



# PEFC Council Board

Virtual Meeting  
Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> March  
Wednesday 1 April 2020

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## Minutes

### Present:

- Peter Latham (Chair)
- David Ford (1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair)
- Geneviève Chua (2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair)
- Brian Kernohan
- Dradjad Wibowo
- Eduardo Rojas y Briales
- Gerald Pfiffinger
- Hervé LeBouler
- Josien Tokoe
- Kurt Ramskogler
- Nurudeen Iddrisu
- Peter Crook
- Riikka Joukio
- Suzette Weeding

### Apologies:

- |                  |              |
|------------------|--------------|
| • Genevieve Chua | Session 1    |
| • Jin Sook Lee   | All sessions |
| • Josien Tokoe   | Session 1    |

### In attendance:

- Ben Gunneberg (Secretary General)
- Michael Berger (Deputy General Secretary)
- Esa Harmala (PEFC Nominations Committee)
- Jan McAlpine (PEFC Nominations Committee)

### For selected agenda items

- Thomas Seyvet (Item 5.6)
- Gill Parker (Item 6.1)
- Fabienne Sinclair (Item 8.1)
- Alexander Knapp (Item 8.2)

## 1. AGENDA

### 1.1 Declarations of potential conflicts of interest with agenda

- Declarations of potential conflicts of interest with agenda – there were none

**BOD/4/2020** Unanimously agreed:

- To approve the Agenda

### 1.2 Affiliations update

Board members reviewed their affiliations

**BOD/5/2020** Unanimously agreed:

- To approve the Board Affiliation

## 2. MINUTES

**BOD/6/2020** Unanimously agreed:

- To approve the minutes of the last Board meeting held Monday 17 February 2020 via video conference call.

## 3. MATTERS ARISING

### 3.1 Risk items to be considered

The Board noted the actions taken by the Secretariat with respect to the Covid 19 pandemic in terms of:

- audit requirements;
- extending endorsement milestones of national systems;
- extending the transition periods of the three recently approved standards by the General Assembly;
- the secretariat office arrangements

Some of the challenges being faced by NGB members were also considered.

### 3.2 Board Follow up (Q4 Progress report)

- The Chair and Vice chair reported on recent meetings with PEFC Sweden and with WWF.

- Noted that PEFC had written letters to EC concerning the appointment of assessors of certification systems and also to the minister in Gabon.

## 4. STRATEGIC DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Women in Forestry

The Board considered this item at length and decided to start work on developing a PEFC “social inclusion declaration” covering a range of stakeholders. The Secretary General was tasked to put together a small working group on this issue including selected board members, and report back to the Board with a view to having a final document approved by the General Assembly. The declaration, once approved, should be applied in standards setting processes.

## 5. OPERATIONAL ITEMS

### 5.1 Board charter Review (including policies)

The Board noted the changes to the charter and suggested some changes which were noted. It was agreed to split the charter from the policies to allow publication of the charter on the website once finalised. It was also noted that the documentation statutes, charter and guidelines) with regards to governance had grown organically over time and now needed a general review. It was noted that member consultation and GA approval would be needed as part of the review process.

**BOD/7/2020** Unanimously agreed:

- To approve the PEFC Board Charter and Policies as amended

### 5.2 Risk Register Review (including members feedback)

The Secretary General reported on both the member and Board input into reviewing the

register. Board members considered several items in discussion including substitution of CO2 intensive products by using those from sustainably managed forests versus forests' role in carbon storage and agreed to keep these matters under review. As the Register was a live document, adjustments would be made and reviewed by the Board as an ongoing process

**BOD/8/2020** Unanimously agreed:

- To approve the Risk Register as amended

### 5.3 Integrity programme Update

The Deputy General Secretary referred the Board to the options outlined in paper 5.3. The Board noted the current elements already in place and the need to extend these further. The Board agreed that PEFC should start work on further enhancing its current integrity programme by conducting a consultant review on an overall encompassing concept for the PEFC Council and to plan / allocate expenditure for this in the budget. Current activity related to ensuring integrity should be noted and communicated to a wider audience so they were aware of this and of developments

**BOD/9/2020** Unanimously agreed:

- To note the Integrity programme update and its follow up.

### 5.4 Overview of PEFC Data Ecosystem

The Deputy Secretary General referred the Board to paper 5.4 which provided an overview about the current status of the Data Ecosystem. The purpose of the Data Ecosystem is to harmonize existing IT tools and thereby to support an increase in performance and efficiency of the Secretariat and in the PEFC Council work overall. It was noted that the implementation of the PEFC Data Ecosystem is part of the Secretariat's

work plan 2020. It was also noted that some elements were already budgeted for and that others would require new budget

**BOD/10/2020** Unanimously agreed:

- To note the overview of PEFC Data Ecosystem V1

### 5.5 PEFC Database Management System – budget

It was noted that there was no paper on this as the period for the call for tender had been extended due to the COVID 19 situation.

### 5.6 ISM Approach – Update

Mr Thomas Seyvet made a presentation of the services currently being supplied and planned to be supplied to enhance the service to and engagement of PEFC international Stakeholder members. Capacity building, collaborative projects and enhancing PEFC values were quoted as development focus areas of this project. The Board noted the progress and some of the clear linkages to the work being undertaken by the Board's Marketing, Communication and Advocacy Working Group.

