
GENERAL PROCEDURE CERFOAR – PEFC ARGENTINA

Procedure for the resolution of disputes of the CERFOAR– PEFC Argentina Association

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1. Object

This procedure describes the responsibilities of the CERFOAR - PEFC Argentina Association and establishes the actions that shall be fulfilled in the process of handling complaints and resolving disputes.

2. Scope

This General Procedure was approved by the Board of Directors of the CERFOAR - PEFC Argentina Association and applies to the process of handling complaints and resolving disputes related to the application of the Argentine Forest Certification System or the certification procedure for sustainable forest management and /or the chain of custody, which cannot be resolved through the conflict resolution procedures of the accredited Certification Body or the corresponding Accreditation Body.

3. General requirements

The CERFOAR – PEFC Argentina Association shall ensure that the implementation of the process for dealing with complaints and conflict resolution is carried out following these guidelines:

- Information about how and where to make complaints is available to stakeholders in an accessible manner and is disclosed for their knowledge;
- Receipt of the complaint is acknowledged to the complainant immediately and the complainant is informed of the progress of his complaint;
- Each complaint is treated fairly, objectively and impartially;
- The complaint and dispute resolution process is free for the claimant;

e) The complaint handling and dispute resolution process is confidential with respect to the claimant and his personal information will only be disclosed with his consent when this is necessary for the treatment of the claim;

f) The effective implementation of the complaints handling and dispute resolution process contributes to the fulfilment of the objectives of the CERFOAR – PEFC Argentina Association and its continuous improvement.

4. Procedure for dealing with complaints and dispute resolution

4.1 The Executive Secretary of the CERFOAR – PEFC Argentina Association is responsible for the implementation of the process for dealing with complaints and dispute resolution and for the control of the records of this process.

4.2 All complaints shall be addressed in documented form to the Executive Secretariat of CERFOAR – PEFC Argentina and shall be accompanied by supporting information for their treatment.

4.3 The resolution of the complaint is carried out by a Dispute Resolution Committee made up of three members, a representative of the forest producers, a representative of the forestry industry and a representative of the other stakeholders, all independent and impartial, convened ad hoc by the Executive Secretariat ad referendum of the approval of the Board of Directors of the CERFOAR – PEFC Argentina Association.

4.4 The complaints and dispute resolution process shall follow the following stages:

a) Receipt of the complaint:

The Executive Secretariat registers the complaint together with the supporting information (background information and evidence provided by the complainant) and identifies it unequivocally. The complaint record shall identify the remedy sought by the complainant and any other information necessary for the effective handling of the complaint.

b) Acknowledgment of receipt of the complaint:

The Executive Secretariat notifies the claimant of receipt of the complaint immediately and documented.

c) Evaluation of the complaint:

The Executive Secretariat assesses the relevance of the complaint to verify that it falls within the scope of PG 06.current. In the case of rejection of the complaint, this shall be informed to the claimant together with the justification for the decision adopted.

d) Investigation of the complaint:

The Executive Secretariat investigates the complaint and all the circumstances that gave rise to it, analyses the supporting information and, if it is insufficient, requests that it be extended by the complainant or the other parties involved. The level of the investigation shall be proportional to the seriousness, frequency of occurrence and severity of the complaint. The Executive Secretariat shall prepare a report with the results of the investigation.

e) Convocation of the Dispute Resolution Committee:

The Executive Secretariat, within a period not exceeding 60 days after receipt of the claim, shall convene the members that will make up the committee that will address each particular

complaint. Each member of the Committee receives a copy of the Investigation Report of the Complaint prepared by the Executive Secretary.

f) Dispute resolution:

The Dispute Resolution Committee shall hold the first meeting within a period not exceeding 90 days from receipt of the complaint. The Committee has the power to convene an external and independent expert for complex complaints that warrant it. The decision will be made by simple majority and within a period of 90 days from the first meeting of the DRC. The Committee's decision is binding and ends the process of attention to the complaint and resolution of the dispute within the CERFOAR – PEFC Argentina Association.

g) Communication of the resolution of the claim:

The Executive Secretariat informs the claimant of the decision taken by the Committee.

h) Implementation of appropriate corrective and preventive actions:

When pertinent, depending on the analysis and resolution of the complaint, the Executive Secretariat shall implement appropriate corrective and preventive actions.

i) Follow-up and records of the claim treatment process:

The Executive Secretariat monitors and records the entire process of dealing with the complaint and resolving the dispute, including the implementation and effectiveness of the corrective and/or preventive actions implemented and the minutes of the meetings of the Conflict Resolution Committee.