the elaboration of the certification group manual. It is advisable that every certification group identifies what information and what is their most appropriate order according to their idiosyncrasies:

1. Information about the certification group and their requirements:

- a) a certification group policy for sustainable forest management and requirements for forest sustainable management;
- b) the structure of the certification group and the obligations and responsibilities of their parties;
- c) rules for the integration, retirement and expulsion of the certification group members;
- d) characteristics of the preadmission audit and verification list used for the audit;

NOTE. The verification list used can be handed in to the candidates to allow them to perform a self evaluation and to verify if they are fulfilling all the certification group requirements before the preadmission audit is performed.

- e) details of the internal audit program of the certification group including preventive action requests, corrective action requests or corrective and preventive action requests and their monitoring;
- f) a procedure to be followed in case of third parties' complaints or if the member has a difficult situation with the certification group manager or other members;
- g) costs of integration and maintenance of the certification group and the expenses for any service provided by the certification group manager;
- h) rules to make the complaints associated to the certification.

2. Information about the certification process and the certification requirements:

- a) characteristics of the certification process, including the sampling system, so that certification group members understand why only some are visited by the certifier.
- b) requirement which allows the certifier to access the selected management unit at any time.

3. A practical guide for the compliance of the IRAM 39801 requirements:

- a) development and maintenance of management plans;
- b) development and implementation of conservation strategies;
- c) queries with the interested parties and treatment of complaints;
- d) maintenance of a forest inventory.

4. A list of laws, codes of good practice and guidelines to be complied by the certification group members:

- a) laws applicable to forest activity;

NOTE. A list or short summary of the main requirements of each law.

- b) recognized codes of good practice, technical documents of support and guidelines to obtain them.

NOTE 1. The handbook can indicate recognized technical documentation and applicable to the region like handbooks of good practice of official organizations, a list of pesticides approved by SENASA (SENASA is an organization responsible to guarantee and certify the health and quality of the agricultural, fishing and forest production), etc.

NOTE 2. The handbook can provide contact data of technological centers and official extension.

5. Chain of custody and rules on the use of the name and logo of the national certification system, the PEFC logo or both;

NOTE. PEFC stands for Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification.

- a) a summary of the internal rules of the chain of custody;
- b) certification group rules for members who negotiate timber individually as certified;
- c) rules for the use of the logo of the national certification system, the PEFC logo or both;

6. Data of the identified service providers to perform the operations.

NOTE. Identification data of contractors who have been trained or tested to assure that their work complies the requirements specified by the certification group.

- a) details of the preferred contractor, including name, contact address or telephone number, operations performed and prices;
- b) details of any benefit or discount available/agreed for the certification group members;

NOTE. Some information used in the elaboration of appendix A (Informative) was obtained from Ruth Nussbaum. Group certification forests: a practical guide. ProForest, 2002.

Appendix B

(Informative)

Bibliography

In this standard setting the following background has been taken into account:

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IRAM-ISO 14001:2005 – Environmental management systems. Use oriented requirements.

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Nussbaum, Ruth. 2002. Group certification for forests: a practical guide. Forestry Research Programme, ProForest.
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Appendix C

(Informative)

Members of the standard setting forum

The setting of this standard has been in charge of the respective forums, composed in the following way:

Forest Management Commission (WG2)

Member

Ricardo BANCHS, Bachelor of Sciences
 Facundo BERTOLAMI, Engineer
 Sebastian BESSONART, Engineer
 Natalia FRACASSI, Bachelor of Sciences
 Adrián GONZÁLEZ, Bachelor of Sciences
 Mrs. Ariana IACONIS
 María Cecilia LI PUMA, Bachelor of Sciences
 Fernando MENDIZABAL, Engineer
 Mirta de los Ángeles MIÑO, Bachelor of Sciences
 Damián OLEMBERG, Bachelor of Sciences
 Jorge Nelson PARDÍAS, Bachelor of Sciences
 Pablo PICCHIO, Engineer
 Sabrina RODRÍGUEZ, Engineer
 Jorge SCARPA, Engineer
 María Aurora AGULLO, Bachelor of Sciences
 Florencia CHAVAT, Engineer

Represents:

WILD FAUNA DEPARTMENT - NATIONAL SECRETARIAT FOR ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
 FOREST DEPARTMENT - NATIONAL SECRETARIAT FOR ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
 FOREST DEPARTMENT - NATIONAL SECRETARIAT FOR ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
 EXPERIMENTAL AGRICULTURAL STATION DELTA DEL PARANÁ
 - NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGY
 EXPERIMENTAL AGRICULTURAL STATION DELTA DEL PARANÁ
 - NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGY
 FOREST DEPARTMENT – NATIONAL SECRETARIAT OF AGRICULTURE, LIVESTOCK, FISHERIES AND FOOD
 WILD FAUNA DEPARTMENT - NATIONAL SECRETARIAT FOR ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
 EDERRA S.A.
 WOOD AND FURNITURE – NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGY
 EXPERIMENTAL AGRICULTURAL STATION DELTA DEL PARANÁ
 - NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGY
 SPECIALIST GUEST
 FOREST DEPARTMENT - NATIONAL SECRETARIAT FOR ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
 SPECIALIST GUEST
 ARGENTINIAN FOREST ASSOCIATION / PAPEL PRENSA S.A.
 IRAM
 IRAM

General Committee of Standards (G.C.S.)

Member

Vicente BIANCHI, Bachelor of Sciences
 José M. CARACUEL, M.D.
 Alberto CERINI, Bachelor of Sciences
 Irene DASSO, M.D.

Member

Ricardo MACCHI, M.D.
 Hugo D. MARCH, Technician
 Ángel TESTORELLI, Technician
 Raúl DELLA PORTA, Engineer

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* It corresponds to the National Supply Classification appointed by the National Cataloguing Service of the Defense Department.