

Draft

PEFC International's Recognition of Certification Body Internal PEFC Chain of Custody Training (TRP)

Guidelines for the recognition process



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1. Background

PEFC chain of custody related standards (*PEFC ST 2001, PEFC Trademarks, PEFC ST 2002, Chain of Custody and PEFC ST 2003, Certification Body Requirements for Chain of Custody*) were revised and approved in 2020. As part of this revision process, PEFC International (referred to as PEFC) is revising the training framework for chain of custody according to the 2020 version of PEFC ST 2003. The aim of this revision is to ensure that the PEFC chain of custody related standards are implemented in a harmonised, consistent and transparent manner worldwide.

To do so, we have reviewed the *PEFC International Training Recognition Programme (TRP)*. The TRP, running since 2014, is a voluntary continuous programme that enables certification bodies to develop and implement an internal PEFC chain of custody training programme for auditors, reviewers and certification decision makers¹ recognized by PEFC International, in compliance with PEFC ST 2003.

The main advantage of the TRP is that participating certification bodies do not have to plan how and when every individual participant can attend a training organized by PEFC. Instead, they can decide when to train their personnel, integrate this training as part of other trainings and, in most cases, lower the cost of the training per auditor, reviewer and certification decision maker.

This document describes the process to participate in the TRP. It also details the requirements for certification bodies to obtain and maintain the recognition of their internal PEFC chain of custody trainings (referred to as internal trainings), and the requirements for their internal PEFC chain of custody training programmes (referred to as internal training programmes). Moreover, it also includes requirements to ensure continuous coordination and communication between PEFC and the participating certification bodies.

This document may be revised in the future, once feedback on its implementation is gathered.

2. TRP coordinator

The TRP is managed and coordinated by PEFC International Technical Unit.

3. TRP target participating certification bodies

Notified² certification bodies that provide internal training on the PEFC chain of custody related standards for their auditors, reviewers and certification decision makers, and would like this internal

¹ The 2020 version of *PEFC ST 2003, Requirements for Certification Bodies providing Chain of Custody Certification*, now includes requirements for reviewers and certification decision makers, including PEFC chain of custody recognised training, such as for auditors. In order to cover reviewers and certification decision makers as part of the TRP, the revised TRP guidelines include them as part of the scope of the certification body internal training.

² Certification bodies that are notified by PEFC Council or a PEFC authorised body to provide PEFC chain of custody certification. As part of the notification, certification bodies shall comply with any applicable accreditation requirements, as per the PEFC Council technical documentation.

training to be recognised by PEFC, in order to comply with the minimum PEFC chain of custody training requirements within PEFC ST 2003, requirements 6.1.1.2.3 and 6.1.1.4.3.

4. TRP objectives

The TRP objectives are to ensure:

- PEFC chain of custody related standards are consistently understood and implemented worldwide.
- Auditors, reviewers and certification decision makers receive harmonised and high-quality training, and perform quality PEFC chain of custody audits.
- All PEFC chain of custody training takes place in coordination with PEFC.
- Continuous communication between PEFC and the participating certification bodies.
- Clear and concrete requirements to assess certification body internal training programmes.
- An up-to-date register of all trained auditors, and accreditation bodies helped in the process to check training requirements according to PEFC ST 2003.

5. Recognition process

The TRP is a continuous programme. To maintain their participation in the TRP, certification bodies must continue to fulfil all the following phases.

5.1. Phase I: Initial session

The **certification body representative** must attend an initial session. The objective of the initial session is to provide information on the TRP participation requirements, and provide the representative with a technical calibration on the most recent interpretations of the PEFC chain of custody related standards, and any other clarification that PEFC may have identified as needed.

5.2 Phase II: Application

In order to apply for recognition, the following information shall be submitted to PEFC:

- a) Completed training recognition application form (see Annex 1).
- b) The certification body's internal training programme, including training content and materials for initial and refresher training (PEFC International will share the training materials on request after the TRP application form has been submitted).
- c) List of the certification body's trainers, together with their qualifications.

The application must be sent by email to Linda Matole at linda.matole@pefc.org.

5.3 Phase III: Assessment of the application

PEFC will evaluate the application. In this phase, the documentation is assessed against the requirements outlined in this document. The certification body will receive a response within four weeks of submission.

