

GENERAL PROCEDURE CERFOAR – PEFC ARGENTINA

Procedure for the preparation of forest management audit reports that shall be implemented by certification bodies.

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1. Object

This procedure establishes the requirements that the Certification Bodies (hereinafter CB) shall meet for the preparation of the reports of the initial certification and recertification audits and surveillance audits for the evaluation of the conformity of the forest management with the requirements of IRAM 39801, IRAM 39805 and PEFC ST 2001 standards in force.

2. Scope

This General Procedure has been approved by the Board of Directors of the CERFOAR – PEFC Argentina Association and is applicable to all those CBs notified by CERFOAR – PEFC Argentina that carry out audits of sustainable forest management in accordance with the provisions of the Argentine Forest Certification System.

3. Normative references.

The following documents are essential for the application of this document. The latest edition of the indicated documents (including any amendments) or the most current and in force document that replaces any of them applies:

- PEFC ST 2001: in force. — PEFC Trademarks Rules – Requirements

- IRAM 39801: in force. Sustainable forest management. Criteria and indicators of the management unit.
- IRAM 39805: in force. Sustainable forest management. Group Certification.

4. General requirements

4.1 The CB shall prepare forest management audit reports for each organization or certification group requesting forest management certification, in accordance with the requirements specified in this procedure.

4.2 The report of the initial certification and recertification audits shall be constituted by a part of a public nature and available to interested parties, whose content is specified in points 5.1 and 5.2, and by annexed information of a confidential nature established in point 5.3.

4.3 Likewise, the results of all surveillance audits shall be documented by the CB in the surveillance audit reports.

The reports of the surveillance audits shall be constituted by a part of a public nature and available to the interested parties, whose content is specified in points 6.1 and 6.2 and by annexed information of a confidential nature established in point 6.3.

5. Content of the reports of the initial certification and recertification audits

5.1 Cover page of the initial forest management certification and recertification audit reports

5.1.1 The cover page of the reports of the initial forest management certification and recertification audits shall contain at least the following information:

- a) Name and contact details of the CB, including specification of the contact person;
- b) Name and contact information of the holder of the certificate and of the person representing the organization or entity of the forest certification group;
- c) Scope of the certificate;
- d) Location of the management units included in the scope of the certificate;
- e) Date of the report of the initial certification or recertification audit.
- g) Date of issue and expiration date of the certificate.
- f) Audit dates

NOTE: specify the type of audit: initial certification audit, recertification audit and surveillance audit with its number.

- g) Certificate number.

5.2 Content

5.2.1 The information contained in the reports of the initial certification and recertification audits shall include at least the following items:

1. Organization (forest owner) Information

- a) Details of the certification organization or group: business name, contact person, business address, telephone, fax, website.
- b) Scope of the certificate: total area, name, geographical location of the management units covered by the certificate (including latitude and longitude). In the case of group certification, the members of the certification group shall also be identified.

NOTE: the geographical coordinates refer to the centre of the management unit.

- c) Permissible annual cut (m³, pieces) and all products covered by the certificate.

d) Discriminated areas in:

- Area of native forest managed for production purposes;
- Area of planted forest managed with production objectives;
- Area managed for conservation purposes;
- Infrastructure surface and roads.

e) Certificate Issuance Date.

f) Expiration Date of the Certificate.

g) Number of the certificate.

2. The certification process

a) Certification standards used.

b) Audit team: composition of the audit team, lead forest auditor, forest auditor and technical experts, if necessary. List qualifications, specifically mentioning experience and certification training.

c) Audit schedule and stakeholder consultation

NOTE: It is recommended to list by audit date the general location of the main sites evaluated and the tasks performed by the evaluation team in each one (review of documents, interview with technicians and operators, inspection of the agrochemical deposit, visit to the forest nursery, among other tasks)

d) Initial Certification Process: description of the general certification process, including Stages 1 and 2. Inclusion of a summary of how the on-site visits were carried out, including the general activities related to these visits and the aspects of forest management that were evaluated in each.

