

SGEC Standard Document 3

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SGEC Sustainable Forest Management - Requirements

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Foreword

The United Nations General Assembly in 2015 adopted the “2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”、hoisting Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as common development goals of the international society as a whole. The SGEC forest certification scheme, which puts its basis on the Montreal Process, takes on the challenge of materializing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through endeavoring to improve itself continuously as a PEFC endorsed certification scheme in compliance with the latest version of 2018 PEFC forest management standard (PEFC ST 1003:2018 “Sustainable Forest Management – Requirements”). The revision of the SGEC sustainable forest management standard in 2020 was carried out in this context.

This standard was formulated on the basis of transparent public consultation and consensus among a broad range of stakeholders as a standard endorsed by the PEFC (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes) Council. The SGEC forest certification and a SGEC forest product label offer citizens/consumers assurances that the raw materials originate from sustainably managed forests and trees outside forests, recycled and controlled sources.

The SGEC forest certification scheme is ensured its credibility by being verified its compliance with the PEFC international forest certification scheme, which requires the high clearance level commonly applied throughout the world, as endorsed by the PEFC Council. The process of the endorsement of the SGEC certification scheme was implemented in an open, transparent and independent manner so that the SGEC scheme is examined and verified to clear the level of the PEFC international forest certification scheme.

Forest products which originate from forests which are certified based on this standard are recognized as SGEC/PEFC certified products and a SGEC/PEFC claim and/or label are allowed on the products. A product with PEFC claim originating from countries or regions where the SGEC certification scheme does not cover (countries or regions outside Japan) shall be in accordance with PEFC ST 1003:2018 “Sustainable Forest Management – Requirements” or the PEFC certification scheme covering the countries or regions.

Certification procedures of the SGEC certification standard is formulated in accordance

with the standards and procedures established by International Organization of Standardization (ISO) and International Accreditation Forum (IAF). SGEC/PEFC Japan espouses the idea of gender equality and always is in the position to support gender equality when this document mentions any specific individuals (manager, owner, participants, etc.).

This standard (SGEC Standard Document 2021 "SGEC Sustainable Forest Management – Requirement) nullifies and replaces SGEC Document 3 "SGEC Forest Management Certification Standard, Indicators and Guideline" (2018.11.1) . The transition period of this standard is until February 14th, 2023 and certified organizations are required to fulfill this standard by the end of the transition period.

Introduction

0.1 Objectives of the SGEC forest certification scheme and its 2020 revision

SGEC/PEFC Japan contributes to promote sustainable forest management through independent third-party certification as a non-profit non-governmental organization governing a certification scheme in conformity with the PEFC international forest certification scheme. SGEC/PEFC Japan, by establishing and expanding the forest certification scheme, accelerates responsible implementation of forest management and ensures that timber and non-timber forest products are produced in compliance with the high level of environmental, social and ethical standards throughout the whole supply chain from the forests. The SGEC forest certification scheme is seeking for attaining forest management suited to the ecological, social and economic conditions of Japan through the process participated by multi-stakeholders based on the concept of the Montreal Process ; the SGEC scheme is a part of the network of the PEFC international forest certification, being endorsed by PEFC in 2016 to conform to the PEFC certification scheme. In response to the adoption of the "2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDGs)" and revision of the PEFC international forest management standard in 2018, the SGEC forest certification promotes materialization of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and sustainable local societies through enhancing environmental services of "Green Ecosystem" based on the following international frameworks:

- a) Promoting recycling use of forest resources and enhancing environmental services of forests (SDGs, Montreal Process, Convention on Biological Diversity, Paris Agreement on climate change)
- b) Forest management coordinated with promotion of local economy/industries and

energy recycling (SDGs, Montreal Process, Paris Agreement)

c) Recycling in production, manufacturing, distribution and disposal of forest products (SDGs, Montreal Process, Paris Agreement)

In the light of the above, the vision of “Green Ecosystem” is defined and reflected in this document and its operational guideline from the following perspective:

① revision of the SGEC standard in conformity with revision of PEFC standard in 2018 and promoting international standardization of the group certification from the view point of contribution to and coordination with the international framework

② identifying relationship between Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) including their targets and the SGEC forest management certification standard, and having the relationship reflected to the SGEC standard

enhancing requirements of this standard from the view point of “promotion of recycling use of forest resources”, “forest management coordinated with promotion of local economy and energy recycling” and “recycling in production, manufacturing, distribution and disposal of forest products” based on the concept of “Green Ecosystem” and ①・② above.

0.2 Establishment of the standard for sustainability on the basis of the conditions of Japan

Ownership structure of Japanese private forests is extremely small in scale. SGEC/PEFC Japan, therefore, supports development of forest owners cooperatives and other groups for forest certification of which small scale forest owners are members and acquisition of group forest certification by the forest owners cooperatives and the groups. Certified forests pursue materialization of sustainable forest management fulfilling economic, ecological and social functions of the forests in accordance with Japanese inherent natural and social conditions. Forest products originated from sustainable managed forests, when the supply and demand of such forest products are stimulated by selective purchasing, are able to revitalize forestry through market mechanism and promote effective utilization and recycling of forest resources. This would ultimately contribute to establishing sustainable society which enriches people's life underpinned by “Green Ecosystem” and promotes conservation of the nature with rich greenery

SGEC/PEFC Japan makes efforts to contribute to promotion of Ainu culture, dissemination and enlightenment of knowledge of Ainu tradition (hereinafter referred as “promotion of Ainu culture etc.”) in managing and operating the SGEC certification scheme so that the pride of Ainu people as indigenous people is respected under the

understanding and efforts by citizens, and thereby to contribute to coexistence of diverse ethnic groups and development of diverse cultures; these issues are the vital challenges for the international society including Japan.

0.3 Harmonization of forest management under the SGEC certification scheme with forest ecosystems, legal and administrative frameworks, etc. of Japan

SGEC/PEFC Japan shall implement operation of this standard in compliance with SGEC Standard Document 3-1 “SGEC Group Forest Management – Requirements”, SGEC Standard Document 2 “Standard Setting” and other relevant standards of the SGEC forest certification scheme in order to ensure that “SGEC Sustainable Forest Management – Requirements” is in accordance with forest ecosystems; legal and administrative frameworks; social and cultural background; and other factors in Japan.

Japanese forests are managed under the forest planning system based upon the Forest Act. Management of SGEC certified forests shall be practiced in accordance with various plans formulated under the forest planning system as preconditions, and in compliance with the requirements for the SGEC sustainable forest management standard that is formulated under the participation of all stakeholders including forest managers.

The SGEC certification scheme defines its fundamental concept such that forest managers pursue sustainable forest management by observing standards formulated through their own participation. The process of forest management shall be an open and transparent process on a consensus basis, not dominated by a specific interest and offering a wide range of opportunities of participation by all stakeholders.