If changes or amendments to the internal training programme are required by PEFC, the certification body will have to resolve them before participation in the TRP is confirmed.

If the submission is successful, the certification body will be granted participation in the TRP, and can start conducting internal trainings.

To maintain participation in the TRP, the certification body internal training programme shall be submitted to PEFC for evaluation every two years (see 5.5.4), and whenever there is a new issuance of one of the PEFC related chain of custody standards.

5.4 Phase IV: Recognition of the internal training

5.4.1 Training report

After conducting training, the certification body representative shall provide PEFC with the training report form (see Annex 2). This report includes, among others, the names of the participants that have completed the training and the invoicing details for the certification body.

5.4.2 Payment of fees

PEFC will send an invoice to be paid by the certification body. The invoice must be paid within 21 days. The fee is based on the number of participants and the type of training conducted (see Fees, Chapter 8).

5.4.3. Knowledge test

Based on the information within the training report, PEFC will send a link of the PEFC online knowledge test to each of the participants. Participants will have three weeks to take the knowledge test. In order to pass the knowledge test, participants need a score of at least 80%.

5.4.4.1 Knowledge test scores of less than 80%

If a participant obtains less than 80%:

- a) Score between 65% and 79%: the participant shall review the training materials and the chain of custody related standards and re-take the knowledge test.
- b) Score less than 65%: the participant will need to re-take the training and the knowledge test.

A second and third attempt to take the knowledge test will be free of charge.

5.4.5 PEFC chain of custody training recognised certificates

PEFC will provide the certification body representative (prior to the payment of the fees) with a summary of the knowledge test results, detailing the percentage of correct questions and the answers provided by the participants to each question.

Once confirmation of payment is received, PEFC will provide the certification body representative with a digital certificate (for each successful participant) within two weeks. The certificates are proof of participation in a PEFC chain of custody recognised training, in compliance with PEFC ST 2003³.

If the online knowledge test is not passed, or confirmation of payment of the fees is not received, the certificates will not be granted.

5.4.6 Register of trained auditors, reviewers and certification decision makers

PEFC will maintain a register of trained auditors, reviewers and certification decision makers. The participants that pass the knowledge test will be added to this register.

For the purpose of ensuring PEFC's integrity, the information included in this register may be made available to accreditation bodies, certified companies or PEFC stakeholders.

5.5. Phase V: Maintenance of TRP participation

In order to maintain participation in the TRP, the certification body shall continue to carry out the following tasks.

5.5.1 Provide internal trainings in accordance with the TRP requirements

- a) The certification body shall ensure that auditors, reviewers and certification decision makers receive the proper training and fulfil all requirements, including taking the knowledge test within the three-week period.
- b) Pay the fees on time, when invoiced by PEFC. The payment cannot be delayed. In case of delay, the recognition of the training will not be granted.

5.5.2 Maintain continuous communication and coordination with PEFC

- a) Use the dedicated Podio workspace to be up-to-date on all information made available.
- b) Provide PEFC with feedback on the application of the PEFC chain of custody standards, the implementation of the TRP, and any other feedback that the certification body may consider relevant.
- c) In addition to the initial session described in 5.1, attend any TRP sessions⁴, when requested by PEFC. PEFC may schedule four sessions per year, mainly online. The certification body representative shall attend all the sessions (see also 6.1.2, f). Some sessions may also require

³ Independently of the certification body providing the training, the certificate is valid to show compliance with the PEFC chain of custody recognised training requirements in PEFC ST 2003. Freelance auditors can receive training by any entity providing recognised training. A valid recognised chain of custody training certificate issued by PEFC International is sufficient proof of evidence of compliance with the requirements 6.1.1.2.3 and 6.1.1.4.3 of the PEFC ST 2003:2020, independently of the organisation which originally provided the training. Freelance auditors need to take a PEFC chain of custody recognized training and pass the knowledge test once, and not from every certification body with whom they may work for.