e) Justification for the selection of variables and places inspected: description and justification of the methodology used for the sampling of sites on the ground; description of the factors that affected the selection of the site (representative forest sites, size of management units, biological and ecological importance, intensity of use, forestry operations with the greatest impact, among others), description and justification of the sampling intensity (number of properties, extensions, workplaces and tasks visited, among others).

f) In the case of certification group describe the sampling method used to select the management units / members of the certification group and list all the management units visited.

g) Stakeholder consultation process: description of the stakeholder consultation process and how stakeholders were identified and selected. Stakeholders list (organizations or interest groups: NGOs, government entities, neighbours, service providers, among others.) that represent the people consulted during the audit and number of people consulted by interest group.

NOTE: verify the adequacy of the stakeholder consultation process with the General Procedure cerfoar PG03: in force Consultation with stakeholders during FM audits

3. General background organization or forest certification group.

a) General background of the operation: general characteristics and history of the management unit(s) and of the forest certification organization or group.

b) Forms of ownership and use of the land: description of the ownership and use of the land of the management units covered by the certificate

c) Legislative and administrative context: summary of the legislative and institutional context in which the forest certification organization or group operates, including the identification and roles of the enforcement authorities.

d) Environmental and socioeconomic context: description of the specific regional environmental context of the forest certification organization or group, including a description of the regional biological resources, the existing biodiversity, the different degrees of conservation of flora and fauna species, threatened species and in danger of importance for the region, fragile characteristics of the basin, among others. Description of the specific socioeconomic context of the forest producer, including interactions with the local community, the existence of conflicts and

conflict issues, a summary of the non-forestry activities that are carried out in the evaluated area, whether they are carried out by the certificate holder or by third parties (agriculture, livestock, mining, among others)

e) Products of the management unit: list of forest-based products produced in the management units covered by the certificate.

4. Certification group management

NOTE: Requirement only applicable for cases of group forest certification.

a) Legally constituted entity or organization requesting certification.

b) Group structure and roles, rights and responsibilities of the component parts and group management system.

c) List of members of the certification group and of the management units assigned to the group.

d) Membership and group policy.

e) Monitoring and internal control of the group.

f) Summary of use of the PEFC Trademarks (recertification audit report and annual surveillance audit).

5. Forest Management System

a) Property and composition of the forest: description of the property of the land, of the forest (native and implanted) and the areas (total and partial). Categorization of production areas (goods and services) and their types of forest (native and/or planted). Areas with forests and other non-forest formations managed with conservation objectives. Forest composition, productive forests and with other management objectives.

b) Management Objectives: description of the main and specific management objectives established for the management unit(s).

c) Silvicultural system: description of the silvicultural systems and/or other management systems; main harvesting techniques and machinery used.

d) Sustained yield: description and justification of the assumptions on which the estimates are based (inventory data, permanent sampling plots, yield tables, among others); sources of information on which the estimates are based; information for the continuous monitoring of the harvest.

e) Logical basis or foundation of the annual harvest rate in terms of volumes and species.

f) Safeguards to maintain biodiversity and the functions of the ecosystems present in the management unit: identification of priority sites for conservation, specific management objectives and implemented actions. Environmental protection measures (buffer zones for watercourses, riparian areas, among others).

g) Plans for the identification and protection of rare, vulnerable, endangered and critically endangered species for conservation, and their habitats.

f) Summary of use of the PEFC Trademarks (recertification audit report and annual surveillance audit).

6. Observations and conclusions of the initial certification and recertification audit

a) Comments received from stakeholders: summarizes the issues identified by the assessment team and the CB's input in response to specific comments from the stakeholders consulted.

b) Main strengths and weaknesses: summary of the strengths and weaknesses of the audited management unit(s) identified by the audit team.

c) Identified nonconformities and requested corrective actions: Based on the findings recorded in the checklist, nonconformities are identified and the corresponding corrective actions are requested.

d) Observations: identification of minor problems or problems in their initial stage, which do not by themselves constitute a non-conformity, but which the audit team considers may lead to a non-conformity if the certification applicant does not address them.

e) Recommendations for certification or recertification: initial certification or recertification decision.