Note on relation with the forest planning system:

The regional forest plans stipulated in Article 5 of Forest Act (the regional national forest plans stipulated in Article 7-2 of Forest Act in case of national forests) and the municipal forest development plans stipulated in Article 10-5 of Forest Act are the plans which forest managers shall comply with in managing local forests. Forest management plans defined in this document are formulated based on the specific and unique requirements of the SGEC certification scheme with the precondition that the forest management plans comply with the relevant regional forest plan (or regional national forest plan) or the municipal forest development plan. The specific and unique requirements of the SGEC certification scheme are formulated and applied in consideration of relevant laws, regulations and policies established in accordance with natural and social conditions of Japan; scientific knowledge; and relevant international conventions, etc.

0.4 Ensuring conformity with the PEFC international certification standard

In order to be endorsed by PEFC to be in conformity with the PEFC international forest certification standard, the SGEC forest management certification standard shall go through comprehensive, detailed and independent assessment and quality assurance process (quality of forest products produced under the condition in which environment is adequately maintained for trees to grow). The process takes nine months to complete on average, and includes the following elements:

- a) An independent assessment that evaluates compliance of the SGEC certification scheme with PEFC requirements includes a global public consultation;
- b) A quality assurance system;
- c) After the SGEC certification scheme has successfully passed the assessment and quality assurance process, the PEFC General Assembly votes on its endorsement.

All the documents with respect to the SGEC certification scheme endorsed by PEFC as the system fulfilling the internationally recognized PEFC sustainability benchmark through the process described above are made public in the websites of PEFC and SGEC/PEFC Japan. Timber and non-timber forest products originated from SGEC certified forests can be distributed as PEFC certified products globally (can be distributed as SGEC certified products within Japan), and PEFC labels (SGEC labels in Japan) can be put on the products. Forests not managed for timber production may be also recognized that they are sustainably managed, if the forests are managed in compliance with the SGEC certification standard.

0.5 Demonstrating compliance with standard requirements

Entities wishing to obtain SGEC certification are required to demonstrate their conformity with the SGEC forest management certification standard to the certification body. If compliance is demonstrated, the certification body issues a certificate valid up to five years, after which operators must become re-certified. Additional checks are done through annual surveillance audits to proactively verify on-going compliance with the SGEC forest management certification standard. Only if practices and operations continually meet the requirements of the SGEC forest management certification standard do certified entities earn the right to make “SGEC/PEFC certified” claims and use the SGEC/PEFC label.

If a certified entity does not comply with the SGEC/PEFC requirements, its certificate can be suspended or withdrawn. If the certification body, or an accreditation body, is judged to not have dealt with a complaint appropriately, it risks losing its license to operate.

Complaints against SGEC standards themselves or management of the standards are handled by SGEC/PEFC Japan in a prompt and appropriate manner, while complaints against certificate holders are handled by certification bodies according to the procedures for complaints and appeals they determine. Issues unsolved in this stage are dealt by the accreditation body, and thereafter by the International Accreditation Forum as the third stage of appeal, according to their respective procedures for complaints and appeals.

1. Scope

This standard is comprised of requirements for SGEC sustainable forest management (SGEC forest management certification standard) covering forests, their products and services in Japan. The requirements of this standard apply to forest owners or managers, as well as contractors and other operators operating in SGEC certified areas. They cover all necessary processes of a management system that aims at sustainable forest management.

When a forest owner or an entity practicing forest management based on the commission from a forest owner (hereinafter referred as “forest manager”) formulate the forest management plan in order to apply for individual forest management certification, the plan, in principle, should cover the area of all the owned or managed forests. In this case, at least owned or managed forests in the area covered by a regional forest plan shall be included in the target area of the forest management plan concerned for the sake of harmonization of the forest planning system, excluding exceptional cases.

Appendix 1 “Guidelines for the interpretation of requirements in the case of forest plantations” of PEFC ST 1003:2018 “Sustainable Forest Management – Requirements” is not applied to man-made forests of Japanese domestic species (including exotic species that are verified to suite to Japanese domestic natural conditions) as stipulated in the definition “3.9 Forest plantation” and “3.25 Man-made forest” of this standard. With respect to Appendix 2 “Guidelines for the interpretation of requirements for Trees outside Forests (TOF)”, as the result of the standard setting process of this standard, corresponding requirements that applied in Japan are not formulated for the time being.

If there is ambiguity in SGEC/PEFC documents, the Japanese version of the SGEC documents is the reference with respect to the SGEC certification scheme and the English version of the PEFC documents is the reference with respect to the PEFC certification scheme.

2. International conventions, domestic laws and other documents related to SGEC/PEFC

2.1 International conventions, etc.

2.1.1 Fundamental ISO conventions

- ILO No.29: Forced Labor Convention (1930, ratified by Japan in 1932)
- ILO No.87: Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize Convention (1948, ratified by Japan in 1965)
- ILO No.98: Right to Organized and Collective Bargaining Convention (1949, ratified by Japan in 1953)
- ILO No.100: Equal Remuneration Convention (1951, ratified by Japan in 1953)
- ILO No.105: Abolition of Forced Labor Convention (1957, not ratified by Japan)
- ILO No.111: Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention (1958, not ratified by Japan)
- ILO No.138: Minimum Age Convention (1973, ratified by Japan in 2000)
- ILO No.182: Worst Forms of Child Labor Convention (1999, ratified by Japan in 2001)

2.1.2 Other international conventions, etc.

- Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat (1971, ratified by Japan in 1980)
- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (1973, ratified by Japan in 1980)
- Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972, ratified by Japan 1992)
- Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (1970, not ratified by Japan)
- Convention on Biological Diversity (1992, ratified by Japan in 1992)
- Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (2000, ratified by Japan 2003)
- United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Kyoto Protocol (1997)
- Bilateral Convention and Agreements for Protection of Migratory Bird Conventions (for example signed between U.S.A. in 1972)
- Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (ratified by Japan in 2005)
- ILO No.169: Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention (1989, not ratified by Japan)
- Declaration on the Right of Indigenous Peoples adopted at UNGA (2007, affirmative vote by Japan)
- UN Guide for Declaration on the Right of Indigenous Peoples (2007)
- UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)

- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1965, ratified by Japan in 1995)
- International customary laws
- International Covenants on Human Rights (International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights/International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights) (ratified by Japan in 1979)
- Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (ratified by Japan in 1985)
- Convention on the Rights of the Child (ratified by Japan in 1994)
- [Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment](#) (Japan acceded to the treaty in 1981 and to the protocol in 1982)
- Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (not ratified by Japan)
- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (ratified by Japan in 2014)
- Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (ratified by Japan in 2009)
- Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (Japan formulated the action plan in 2016)

2.2 Domestic acts, etc.

- Forest and forestry basic act (1964, last amendment in 2008)
- Forest act (1951, last amendment in 2018)
- Forest management and operation act (2018)
- Act on special measures concerning the improvement of public health functions of forests (1989, last amendment in 2016)
- Forest cooperation act (1978, last amendment in 2018)
- Act on advancement of modernization of rights in relation to forests subject to community (1966, last amendment in 2018)
- Forestry seeds and seedlings act (1970, last amendment in 2016)
- Act on special measures concerning shared forest (1958, last amendment in 2016)
- Landslide prevention act (1958, last amendment in 2017)
- Wildlife protection and proper hunting act (2002, last amendment in 2015)
- Act on conservation of endangered species of wild fauna and flora (1992, last amendment in 2017)
- Act on special measures concerning promotion of securing forest work force (1996, last amendment in 2017)