⁴ TRP sessions may be attended by the certification body representative or by the certification body trainers, depending on the subject of the session. This will be clarified for each session.

attendance by the certification body trainers (see also 6.2.2, b). This will be specified in advance. PEFC will keep a register of attendance. The sessions will cover, among others:

- technical updates
- ensuring that the certification body internal training programmes incorporate the updates
- coordination
- gathering feedback regarding the application of the PEFC chain of custody standards or implementation of the TRP

5.5.3 Further cooperation with PEFC

- a) On request, allow a PEFC technical expert to attend an internal training⁵.
- b) On request, allow a PEFC technical expert to observe, at least, one PEFC chain of custody audit annually⁶.

The arrangements for PEFC to attend either an internal training or observe an audit will be handled and coordinated with the certification body in advance.

5.5.4 Re-evaluation of the certification body internal training programmes

The certification body internal training programmes will be re-evaluated every two years. Certification bodies shall re-submit their training materials to PEFC International, and the trainers and representatives shall attend a PEFC chain of custody update session.

It will take maximum four weeks for PEFC to conduct the re-evaluation and during this time the recognition will still be valid. The re-evaluation does not have any additional cost. The fees structure will be the same as indicated in chapter 8 for each refresher or initial PEFC chain of custody training.

6. Certification body personnel involved in the TRP

6.1. Certification body representative

The certification body shall assign at least one person to be the certification body representative. The certification body representative shall coordinate the internal training programme and be the contact point with PEFC.

The certification body representative can be also a trainer.

6.1.1 Certification body representative qualifications

- a) Good coordination and communication skills
- b) Attention to detail
- c) Familiar with PEFC certification

⁵ Costs incurred for the attendance of an internal training by PEFC are to be assumed by PEFC.

⁶ Costs incurred for the observation of an audit by PEFC are to be assumed by PEFC.

6.1.2 Certification body representative responsibilities

The certification body representative has the following responsibilities:

- a) Attend an initial session on the TRP programme, led by PEFC (see 5.1).
- b) Be the main contact point with PEFC and ensure the communication and coordination with PEFC takes place continuously. This includes, among others, the following tasks:
 - Ensuring that PEFC receives the training application (see Annex 1 and 5.2) and the training report (see Annex 2 and 5.4.1) before and after every training.
 - Ensuring that the invoicing details of the certification body included in the training report are correct.
 - Ensuring that payment of fees takes place.
- c) Receive the PEFC chain of custody recognised training certificates from PEFC, ensuring that the participant details are correct, and providing each certificate to the corresponding participant.
- d) Ensure that any personal information collected as part of the training is done in compliance with GDPR, the Suisse Federal Act on data protection, and any other nationally-relevant data protection laws. This includes ensuring that participants are aware of the information the certification body is sharing with PEFC and informing the participants of the usage of this information (access to the online knowledge test, information added to PEFC's register of trained auditors, reviewers and certification decision makers, and that this information may be shared with other parties, such as accreditation bodies, exclusively for certification purposes).
- e) Be familiar with the PEFC TRP requirements and guarantee that the certification body training complies with them.
- f) Attend TRP sessions (see 5.5.2, c), when planned by PEFC.
- g) Ensure that TRP trainers are aware of any technical updates and the training materials are updated accordingly.
- h) Keep an up-to-date list of certification body trainers and provide them to PEFC, whenever it is updated and on request.
- i) Ensure that PEFC receives any feedback, technical or any other kind, that may be important for certification purposes.
- j) Keep proof of evidence of the participation of the training participants.
- k) Ensure that any person involved in the training has the necessary competencies for it.
- l) Provide PEFC with the training materials, whenever they are updated.

6.2 Certification body trainers

6.2.1 Certification body trainer qualifications

- a) Fulfilment of the requirements from PEFC ST 2003:2020 for qualified auditors.
- b) Advanced knowledge on PEFC in general, the PEFC chain of custody related standards, and any other related documentation.
- c) Trained on "how to train" techniques. The certification body can facilitate a training skills session for their trainers.
- d) Advanced knowledge of the language in which the training is provided.