5.3. Confidential information attached to the reports of the initial certification and recertification audits

5.3.1 The reports of the initial certification and recertification audits shall contain the following attached information of a confidential nature:

- a) Checklist of compliance with IRAM 39801 and/or IRAM 39805 and PEFC ST 2001 standards
- b) Corrective action implementation program
- b) Maps of the management unit and the forest resource
- c) Detailed list of stakeholders consulted
- d) Additional relevant information.

6. Content of the surveillance audit report

6.1 Cover page of the surveillance audit reports

6.1.1 Same content as defined in Section 5.1

6.2 Content

The information contained in the surveillance audit report shall include at least the following sections:

1. Forest Producer Information

Same content as defined in Section 5.2.1

2. The surveillance audit process

- a) Certification standards used.
- b) Audit team: composition of the audit team. List qualifications, specifically mentioning experience and certification training.
- c) Surveillance audit schedule, including stakeholder consultation.

NOTE: It is recommended to list by audit date the general location of the main sites evaluated and the tasks performed by the audit team in each one (review of documents, interview with technicians and operators, inspection of the agrochemical deposit, visit to the forest nursery among other tasks)

d) Audit Process: description of the general audit process. Inclusion of a summary of how the on-site visits were carried out, including general activities related to these visits and the aspects of forest management that were evaluated in each one.

e) Justification for the selection of variables and places audited: description and justification of the methodology used for the sampling of sites in the field; description of the factors that affected the selection of the site (representative forest sites, size of management units, biological importance, intensity of use, among others), description and justification of the sampling intensity (number of properties, extensions, work places and visited tasks, among others).

f) In the case of group certification describe the sampling system used to select the management units / members of the certification group and list all the management units visited.

g) Stakeholder consultation process: description of the stakeholder consultation process and how stakeholders were identified and selected. List of interested parties (organizations or interest groups: NGOs, government entities, neighbours, service providers, among others) who represent the people consulted during the audit and the number of people consulted by interest group.

NOTE: verify the adequacy of the consultation process with the interested parties with the General Procedure cerfoar PG03: in force Consultation with the interested parties during FM audits

3. Changes in forest management, forestry and monitoring and control activities

a) Description of the changes introduced by the forest certification organization or group (including the incorporation of new members or management units) in management practices, in applied forestry and in monitoring and control activities since the certification audit or since the previous audit.

4. Conclusions and observations of the surveillance audit

a) Comments received from stakeholders: summarizes the issues identified by the assessment team and the CB's input in response to specific comments from the stakeholders consulted.

b) Conformity with applied corrective actions: description of the activities carried out by the certified organization to address each of the applicable corrective actions, issued during previous audits. For each corrective action request that was made in previous audits, a finding is presented along with a description of its status using the following categories:

- Closed: The certified organization has satisfactorily complied with the corrective action request and has corrected the identified non-conformities.

- Open: The certified organization has not satisfactorily complied with the corrective action request, with nonconformities existing. The identified non-conformity becomes a Major non-conformity with a term of 3 months for its fulfilment.

c) New nonconformities identified and corrective actions requested based on the findings recorded in the checklist, nonconformities are identified and the corresponding corrective actions are requested.

d) Observations: identification of minor problems or in their initial stage.

e) Recommendations for maintaining certification.

6.3. Confidential information attached to the surveillance audit report

6.3.1 The surveillance audit report shall contain the following attached information of a confidential nature:

a) Checklist of conformity with the Certification Standard IRAM 39801 and / or IRAM 39805

b) Corrective action implementation program

c) Maps of the management unit and the forest resource

d) Detailed list of stakeholders consulted

e) Relevant additional information.