- Act on special measures for ensuring stable timber supply (1996, last amendment in 2016)
- Act on special measures concerning promotion of forest thinning operation (2008, last amendment in 2016)
- Act on forest pest and disease control (1950, last amendment in 2018)
- Act Concerning Utilization of National Forest Land (1951, last amendment in 2019)
- Basic environment act (1993, last amendment in 2018)
- Basic act on biodiversity (2008)
- Nature conservation act (1972, last amendment in 2014)
- Natural parks act (1957, last amendment in 2014)
- Act on promotion of nature restoration (2002)
- Act on protection of cultural properties (1950, last amendment in 2018)
- City planning act (1968, last amendment in 2018)
- Water cycle act (2014, last amendment in 2017)
- Urban green space conservation act (1973, last amendment in 2018)
- Act on prevention of disasters caused by steep slope failure (1969, last amendment in 2005)
- Agricultural chemical control act (1948, last amendment in 2018)
- Explosives control act (1952, last amendment in 2015)
- Fishery act (1949, last amendment in 2018)
- Quarrying right act (1950, last amendment in 2018)
- Surveying act (1949, last amendment in 2017)
- Road transportation act (1951, last amendment in 2017)
- Road act (1951, last amendment in 2018)
- Railway business act (1986, last amendment in 2011)
- Railway operation act (1900, last amendment in 2006)
- Electricity business act (1964, last amendment in 2017)
- Telecommunication business act (1984, last amendment in 2019)
- Basic act on disaster management (1961, last amendment in 2018)
- National land survey act (1951, last amendment in 2013)
- Real property registration act (20014, last amendment in 2018)
- Invasive alien species act (2004 , last amendment in 2016)
- Act on special measures concerning water quality conservation at water resources area to prevent the specified difficulties in water utilization (1994, last amendment in 2014)
- Act on maintenance and improvement of traditional scenery in certain districts (2008,

last amendment in 2018)

- Act on special measures concerning conservation of historic natural features of ancient cities (1966, last amendment in 2018)
- Act on special measures concerning conservation of historic natural features and improvement of living environment in Asuka village (1980, last amendment in 2018)
- Coast act (1956, last amendment in 2018)
- River act (1964, last amendment in 2017)
- Erosion control act (1897, last amendment in 2013)
- Labor standard act (1972, last amendment in 2018)
- Industrial safety and health act (1972, last amendment in 2018)
- Labor union act (1949, last amendment in 2018)
- Health insurance act (1922, last amendment in 2018)
- Employees' pension insurance act (1954, last amendment in 2018)
- Employment insurance act (1974, last amendment in 2018)
- Act on special measures concerning taxation (1957, last amendment in 2019)
- Act on promotion of policies for realizing the society in which the pride of Ainu people is respected (2019)
- Rules and guidelines on forest road (Notification by the Secretary General of Forestry Agency in 1973, last amendment in 2011)
- Customary laws
- Related ordinances of prefectural and municipal governments, judicial precedents

2.3 Related ISO, SGEC/PEFC documents

2.3.1 Related ISO documents

- ISO/IEC 17021-1(2015) Conformity assessment – requirements for bodies providing audits and certification of management systems – Part 1
- ISO/IEC 17065 (2012) Conformity assessment – requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services
- ISO/IEC Guide 2 (2004) Standardization and related activities – general vocabulary

2.3.1 Related SGEC/PEFC documents

- SGEC Standard Document 2 “SGEC Standard Setting”
- PEFC ST 1001:2017 “Standard Setting – Requirements”
- SGEC Standard Document 3-1 “Group Forest Management – Requirements”
- PEFC ST 1002:2018 “Group Forest Management – Requirements”
- SGEC Standard Document 4: 2021 “Chain of Custody of Forest and Tree Based

Products – Requirements”

- PEFC ST 2002: 2020 “Chain of Custody of Forest and Tree Based Products– Requirements”
- PEFC ST 1003: 2018 “Sustainable Forest Management – Requirements”
- PEFC GD 1007: 2017 “Endorsement and Mutual Recognition of Certification Systems and their Revision”
- SGEN Guide Document 3-1: 2020 “SGEN Guide for Implementation of FPIC to Ainu People”

3. Terms and Definitions

For the purposes of this document the terms and definitions given in ISO/IEC Guide 2 apply together with the following definitions.

3.1 Affected stakeholder

A stakeholder who might experience a direct change in living and/or working conditions caused by implementation of this standard, or stakeholder who might be a user of the standard and therefore is subject or possible to subject to the requirements of the standard.

Note 1: Affected stakeholders include neighboring communities, indigenous people, workers, etc. However, having an interest in the subject matter of the standard (e.g. NGOs, scientific community, civil society) is not equal to being affected.

Note 2: A stakeholder who might be user of the standard is likely to become a certified entity, e.g. a forest manager in the case of the forest management standard, or a wood processing enterprise in the case of the COC standard.

3.2 Afforestation and reforestation

Afforestation or reforestation is to establish forest composed of useful tree species. Methods of planting are divided into methods for developing man-made forests by planting seedlings/cuttings, or seeding and methods for developing natural forests through natural regeneration by nurturing natural seedlings or sprouts. Afforestation and reforestation include protection and tending of the trees and forest land in a broader sense.

Note: FAO (2018) defines “afforestation” as “Establishment of forest through planting and/or deliberate seeding on land that, until then, was used for different purposes,

including conversion from non-forest land to forest”. Definition of afforestation or reforestation stipulated in the above include conversion from non-forest to forest.

3.3 Certified area

The forest area covered by the sustainable forest management system according to the SGENC sustainable forest management standard.

3.4 Degraded forest

Land with long-term significant reduction of the overall potential to supply benefits from the forest, which includes carbon storage, biodiversity and other goods and services (definition based on FAO 2003).

Note: Degraded forests are reduction of functions occurring in forests maintaining canopy cover of the threshold of 10 % or above. (FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment 2003)

3.5 Ecologically important forest areas

Ecologically important forest areas are the forest areas:

- a) containing protected, rare, sensitive or representative forest ecosystem;
- b) containing significant concentrations of endemic species and habitats of threatened species, as defined in recognized reference lists;
- c) containing endangered or protected genetic in situ resources;
- d) contributing to globally, regionally and nationally significant large landscapes with natural distribution and abundance of naturally occurring species.

3.6 Ecosystem services

Benefits obtained from ecosystems. These include provisional services such as food, water, timber, and fibre; regulating services that affect climate, floods, disease, wastes, and water quality; cultural services that provide recreational, aesthetic, and spiritual benefits; and supporting services such as soil formation, photosynthesis, and nutrient cycling (based on Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, 2005).

Note: Millennium Ecosystem Assessment is an environmental assessment of ecosystems in global scale conducted from 2001 to 2005 by the leadership of the UN.

3.7 Forest

“Forest” subject to certification is forest subject to formulation of “forest plans” defined in Forest Act.