6.2.2 Certification body trainer responsibilities

The certification body trainer has the following responsibilities:

- a) Pass the knowledge test before starting to provide trainings⁷
- b) Provide trainings in compliance with the TRP requirements.
- c) Attend TRP technical sessions (see 5.5.2, c), when planned by PEFC.
- d) Actively participate in PEFC's training forums and exchanges.
- e) Provide participants with case studies to be done before the training, analyse the responses from the participants, and adapt the training content accordingly.
- f) Provide during and/or after the training, as applicable, any technical update or updated information received from PEFC that training participants need to be aware of, to ensure the consistent implementation of the PEFC chain of custody standards.
- g) Ensure that participants fulfil all the requirements to participate in the training.
- h) Provide the certification body representative with the necessary information before and after each training.

The certification body trainer can start providing internal training recognised by PEFC once their certification body internal training programme has been assessed by PEFC, and they are included in the updated list of the certification body trainers.

6.3 Training participants

6.3.1 Certification body training participant qualifications

- a) Fulfilment of the requirements outlined in PEFC ST 2003:2020, as applicable⁸ (see also 7.3.1).
- b) Advanced knowledge of the language in which the training is provided.

6.3.2 Certification body training participant responsibilities

- a) Complete all case studies provided by the certification body trainer in advance, in preparation for the training.
- b) Attend the full training.
- c) Actively participate in the training and provide feedback.
- d) Pass the knowledge test (scoring, as a minimum, 80%) on the PEFC online training platform after receiving internal training. This test must be taken each time they receive initial or refresher training.

⁷ For certification body trainers access to the knowledge test is free of charge. Trainers (as indicated on the application form) will be given access to the knowledge test once PEFC has reviewed and approved the application, so once steps I, II and III of the recognition process are completed (see 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3).

⁸ Standard requirements and training requirements differ for auditors that apply to be qualified for the first time (initial training), or already qualified auditors (refresher training).

7. Certification body internal training requirements

7.2. Internal training process

7.2.1 Planning

7.2.1.1 Definition of the scope

The certification body shall define the scope of the training, including:

- a) Certification body trainers (must be included in the updated list sent to PEFC, 6.1.2, h)
- b) Countries
- c) Participants (including qualifications and role)
- d) Type of training according to experience and knowledge (initial or refresher training)⁹
- e) Language (see also 6.2.1, d and 6.3.1, b)

7.2.1.2 Define responsibilities

For each training, identify who is responsible for:

- a) Process and coordination
- b) Content
- c) Providing the training (certification body trainers) and their qualification (must comply with chapter 6)

7.2.1.4 Training agenda

The certification body shall develop an agenda for each training. The agenda shall be provided to the participants in advance.

7.2.1.5 Training venue and equipment

The training can take place remotely or in person.

The certification body shall ensure that the participants have:

- a) Access to the standards and any related information in advance.
- b) A suitable venue, if the training takes place in person, and training equipment (maximum 25 participants per session for in person training, and maximum 35 participants per session for an online live training).

⁹ Reviewers and certification decision makers that were already working as reviewers and certification decision makers according to the previous version of the PEFC chain of custody related standards are considered as qualified for the 2020 version of the PEFC ST 2003. Therefore, they are required to receive refresher training on the 2020 version of the PEFC chain of custody related standards.

- c) For recorded online sessions, the certification body shall ensure the use of a quality video recording software that showcases the training slides consecutively with the voice of the trainer.
- d) Access to required tools.
- e) Access to chain of custody materials, such as case studies or practical exercises, as applicable.
- f) Access to any tools required to take the PEFC knowledge test once the training is finalised.

7.2.1.6 Communication of the training

The certification body shall ensure that the training is communicated in advance to the potential participants. This communication shall ensure that the participants are aware of the requirements they must fulfil to participate in the training.

7.2.2 Training duration¹⁰

7.2.2.1 Initial training

Minimum duration: 16 hours

The training duration does not necessarily need to take place in one day. It also does not need to take place as a “live training” with a trainer. Certification bodies can decide whether they want to cover the minimum hours through live training or through recorded webinars and exercises to be taken by the participants, as long as the certification bodies ensure that the participants are properly trained. See also note 9.

7.2.2.2 Refresher training

Minimum duration: 8 hours

The training duration does not necessarily need to take place in one day. It also does not need to take place as a “live training” with a trainer. Certification bodies can decide whether they want to cover the minimum hours through live training or through recorded webinars and exercises to be taken by the participants, as long as the certification bodies ensure that the participants are properly trained. See also note 9.