### 5.7 Letter (IBA) concerning re Sustainable Intensification

The PEFC Secretary General reported that he had been engaged in ongoing discussions on "sustainable intensification" and "sustainable optimisation" since the original letter from iba had been submitted to the Board at the PEFC Week in November.

The Board noted that iba (with the support of some PEFC NGBs and ISMs) has not been in a position to finalise its request, and supported the proposal for technology updates at PEFC gatherings to ensure members are up to speed with latest developments, this being in line with PEFC's learning organisational culture.

The Secretary General would continue the dialogue to accommodate this request.

**BOD/11/2020** Unanimously agreed:

- To note the update on discussions with Iba

## 5.8 Dates and Deadlines 2021

The Board considered these in the light of a possible “new normal” post COVID 19 with respect to the dates and deadlines for PEFC Council meetings 2021. The issue of the role and purpose of the stakeholder dialogue and resources needed to run these was also raised and it was agreed to revisit these. Some of the meetings might need to be virtual and others in person, but at this stage it was important to agree the dates (and communicate these as provisional to members). Venues could be agreed at a later stage, although it was noted that the venue for the PEFC Week – currently planned for Montreux in Switzerland – was in the process of being booked. Depending on what happened with PEFC week planned in Ireland this year, it might be prudent to consider Ireland as the venue for next year if this year’s PEFC Week had to be virtual due to ongoing COVID 19 restrictions. The Board would keep the matter under review.

**BOD/12/2020** Unanimously agreed:

- The dates and Deadline for PEFC Council meetings in 2021

## 6. FINANCES

### 6.1 Management Accounts Committee (MAC)

The Chair of the MAC (Geneviève Chua) provided a summary of the Q4 accounts (2019) and the first draft of the accounts to be sent for auditing. It was noted that a near balanced result had been achieved for 2019 with a minor deficit. Updates on PEFC’s reserves and investment strategies were also

provided in light of the COVID 19 situation. It was also noted that a meeting had been held with a consultant to assist in recommendations on upgrading the accounting system of PEFC and an offer was expected shortly. It was further noted that this was also part of the PEFC Data Ecosystem review (see item 5.4).

The Secretary General reported on the financial outlook for 2020 and noted that the majority of NGBs had, or had given dates, for payment of 2020 subscriptions. COVID-19 related factors were more likely to impact 2021 and work plans and budgets would have to reflect the range between ‘best case’ and ‘worse case’ scenarios. He had had initial discussions with the Chair.

**BOD/13/2020** Unanimously agreed:

- To note the draft accounts for the year end 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019 and that these would now be sent for audit

## 7. MEMBERSHIP (NGB)

### 7.1 Sierra Leone

The Board considered the application submitted by the “Forest Certification Council – Sierra Leone” and agreed that there was still need for further development of the operational perspective of the organisation prior to it being recommended as a full member of PEFC.

Nevertheless, the Board felt that the progress to date should be recognised and thus agreed to designate the council as the “candidate PEFC NGB member for Sierra Leone”.

This new, but not formal, status would allow the representatives of the council to attend all PEFC events (Members Meeting and also the PEFC Week) and to nominate representatives in initiatives and working groups of PEFC.

This is a new status approved by the Board and as such needs no further action by members. Members would only approve the final full membership (as per the statutes) at

the General Assembly when the candidate to proseed for full membership by the Board.

The secretary General was tasked to ensure the further development of guidance documentation to reflect this new development being proposed by the Board.

**BOD/14/2020** Unanimously agreed:

- To recognize the Forest Certification Council – Sierra Leone as the “candidate PEFC NGB member” in Sierra Leone.

## 7.2 Turkey

The Board decided to delay its decision on a recommendation concerning the application (of the Association for Sustainable Forest Management, Forest Products and Services Certification to become the PEFC NGB member in Turkey) to allow some clarifying questions to be answered.

## 8. COMMITTEE UPDATES

### 8.1 Strategic Funding Task Force

The Chair of the Board’s “Strategic Funding Task Force” (David Ford) updated Board members on developments of the Task Force’s work and it was noted that he had presented to staff and would be presenting to the members on the current status of the work undertaken. The presentation would be placed on the PEFC Extranet for members and board members. It was further noted (Covid 19 permitting) that an extra Board meeting dedicated to reviewing the options for PEFC was planned in London for 23-24<sup>th</sup> July

### 8.2 Marketing Communications & Advocacy WG (MCA) Update

The Chair of the Board’s Marketing, Communications and Advocacy Working Group (Riikka Joukio) reported that since November, the working group remit had been approved, members appointed and the working group had met in person once and

virtually earlier that week. They had assessed the market and reviewed the MCA’s role and determine internal and external success factors as well as how its work would be able to assist in the reporting on the strategic indicators for the PEFC strategy. 2020 was the preparation and planning year and implementation proper would commence in 2021.

## 9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was none

## 10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Board Retreat, 23-24th July London, UK (Covid 19 permitting)

Signed:

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Peter Latham

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Ben Gunneberg