Specifically, the forest subject to certification is national forest stipulated in Article 7-2, or public/private forest covered by a forest plan stipulated in Article 5 of Forest Act (excluding public/private forest which is considered not suitable to be utilized as forest from the aspects of natural, economic and social conditions, or pattern of land utilization of the nearby area).

Note 1: Article 2 of Forest Act

Article 2 “Forest” in this act is defined as follows, except for that land/forest mainly utilized for agriculture, residential area and similar purpose:

- 1) land on which trees/bamboos grow aggregately and trees/bamboos thereon
- 2) in addition to the above, land utilized for growing trees/bamboos aggregately

Note 2: Definition and classification of Japanese forests used in a FAO report

(Definition of forest in the country report of Japan in Global Forest Resources Assessment 2005 of Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO))

Forest is defined to be land spanning more than 0.3 hectares where trees and bamboos grow aggregately including trees and bamboos growing thereon, or where trees or bamboos are intended to be grown aggregately. It does not include land that is predominantly under agricultural, urban or similar land use and trees and bamboos thereon.

Regarding forest classification, (i) “forest with standing trees” is “forest that have canopy cover of 30 percent or higher, including young stands with the degree of stocking of 0.3 or higher”, (ii) “forest without standing trees” is “forest that does not fall under “forest with standing tree” or “bamboo forest”, and (iii) “Bamboo forest” is “forest that does not fall under ‘forest with standing tree’ and is dominated by bamboo (excluding bamboo grass)”.

Note 3: Forest definition of PEFC ST 1003 “PEFC Sustainable Forest Management – Requirements”

Minimum area of land of 0.05 – 1.0 hectares with tree crown cover (or equivalent stocking level) of more than 10-30 percent with trees with the potential to reach a minimum height of 2-5 meters at maturity in situ. A forest may consist either of closed formations where trees of various storeys and undergrowth cover a high proportion of the ground or open forest. Young natural stands and all plantations which have yet to reach a crown density of 10-30 percent or tree height of 2-5 meters

are included under forest, as are areas normally forming part of the forest area which are temporarily unstocked as a result of human intervention such as harvesting or natural causes but which are expected to revert to forest (source: United Nations 2002).

Note 4: Each regional, national or subnational standard has to include the specific values for the criteria in the definition. If such specifications for a country are not yet available, the standardizing body is responsible to set the values according to the national framework. In case of the SGEK certification scheme, the definition is based on that of Forest Act as stipulated above.

3.8 Conversion of Forest land Use

Direct human-induced change of forest to non-forest land, or of natural forest to man-made forest.

Note: Regeneration by planting or direct seeding and/or human-induced promotion of natural seed sources (e.g. scarification) of the same dominant species which existed before harvesting or other species which had existed historically; or introduction of tree species according to national forestry policies is not considered “conversion of forest land use”.

3.9 Forest plantation

“Forest plantation” is defined in the PEFC forest management certification standard (PEFC ST 1003:2018 “Sustainable Forest Management – Requirements”) as shown below. However, the management of forest that is specifically defined as “forest plantation” is virtually non-existent in Japan, and, therefore, any man-made forest in Japan is not categorized as “forest plantation”, but dealt as usual man-made forest.

<Definition of “3.9 forest plantation” of PEFC ST 1003:2018 “Sustainable Forest Management – Requirement”>

Forest of introduced species, and in some cases native species, established through planting or seeding, mainly for production of wood or non-wood goods and services.

Note 1: Includes all stands of introduced species established for production of wood or non-wood goods and services

Note 2: May include areas of native species characterized by few species, intensive land preparation (e.g. cultivation), straight tree lines and/or even-aged stands.

Note 3: Application of the definition requires consideration of national forestry

terminology and legal requirements.

3.10 Fundamental ILO conventions

Eight conventions (ILO 29, 87, 98, 100, 105, 111, 138 and 182) identified by the ILO's Governing Body as "fundamental" in terms of principles and rights at work: freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining; the elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labour; the effective abolition of child labour; and the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

3.11 Genetically modified trees

Trees in which the genetic material has been altered in a way that does not occur naturally by mating and/or natural recombination, taking into account applicable legislation providing a specific definition of genetically modified organisms.

Note 1: The following techniques are considered as genetic modification resulting in genetically modified trees (EU Directive 2001/18/EC):

- 1) recombinant nucleic acid techniques involving the formation of new combinations of genetic material by the insertion of nucleic acid molecules produced by whatever means outside an organism, into any virus, bacterial plasmid or other vector system and their incorporation into a host organism in which they do not naturally occur, but in which they are capable of continued propagation;
- 2) techniques involving the direct introduction into an organism of heritable material prepared outside the organism including micro-injection, macro-injection, and micro-encapsulation;
- 3) cell fusion (including protoplast fusion) or hybridization techniques where live cells with new combinations of heritable genetic material are formed through the fusion of two or more cells by means of methods that do not occur naturally.

Note 2: The following techniques are not considered as genetic modification resulting in genetically modified trees (EU Directive 2001/18/EC):

- 1) in vitro fertilization;
- 2) natural processes such as: conjugation, transduction, transformation;
- 3) polyploidy induction.

3.12 Integrated Pest Management (IPM)

The careful consideration of all available pest control techniques and subsequent integration of appropriate measures that discourage the development of pest populations and keep pesticides and other interventions to levels that are economically justified and reduce or minimize risks to human health and the environment (source: FAO 2018).

3.13 Landscape

A socio-ecological system that consists of a mosaic of natural and/or human-modified ecosystems, with a characteristic configuration of topography, vegetation, land use, and settlements that is influenced by the ecological, historical, economic and cultural processes and activities of the area (source: Scherr et al. 2013).

3.14 Management plan with respect forest (hereinafter referred as “forest management plan”)

Documented information specifying objectives, actions and control arrangements concerning the management of ecosystem resources and services for a set period of time.

Note: Relationship between forest management plans formulated under the SGEC certification scheme and the forest planning system

The forest planning system defines regional forest plans in Article 10-5 (regional national forest plans in Article 7-2 in case of national forest) of Forest Act and municipal forest development plans in Article 10-5 of the act as plans local forest managers must comply with. When forest managers formulate forest management plans under the SGEC certification scheme, compliance with the forest plans defined by the forest planning system is the prerequisite, as well as conformity with “Sustainable Forest Management – Requirements” of the SGEC certification scheme.

3.15 Management system

Set of interrelated or interacting elements of an organization to establish policies and objectives and processes to achieve those objectives.

3.16 Manager

Person who directs and controls an organization.

Note: A manager may also be a person executing her or his ownership rights and at the same time traditional or customary tenure rights.

3.17 Non-forest ecosystem

Land not meeting the definition of forest.

3.18 Non-wood forest products

Products consisting of goods of biological origin other than wood, derived from forests and trees outside Forests (source: following FAO 2017).

3.19 Organization

Person or group of people that has its own functions with responsibilities, authorities and relationships to achieve its objectives.

Note 1: An organization applies for SGEC certification and is responsible for the compliance with SGEC sustainable forest management requirements and can be responsible for several forest management units.