7.2.3 Information flow

The certification body internal training programme shall have mechanisms to ensure that continuous communication flow takes place, during the training and within trainings, including:

- a) Evaluation of the training by the participants (see 7.3.6)
- b) Permanent mechanisms for the participants to receive feedback on the PEFC standards and to give feedback on the standards (see also 6.1.2, i)

¹⁰ The minimum training duration does not include the time needed for participants to: take the knowledge test, revise the PEFC 2020 chain of custody standards before the training, or do the case studies in preparation for the training. However, discussion on the case studies among the participants can be included as part of the minimum duration of the training.

- c) PEFC contact (PEFC International and PEFC national offices)

7.2.4 Records

The certification body representative shall keep proof of evidence of participation for each participant (see also 5.2.1.2, j).

7.2.5 Evaluation

At the end of the training, a survey shall be provided to the participants to evaluate the training and give feedback on a voluntarily basis.

The survey can be provided either directly at the end of the training, or online afterwards.

The survey responses must be anonymous.

7.3. Training content

7.3.1 Initial training

The initial training shall:

- a) Include, prior to the training, case studies to be done by the participants in preparation for the training. The results of the case studies shall be sent to the trainer in advance, who will adapt the training content according to the needs identified through the case studies (see also 6.2.2, d).
- b) Ensure that any participants attending the training have already studied the three PEFC chain of custody related standards and are familiar with them.
- c) Cover:
 - PEFC in general, PEFC's system and PEFC's objectives
 - In detail the *PEFC ST 2001*, *PEFC Trademarks* and *PEFC ST 2002*, *PEFC Chain of Custody*, plus the *PEFC ST 2003*, *Certification Body Requirements for Chain of Custody*, as required
 - Basic principles of the complaints and appeals procedures of PEFC, the certification body and the certification body's accreditation body
 - PEFC's Q&A, interpretations and clarifications of the standards
- d) Include theory and practical exercises. Analysis of the case studies shall take place during the training.
- e) Include experience exchange.
- f) Inform participants of the information that must be compiled during the audit, and how and when to provide it to PEFC.
- g) Highlight any technical updates or interpretations provided by PEFC, in order to ensure the standards are implemented consistently.

7.3.2 Refresher training

The refresher training shall:

- a) Include, prior to the training, case studies to be done by the participants in preparation for the training. The results of the case studies shall be sent to the trainer in advance, who will adapt the training content according to the needs identified through the case studies (see also 6.2.2, d).
- b) Ensure that when there is a new issuance of the standards, participants are already familiar with the revised standards.
- c) Cover:
 - *PEFC ST 2001, PEFC Trademarks and PEFC ST 2002, PEFC Chain of Custody*, plus the *PEFC ST 2003, Certification Body Requirements for Chain of Custody*, as required
 - PEFC's Q&A, interpretations and clarification on the standards
- d) Include theory and practical exercises. Analysis of the case studies shall take place during the training.
- e) Include experience exchange.
- f) Inform participants of the information that must be compiled during the audit, and how and when to provide it to PEFC.
- g) Highlight any technical updates or interpretations provided by PEFC, in order to ensure the standards are implemented consistently.

7.4 Training materials

PEFC will provide the certification bodies with training materials, including case studies, on request, to be used as a basis for the certification bodies to develop their own training materials after sending the signed TRP application form.

Training materials are to be included as part of the internal training programme submitted in the application (see also 5.2, b). Training materials shall be provided to PEFC whenever they are updated (see also 6.1.2, l).

8. TRP recognition fees

8.1 Fees

The certification body must pay to PEFC the following fee¹¹:

- 250 CHF per auditor, reviewer and certification decision maker whose initial training is covered by this recognition.
- 200 CHF per auditor, reviewer and certification decision maker whose refresher training is covered by this recognition.

The training programme recognition fees cover the following:

- a) Participation in the initial TRP session
- b) Assessment of the certification body internal training programme
- c) Participation in TRP sessions that provide technical updates and relevant information for the implementation of the standards

¹¹ From 50 training participants, a discount of 75% on the fees to be paid per participant will be applied. This discount will be applied every two years during the re-evaluation of the TRP according to 5.5.4.

