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Terms of Reference of the PEFC Working Group “Operating Forest Management Certification”



PEFC Council

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Document name: Terms of Reference of the PEFC Working Group Operating Forest Management Certification

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1 Establishment

The PEFC Council's Working Group (WG) "Operating Forest Management Certification" was initially established as PEFC Council's Working Group Forest Management Certification Procedures" by the PEFC Council's Board of Directors in 2016, to conduct the revision of the *PEFC ST 1002, Group certification procedures*, and to develop the *PEFC ST 1004:20XX, Operating Forest Management Certification – Requirements*. The PEFC ST 1002 was revised and approved in 2017.

The Working Group has been re-activated in 2021 to continue the work on the PEFC ST 1004. To reflect the current work scope, the Working Group has been re-named to "Operating Forest Management Certification" and the WG Terms of References updated accordingly.

This WG was established as a task based WG and it will be dissolved once its objective has been met.

2 Normative basis

The work of the WG is based on and follows:

- Project proposal "Revision of the PEFC Council's requirements for Certification Bodies conducting PEFC Forest Management certification" (15th September 2015)
- PEFC GD 1003:2009, *PEFC Council Technical Documents Development Procedures* (<http://www.pefc.org/standards/technical-documentation/pefc-guides-2010/460-pefc-gd-10032009-pefc-council-technical-documents-development-procedures-requirements>).

3 Scope

The scope of the WG's work is the revision of PEFC's requirements for Certification Bodies conducting PEFC Forest Management, as defined in the project proposal for this WG, approved by the PEFC Board of Directors on 8th October 2015.

4 Members

The Board of Directors authorised the PEFC Council Secretary General to appoint members of the WG based on nominations submitted by PEFC members, Board of Directors and other stakeholder groups.

As the WG has been re-launched, a call for nominations to complete those seats from participants on the previous working group that were no longer available was conducted.

The Secretary General can revoke the appointment of WG members at any time.

Seats in the WG can be appointed to individuals as well as to organisations. The decision whether the membership status is with an individual or an organisation is made by the Secretary General, who can change this decision at any time. If not specified otherwise, members are holding a seat as individual. Members shall inform the PEFC Secretariat about any change of their professional/organisational status.

Members can apply to the Secretariat for the designation of a second, representing the member at WG meetings on the member's behalf. To ensure a balanced representation of stakeholders and to avoid that the discussion is dominated by a few parties, member and seconds shall not participate in a WG meeting at the same time, unless approved by the Secretariat in advance.

5 Stakeholder groups

To ensure a balanced representation of stakeholder interests, the WG consists of the following stakeholder groups, with the maximum amount of seats indicated for each group in brackets:

- a) Civil Society (NGO's, Workers & Trade Unions, Scientific Communities, Indigenous People, Women, Youth, etc.) (max. 8),
- b) Conformity Assessment Community (Certification & Accreditation Bodies, PEFC Registered Assessors, etc.) (max. 8),
- c) End Users - Customers & Consumers (Retail & Consumer, Institutional Users, Authorities, etc.) (max. 8),
- d) Materially Affected certifiable stakeholder (Forest Landowners & Managers, Forest-based Businesses & Industry, etc.) (max. 8),
- e) PEFC National Governing Body Members (max. 8).

In addition, an appropriate geographical representation of WG members should be aimed for. Stakeholder groups and number of seats can be amended by the Secretary General.

6 Working style

The WG congregates in meetings convoked by the Chair of the WG or the Secretariat. Meetings can take place in person or via telephone/web conferencing facilities or a combination thereof.

The agenda of an upcoming meeting and related papers should be distributed to the WG about 14 to seven days before the meeting.

Members can submit comments, requests for discussions, documents etc. with the request to be considered at the meeting, to the Secretariat up to ten days before the meeting.

PEFC's intranet (Podio) will be the main communication platform. It will be used for the provision of documents and organisational information. WG members need to ensure that they have access to the system.

As the WG's work is following the PEFC Council Technical Documents Development Procedures outlined in PEFC GD 1003:2008, the consensus building requirements defined in this document apply.

7 Confidentiality

PEFC members can be informed by the Secretariat about the discussions in the WG and the outcome of WG meetings at any time.

WG members can communicate with their own stakeholders on topics arising within the WG, but they are not expected to do so in an inappropriately public manner, such as on websites, in newsletters, etc. Any information which was requested to be kept as confidential by any of the WG members or the Secretariat needs to be kept confidential.

In addition the following antitrust policy of PEFC applies for all meetings of the WG:

It is the policy of the PEFC Council and its members to comply with laws and regulations applicable to their activities.

The PEFC Council respects antitrust laws that prohibit fixing prices, allocating geographic markets, unfair or deceptive practices, setting profit levels; boycotts, and most other anticompetitive actions. The PEFC Council will neither permit nor condone anti-competitive behaviour, whether wilful or inadvertent, in connection with any PEFC Council meeting or activity.

Conversations involving discussion of matters that may violate applicable laws and regulations should always be avoided, even in private settings, and cannot be tolerated in connection with any PEFC Council meeting or activity. Persons engaging in possible violations of PEFC Council policy during meetings or activities will be required to cease such activities, and if necessary, are subject to ejection by the Chair of the WG or the PEFC Council's Secretary General or its representative in a WG meeting.

Questions concerning antitrust or other laws or regulations connected to PEFC Council activities should be referred immediately to the PEFC Council's Secretary General.

8 Costs

Expenses incurred due to a WG member's work within the WG, especially for travelling, accommodation, phone bills, meals and working time will not be reimbursed by PEFC, unless otherwise agreed with the Secretary General in writing.