Note 2: A manager or owner can also take the role of an organization.

3.20 Reforestation

Re-establishment of forest through planting and/or deliberate seeding on land classified as forest (source: FAO 2018).

3.21 Stakeholder

A person, group, community or organization with an interest in the subject of the standard.

3.22 Standardizing body

Body that has recognized activities in standardization.

Note: A standardizing body for a forest management certification scheme/standard is a body which is responsible for the development and maintenance of standards for the forest certification scheme. The standardizing body of the SGEC certification scheme is SGEC/PEFC Japan.

3.23 Trees outside Forests (TOF)

Trees growing outside areas of nationally designated forest land according to Article 2 of Forest Act. Such areas will normally be classified as “agriculture” or “settlement”.

3.24 Forest management unit

A management unit clearly divided as the area managed by a single manager based on forest plans under the forest planning system and forest management plans under this standard.

3.25 Man-made forest, natural forest

Man-made forest is forest in which the percentage of growing stock (or number of trees) of tree species which are grown by planting seedlings or cuttings, or by artificial seeding, is 50% or more of the total.

Natural forest is forest which does not fall under the category of man-made forest.

“Natural forest with human intervention” is naturally-regenerated forest with partial human intervention such as “supplementary planting of seedlings” or “scarification of land surface” in the part where naturally regenerated seedlings are scarce, whilst “naturally generated forest” is forest regenerated naturally without human interventions throughout the regeneration transition stages.

3.26 virgin forest, primary forest

Forest of indigenous species without apparent signs of human interventions and without significant hinderance to succession of the ecosystem

Note: including area where non-timber forest products, or in some case small number of trees, are taken by people but imposing only little influence.

3.27 Satoyama forest

Woodland, adjacent to human settlements, which have been maintained/managed under close linkage with human activities.

3.28 Ainu people or Ainu ethnic group

Ainu ethnic group is recognized as indigenous people in “Act for Promotion of Policies Realizing Society where the Pride of Ainu People is Respected (Ainu Policies Promotion Act)” and represents a group of people who share the Ainu culture or the common consciousness of belonging by sharing the Ainu culture. Ainu people are, among people who belong to Ainu ethnic group, people who are categorized as

“affected stakeholders” defined in this standard.

Note: Indigenous people

Indigenous people are defined as an ethnic group who have been residing in a certain region of a nation since before the reign of the nation reached over the region, keeping the culture and identity different from the majority ethnic group constituting the nation, and have been residing in the same region since then without losing their unique culture and identity even under the domination by the majority ethnic group which is forced to them regardless of their intention.

3.29 Ainu culture, policies for Ainu people

Ainu culture is Ainu language; the life style inherited by Ainu people through generations; cultural assets such as music, dance, handicraft; and other assets develop from them.

Policies for Ainu people are those implemented by local governments which submit a “regional plan for promotion of Ainu policies” and are authorized by the Prime Minister based on the “Ainu Policy Promotion Act”.

Note: authorized regional plans for promotion of Ainu policies

An regional plan for promotion of Ainu policies is a plan formulated by a municipal government and applied for authorization by the Prime Minister in accordance with the basic strategies defined by the national government based on “Ainu Policies Promotion Act” (and also with consideration of prefectural strategies in case prefectural governors determine the prefectural strategies) with respect to “projects for promoting understanding of the traditions of Ainu people”, “projects for promotion of tourism and other industries”, “projects for promoting exchange among people within or between local regions or internationally” and “other projects stipulated in the cabinet office ordinance”.

3.30 Customary law

Where certain “general customs” exist as specific practices widely (or not widely) conducted in domestic or international relations and such “general customs” are recognized as laws with “*opinio juris sive necessitatis*”, then these “general customs” are referred as “customary laws”. In international relations, customary laws are recognized as international laws according to the statute of the International Court of Justice, while within a country, relations between customary laws and legislation obey

the legislation concerned. In Japan, Article 3 of the Act on General Rules for Application of Laws stipulates that “customs which are not against public policy shall have the same effect as laws, to the extent that they are authorized by the provisions of laws and regulations, or they relate to matters not provided for in laws and regulations”. On the other hand, Article 92 of Civil Code stipulates that “if there is any custom inconsistent with a provision of law or regulation which is not related to public policy, and if it is found that any party to a juristic act has the intention to abide by such custom, such custom shall prevail”. Therefore, it is unclear which one prevails, either “a provision in law and regulation not related to public policy” or “customs”.

3.31 Customary and traditional rights

Rights which indigenous people claim that the present nations should guarantee, as being rights established before the reign of the present nations extended to them and rights inherent to indigenous people and generated from political, economic and social structure of indigenous people, as well as from the culture, spiritual tradition, history and philosophy of indigenous people. Customary and traditional rights particularly refer to rights related to land, territories and resources. Although rights of indigenous people listed in the “UN Declaration on the Right of Indigenous Peoples” remain in “the level of attainment pursued in the spirit of cooperation and mutual respect, in recognition that the situation of indigenous peoples varies from region to region and from country to country and that the significance of national and regional particularities and various historical and cultural backgrounds should be taken into consideration”, some rights are stipulated in written law or recognized as customary laws in certain nations depending on histories of relationships between the nations and indigenous people.

3.32 FPIC (Free, Prior and Informed Consent)

In addition to rights of citizens in general, ILO 169 and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples define the right called FPIC, the right to ensure a certain process under the circumstances requiring special consideration for indigenous people who are prone to be placed in a vulnerable position (Iwanaga, 2017).

3.33 Forest planning system

Forest planning system is a framework program for promotion of sustainable management of forests in Japan through establishing rules and guidelines of forest management in national, prefectural, municipal and forest owners levels as well as

fulfilling respective responsibilities based upon the needs of the people in Japan (refer Appendix “Outline of forest planning system”).

3.34 “Forest management and operation right” and “forest management and operation implementation right” under Forest Management and Operation Act

Forest Management and Operation Act, enacted in April 2019, aims at enabling both the growth of forestry as an industry and optimum management of forests parallelly by securing adequate forest management and operation by means of consolidation of unmanaged or not-adequately managed forests into forest managers who have the will and ability or commission of their management to municipal governments (Forestry Agency 2019).

“Forest management and operation right” defined by the act is the right of a municipal government to implement management and operation of forests on behalf of the forest owner based on commission. “Forest management and operation implementation right” is the right of a private entity to implement management and operation of forests on behalf of the municipal government by commissioning the “forest management and operation right” of the municipal government to the private entity.

4. SGEN forest management certification standard and the organizations applying the standard

4.1 Requirements for sustainable forest management

The requirements for sustainable forest management defined by the SGEN forest management certification standard (hereinafter referred as “the standard”) shall:

- a) include management and performance requirements that are applicable at the forest management unit level, or at another level as appropriate, to ensure that the intent of all requirements is achieved at the forest management unit level;

Note: An example of a situation where a requirement can be defined as being at another level (e.g. group/regional) is monitoring of forest health. Through monitoring of forest health at regional level, and communicating of results at the FMU level, the objective of the requirement is met without the necessity to carry out the individual monitoring of each forest management unit.