- d) Access to the knowledge test for auditors, reviewers and certification decision makers
- e) Access to PEFC training materials
- f) Issuance of PEFC recognised certificates for auditors, reviewers and certification decision makers
- g) Registration of the trained auditors, reviewers and certification decision makers on the PEFC register
- h) Access to a dedicated workspace on Podio (PEFC's intranet)

8.2 Invoices and payment

Invoices will be emailed to the certification body within two weeks of PEFC receiving the training report according to 5.4.1. The invoices shall contain the amount to be paid, payable in Swiss Franc (CHF), and the payment deadline is 21 days from the date of the invoice.

Reminders will be sent monthly by email; a second reminder may incur penalty costs.

No certificates will be issued by PEFC International prior to the receipt of fees.

8.3 Refund policy

No refunds will be permitted except in exceptional circumstances.

Annex 1 – Training Recognition Application Form Template

Name and Address of Certification Body

	<i>Please give the name and complete address of the certification body applying for training recognition</i>
--	--

Name, Email and Phone Number of Certification Body Representative

	<i>Please give the name, email and phone number of the certification body representative</i>
--	--

Name, Email and Phone Number of Certification Body Trainer(s)

	<i>Please give the name, address and email of the certification body trainer(s)</i>
--	---

Please give an estimated number of auditors, reviewers and certification decision makers (CDMs) covered by the internal training

		<i>Initial training (not yet qualified)</i>	<i>Refresher training (already qualified)</i>
	<i>Auditors</i>		
	<i>Reviewers</i>		
	<i>CDMs</i>		

Declaration of Consent

The declaration of consent must be completed, signed and sent back to PEFC International

With your signature you confirm the following:

- The information provided in your training recognition application is complete and true for the best of your knowledge.
- You understand that PEFC will maintain a register of trained auditors, reviewers and certification decision makers for the purpose of ensuring the integrity of PEFC. The information may be made available to accreditation bodies, certified companies or PEFC stakeholders. You will inform training participants accordingly, on respect of data protection legislation. You understand that PEFC International will charge a fee to every auditor, reviewer and certification decision maker who takes the PEFC International knowledge test and receives a PEFC International recognized certificate valid for 2 years.
- You have read and understood the TRP guidelines

(Please sign the document below)

Name	Title	Date

X

Certification body representative

Annex 2 – Training Report Form template

Name and Address of Certification Body

	<i>Please give the name of the certification body that covered the training</i>
--	---

Name, Email and Phone Number of Certification Body Representative

	<i>Please give the name, address and email of the certification body representative</i>
--	---

Name, Address and Email of Certification Body Trainer(s)

	<i>Please give the name, address and email of the certification body trainer(s)</i>
--	---

Please give the number of auditors, reviewers and certification decision makers to take the knowledge test

		<i>Initial training (not yet qualified)</i>	<i>Refresher training (already qualified)</i>
	<i>Auditors</i>		
	<i>Reviewers</i>		
	<i>CDMs</i>		
	<i>Please attach the list of participants with their full correct names and email addresses here</i>		

Type of Training & Language

	<i>Please select the type of training that was provided under the internal training programme</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Initial Training (Minimum 16 hours) <input type="checkbox"/> Refresher Training (Minimum 8 hours) <input type="checkbox"/> Both (*On condition that the participants of the initial training and refresher training are trained separately) <i>Training language</i> <input type="text"/>
--	---

Mode of Training

	<i>Please mark the mode of training your organization used. (You can mark both)</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Online <i>If online, please name the online platform that was used:</i>
--	--

	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>In person</i> <i>If in person, please give the address of where the training took place:</i>
--	---

Training Duration & Dates

	<i>Please give the training dates and timings</i>
--	---

Feedback collected from the CB Trainer, if any

--	--

Feedback collected from the training participants on the training, if any

--	--

Feedback collected from the training participants on the PEFC standards, if any

--	--

For the purposes of invoicing, please give the details below

	Name of organisation that the invoice is to be addressed to: Address: Contact Name: Email Address: Ref or Tax Number (if required):
--	--

(Please sign the document below)

Name	Title	Date

X

Certification body representative