- b) be clear, performance based and auditable;

- c) apply to activities of all forest operators in the defined forest area who have an impact on achieving compliance with the requirements;
- d) require record-keeping that provides evidence of compliance with the requirements of the standard;
- e) specify “100% SGEC origin” as claim to be used to communicate the origin of products in an area covered by the SGEC forest management certification standard to customers with a SGEC or PEFC chain of custody;

Note: Certification claims and abbreviations of such claims approved by SGEC/PEFC Japan and their Japanese version are published on the website of SGEC/PEFC Japan and their translations into English and other languages are published on the PEFC website .

- f) require that where owners/managers of forests are selling products from areas other than covered by the standard, only products from areas covered by the standard are sold with the claim “100% SGEC certified”;
- g) require that claims on the origin of products in an area covered by the standard are only made by forest owners/managers covered by a SGEC certificate issued against the standard;
- h) specify requirements concerning the information which need to be provided to a SGEC chain of custody certified customer;
- i) clearly show the outline of Japanese laws applicable instead of international conventions, etc. in case the content of such international conventions is not reflected in the SGEC requirements because they are not-ratified or by other reasons.

4.2 Understanding the needs and expectations of affected stakeholders

The organization shall determine:

- a) the affected stakeholders that are relevant to the sustainable forest management;
- b) the relevant needs and expectations of these stakeholders.

4.3 Determining the scope of the sustainable management system

4.3.1 The organization shall determine the boundaries and applicability of the management system to establish its scope.

4.3.2 Forest management shall comprise the cycle of inventory and planning,

implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and shall include an appropriate assessment of the social, environmental and economic impacts of forest management practices. This shall form a basis for a cycle of continuous improvement.

5. Leadership

5.1 The organization shall provide a commitment:

- 1) to comply with and implement the SGEC sustainable forest management standard and other applicable requirements of the certification scheme;
- 2) to continuously improve the sustainable forest management system.

5.2 This commitment shall be publicly available.

5.3 Responsibilities for sustainable forest management shall be clearly defined and assigned.

6. Planning

6.1 Actions to address risks and opportunities

6.1.1 The organization shall consider risks and opportunities concerning compliance with the requirements for sustainable forest management. Size and scale of the forestry operations of the organization shall be considered.

6.1.2 Inventory and mapping of forest resources shall be established and maintained, adequate to local conditions and in correspondence with the requirements described in the standard.

6.2 Forest management plan

6.2.1 Forest management plans shall be:

- 1) elaborated and periodically updated or continually adjusted;
- 2) appropriate to the size and use of the forest area;
- 3) based on applicable local, national and international legislation as well as existing forest-use or other official plans;
- 4) adequately covering forest resources.

6.2.2 Forest management plans shall take into account the different uses or functions of the managed forest area.

6.2.3 Forest management plans shall include at least a description of the forest

management unit, long-term objectives, and the average annual allowable cut, including its justification.

- 6.2.4 The annually allowable use of non-wood forest products shall be included in the forest management plan where forest management covers commercial use of non-wood forest products at a level which can have an impact on their long-term sustainability.
- 6.2.5 Forest management plans shall specify ways and means to minimize the risk of degradation and damage to forest ecosystems.
- 6.2.6 Forest management plans shall take into account the results of scientific research.
- 6.2.7 Forest management plans shall be appropriate to the scope and scale of forest management. Summaries of the plans shall be publicly available and shall include information on the general objectives and forest management principles.
- 6.2.8 The publicly available summary of the management plan may exclude confidential business and personal information and other information made confidential by applicable legislation or for the protection of cultural sites or sensitive natural resource features.
- 6.2.9 Policy measures established in order to support production of profitable or non-profitable forest products and ecosystem services shall be effectively utilized in practicing forest management plans.

6.3 Compliance requirements

6.3.1 Legal compliance

- 6.3.1.1 The organization shall identify and have access to the legislation applicable to its forest management and determine how these compliance obligations apply to the organization.
- 6.3.1.2 The organization shall comply with applicable laws and regulations as well as international legislation on forest management, including but not limited to forest management practices; nature and environmental protection; protected and endangered species; property, tenure and land-use rights for indigenous peoples, local communities or other affected stakeholders; health, labour and safety issues; anti-corruption and the payment of applicable royalties and taxes.
- 6.3.1.3 The organization shall take measures to protect the forest from unauthorized activities such as illegal logging, illegal land use, illegally initiated fires, and other illegal activities.

6.3.2 Legal, customary and traditional rights related to the forest land

6.3.2.1 Property rights, tree ownership and land tenure arrangements shall be clearly defined, documented and established for the relevant management unit. Likewise, legal, customary and traditional rights related to the forest land shall be clarified, recognized and respected.

Note: Guidance for the handling of tenure arrangements can be obtained from the FAO Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security.

6.3.2.2 Forest practices and operations shall be conducted in recognition of the established framework of legal, customary and traditional rights such as outlined in ILO 169 and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which shall not be infringed upon without the free, prior and informed consent of the holders of the rights, including the provision of compensation where applicable. Where the extent of rights is not yet resolved, or is in dispute, there are processes for just and fair resolution. In such cases forest managers shall, in the interim, provide meaningful opportunities for parties to be engaged in forest management decisions whilst respecting the processes and roles and responsibilities laid out in the policies and laws where the certification takes place.

With respect to the recognition of the established framework of the above, international laws such as International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and International Covenants on Human Rights – International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights; domestic laws and regulations such as Ainu Policy Promotion Act”, as well as FPIC for Ainu people, shall be observed.

6.3.2.3 Forest practices and operations implemented by the organization shall respect human rights as defined by the Universal Declaration on Human Rights.

6.3.3 Fundamental ILO conventions

6.3.3.1 Forest practices and operations shall comply with fundamental ILO conventions.

Note: This section 6.3.3.1 is applied to ILO conventions ratified by Japan. ILO fundamental conventions not ratified by Japan shall be respected and the relating domestic laws and regulations shall be observed.

6.3.4 Health, safety and working conditions

6.3.4.1 Forest operations shall be planned, organized and performed in a manner that enables health and accident risks to be identified and all reasonable measures to be applied to protect workers from work-related risks. Workers shall be informed about the risks involved with their work and about preventive measures.

6.3.4.2 Working conditions shall be safe, and guidance and training in safe working practices shall be provided to all those assigned to a task in forest operations. Working hours and leave shall comply with national laws or applicable collective agreements.

Note: Guidance for specifying the forest management certification standard can be obtained from the “ILO Code of Good Practice: Safety and Health in Forestry Work” and domestic laws and regulations.

6.3.4.3 Wages of local and migrant forest workers as well as of contractors and other operators operating in SGEC-certified areas shall meet or exceed at least legal, local minimum standards or, where applicable, collective bargaining agreements.

6.3.4.4 The organization is committed to equal opportunities, non-discrimination and freedom from workplace harassment. Gender equality shall be promoted.

7. Support

7.1 Resources of the organization

7.1.1 The organization shall determine and provide the resources needed for the establishment, implementation, maintenance and continual improvement of the sustainable forest management system.

7.2 Competence of the organization

7.2.1 Forest managers, contractors, employees and forest owners shall be provided with sufficient information and kept up-to-date through continuous training in relation to sustainable forest management, as a precondition for the management planning and practices.

7.3 Communication

7.3.1 Effective communication and consultation with local communities, indigenous peoples and other stakeholders relating to sustainable forest management shall be provided.

7.4 Complaints

7.4.1 The organization shall have appropriate mechanisms for resolving complaints and disputes relating to forest management operations, land use rights and work conditions.

7.5 Documented Information

7.5.1 The organization's management system shall include documented information required by the standard and determined by the organization as being necessary for the effectiveness of the sustainable forest management system.

7.5.2 The documented information is relevant, and updated as appropriate, to the activities of the organization.

8. Requirements for sustainable forest management

Criteria and indicators of requirements for sustainable forest management are defined below. The operating guideline of the requirements is shown in Appendix 1.

8.1 Criterion 1: Maintenance or appropriate enhancement of forest resources and their contribution to the global carbon cycle

8.1.1 Forest management shall aim to maintain or increase forests and their ecosystem services and maintain or enhance the economic, ecological, cultural and social values of forest resources.

8.1.2 The quantity and quality of the forest resources and the capacity of the forest to store and sequester carbon shall be safeguarded in the medium and long term by balancing harvesting and growth rates, using appropriate silvicultural measures and preferring techniques that minimize adverse impacts on forest resources.

8.1.3 Climate positive practices in management operations, such as greenhouse gas emission reductions and efficient use of resources shall be encouraged.

8.1.4 Conversion of forest land use shall not occur unless in justified circumstances where the conversion:

- a) is in compliance with national and other policy and legislation applicable for land use and forest management and is a result of land-use planning governed by the national government or other official authority including consultation with affected stakeholders; and
- b) entails a small proportion (details are stipulated in Attachment 1 4.1.3, 4.1.4, 4.1.5) of forest within the certified area; and

- c) does not have negative impacts on ecologically important forest areas, culturally and socially significant areas, or other protected areas; and
- d) does not destroy areas of significantly high carbon stock; and
- e) makes a contribution to long-term conservation, economic, and social benefits.

8.1.5 Afforestation of ecologically important non-forest ecosystems shall not occur unless in justified circumstances where the conversion:

- a) is in compliance with national and other policy and legislation applicable for land use and forest management as well as international conventions, etc. and is a result of land-use planning governed by the national government or other official authority; and
- b) is established based on a decision-making basis where affected stakeholders have opportunities to contribute to the decision-making on conversion through transparent and participatory consultation processes; and
- c) does not have negative impacts on threatened (including vulnerable, rare or endangered) non-forest ecosystems, culturally and socially significant areas, important habitats of threatened species or other protected areas; and
- d) entails a small proportion of the ecologically important non-forest ecosystem managed by an organization; and
- e) does not destroy areas of significantly high carbon stock; and
- f) makes a contribution to long-term conservation, economic, and social benefits.

8.1.6 Criterion with respect to forest plantation described in PEFC ST 1003:2018 is not applied to “man-made forests mainly composed of domestic species” in Japan in this standard.

8.2 Criterion 2: Maintenance of forest ecosystem health and vitality

8.2.1 Health and vitality of forest ecosystems shall be maintained or enhanced and degraded forest ecosystems shall be rehabilitated wherever and as far as economically feasible, by making best use of natural structures and processes and using preventive biological measures.

8.2.2 Adequate genetic, species and structural diversity shall be encouraged or maintained to enhance the stability, vitality and resilience of the forests to adverse environmental factors and strengthen natural regulation mechanisms.

8.2.3 Use of fire shall be limited to regions where fire is an essential tool in forest management for regeneration, wildfire protection and habitat management or a recognized practice of indigenous peoples. In these cases adequate management and control measures shall be taken.

- 8.2.4** Appropriate forest management practices such as reforestation and afforestation (artificial regeneration, natural regeneration) with tree species and provenances that are indigenous or suited to the site conditions, or the use of tending, harvesting and transport techniques that minimize tree and/or soil damages shall be applied.
- 8.2.5** The indiscriminate disposal of waste on forest land shall be strictly avoided. Non-organic waste and litter shall be collected, stored in designated areas and removed in an environmentally-responsible manner. The spillage of oil or fuel during forest management operations shall be prevented. Emergency procedures for the minimization of risk of environmental harm arising from the accidental spillage shall be in place.
- 8.2.6** Integrated pest management, appropriate silviculture alternatives and other biological measures shall be preferred to minimize the use of pesticides.
- 8.2.7** Manuals of any use of pesticides shall be documented.
- 8.2.8** The WHO Class 1A and 1B pesticides and other highly toxic pesticides shall be prohibited, except where no other viable alternative is available. Exception to the usage of WHO Class 1A and 1B pesticides is defined in Appendix 4 of this standard.
- 8.2.9** Pesticides, such as chlorinated hydrocarbons whose derivatives remain biologically active and accumulate in the food chain beyond their intended use, and any pesticides banned by international agreement, shall be prohibited.

Note: “Pesticides banned by international agreements” are defined in the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants.

- 8.2.10** The use of pesticides shall follow the instructions given by the pesticide producer and be implemented with proper equipment by trained personnel.
- 8.2.11** Where fertilizers are used, they shall be applied in a controlled manner and with due consideration for the environment. Fertilizer use shall not be an alternative to appropriate soil nutrient management.

8.3 Criterion 3: Maintenance and encouragement of productive functions of forests (wood and non-wood)

- 8.3.1** The capability of forests to produce a range of wood and non-wood forest products and services on a sustainable basis shall be maintained.
- 8.3.2** Sound economic performance shall be pursued, taking into account possibilities for markets and economic activities in connection with all relevant goods and services of forests.

8.3.3 Management, harvesting and regeneration operations shall be carried out at a time, and in a way, that does not reduce the productive capacity of the site, for example by avoiding damage to soil and retained stands and trees.

8.3.4 Harvesting levels of both wood and non-wood forest products shall not exceed a rate that can be sustained in the long term, and optimum use shall be made of the harvested products.

8.3.5 Adequate infrastructure such as roads, skid tracks or bridges shall be planned, established and maintained to ensure efficient delivery of goods and services while minimizing negative impacts on the environment.

8.4 Criterion 4: Maintenance, conservation and appropriate enhancement of biological diversity in forest ecosystems

8.4.1 Forest management planning shall aim to maintain, conserve or enhance biodiversity on landscape, ecosystem, species and genetic levels.

8.4.2 Inventory, mapping and planning of forest resources shall identify, protect, conserve or set aside ecologically important forest areas.

Note: This does not prohibit forest management activities that do not damage the important ecologic values of those biotopes, allowing appropriate activities suitable for the conditions of the sites.

8.4.3 Protected, threatened and endangered plant and animal species shall not be exploited for commercial purposes. Where necessary, measures shall be taken for their protection and, where relevant, to increase their population.

Note: The requirement does not preclude trade according to CITES requirements.

8.4.4 Successful regeneration shall be ensured through natural regeneration or planting that is adequate to ensure the quantity and quality of the forest resources.

8.4.5 For reforestation and afforestation origins of native species that are well-adapted to site conditions shall be preferred. Only those introduced species, provenances or varieties shall be used whose impacts on the ecosystem and on the genetic integrity of native species and local provenances have been scientifically evaluated, and if negative impacts can be avoided or minimized.

Note: CBD (Convention on Biological Diversity) Guiding Principles for the

Prevention, Introduction, and Mitigation of Impacts of Alien Species that Threaten Ecosystems, Habitats or Species are recognized as guidance for avoidance of invasive species.

8.4.6 Afforestation, reforestation and other tree planting activities that contribute to the improvement and restoration of ecological connectivity shall be promoted.

8.4.7 Genetically-modified trees shall not be used.

Note: The restriction on the usage of genetically-modified trees has been adopted by the PEFC General Assembly based on the Precautionary Principle. Until enough scientific data on genetically modified trees indicates that impacts on human and animal health and the environment are equivalent to, or more positive than, those presented by trees genetically improved by traditional methods, no genetically-modified trees will be used.

8.4.8 A diversity of both horizontal and vertical structures and the diversity of species such as mixed stands shall be promoted, where appropriate. The practices shall also aim to maintain or restore landscape diversity.

8.4.9 Traditional management practices that create valuable ecosystems on appropriate sites shall be supported, where appropriate.

8.4.10 Tending and harvesting operations shall be conducted in a way that does not cause lasting damage to ecosystems. Wherever possible, practical measures shall be taken to maintain or improve biological diversity.

8.4.11 Infrastructure shall be planned and constructed in a way that minimizes damage to ecosystems, especially to rare, sensitive or representative ecosystems and genetic reserves, and that takes threatened or other key species – in particular their migration patterns – into consideration.

8.4.12 With due regard to management objectives, measures shall be taken to control the pressure of animal populations on forest regeneration and growth as well as on biodiversity.

8.4.13 Standing and fallen dead wood, hollow trees, old groves and rare tree species shall be left in quantities and distribution necessary to safeguard biological diversity, taking into account the potential effect on the health and stability of forests and on surrounding ecosystems.

8.5 Criterion 5: Maintenance or appropriate enhancement of protective functions

in forest management (notably soil and water)

- 8.5.1** Protective functions of forests for society, such as their potential role in erosion control, flood prevention, water purification, climate regulation, carbon sequestration and other regulating or supporting ecosystem services shall be maintained or enhanced.
- 8.5.2** Areas that fulfil specific and recognized protective functions for society shall be mapped, and forest management plans and operations shall ensure the maintenance or enhancement of these functions.
- 8.5.3** Special care shall be given to forestry operations on sensitive soils and erosion-prone areas. Techniques applied and the machinery used shall be suitable for such areas. Special measures shall be taken to minimize the pressure of animal populations on these areas.
- 8.5.4** Special care shall be given to forestry operations in forest areas with water protection functions to avoid adverse effects on the quality and quantity of water resources. Inappropriate use of chemicals or other harmful substances or inappropriate silvicultural practices influencing water quality in a harmful way shall be avoided. Downstream water balance and water quality shall not be significantly affected by the operations.
- 8.5.5** Construction of roads, bridges and other infrastructure shall be carried out in a manner that minimizes bare soil exposure, avoids the introduction of soil into watercourses and preserves the natural level and function of water courses and river beds. Proper road drainage facilities shall be installed and maintained.

8.6 Criterion 6: Maintenance or appropriate enhancement of social and -economic functions and conditions

- 8.6.1** Forest management planning shall aim to respect all socio-economic functions of forests.
- 8.6.2** Adequate public access to forests for the purpose of recreation shall be provided, taking into account respect for ownership rights, safety and the rights of others, the effects on forest resources and ecosystems, as well as compatibility with other functions of the forest.
- 8.6.3** Sites with recognized specific historical, cultural or spiritual significance and areas fundamental to meeting the needs of indigenous peoples and local communities such as health and subsistence shall be protected or managed in a way that takes due regard of the significance of the site. In particular, promotion of Ainu culture shall be endeavored so that Ainu people live with the pride as indigenous people in the

northern part of Japanese Archipelago, especially in Hokkaido.

- 8.6.4** Forest management shall promote the long-term health and well-being of communities within or adjacent to the forest management area, where appropriate supported by engagement with local communities and indigenous peoples. Forest management planning where Ainu people are identified as stakeholders shall aim at realization of the society in which the pride of Ainu people is respected by recognizing “regional plans for promotion of policies on Ainu people” formulated by municipal governments in consideration of the basic policy of the national government and the prefectural policies based on Ainu Policy Promotion Act in consideration of the current situation of Ainu culture and traditions, which are the origin of the pride of Ainu people.
- 8.6.5** Forest management practices shall be conducted with the sufficient understanding of forest-related experience, traditional knowledge and innovations of forest owners, local societies, indigenous peoples, etc., and with efforts toward equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of such experiences, knowledge, etc.
- 8.6.6** The standard requires that management shall give due regard to the role of forestry in local economies. Special consideration shall be given to new opportunities for training and employment of local people, including indigenous peoples.
- 8.6.7** Forest management shall contribute to research activities and data collection needed for sustainable forest management or support relevant research activities carried out by other organizations, as appropriate.

9. Performance evaluation of forest management

9.1 Monitoring, measurement, analysis and evaluation

- 9.1.1** Monitoring of forest resources and evaluation of their management, including ecological, social and economic effects, shall be periodically performed, and results fed back into the forest management planning process.
- 9.1.2** Health and vitality of forests shall be periodically monitored, especially key biotic and abiotic factors that potentially affect health and vitality of forest ecosystems, such as pests, diseases, animal damage, overgrazing and overstocking, fire, and damage caused by climatic factors, air pollutants or by forest management operations.
- 9.1.3** Where it is the responsibility of the forest owner/manager and included in forest management, the use of non-wood forest products, including hunting and fishing, shall be regulated, monitored and controlled.
- 9.1.4** Working conditions and safety shall be regularly monitored and adapted as

necessary so that compliance with related laws and regulations is attained.

9.2 Internal audit

9.2.1 Objectives

An internal audit programme at planned intervals shall provide information on whether the management system

- a) conforms to
 - the organization's requirements for its management system;
 - the requirements of the sustainable forest management standard
- b) is effectively implemented and maintained.

9.2.2 Organization

The organization shall:

- a) plan, establish, implement and maintain an audit programme(s) including the frequency, methods, responsibilities, planning requirements and reporting, which shall take into consideration the importance of the processes concerned and the results of previous audits;
- b) define the audit criteria and scope for each audit;
- c) select the auditors and conduct audits to ensure objectivity and the impartiality of the audit process;
- d) ensure that the results of the audits are reported to relevant management;
- e) retain documented information as evidence of the implementation of the audit programme and the audit results.

9.3 Management review

9.3.1 An annual management review shall at least include

- a) the status of actions from previous management reviews;
- b) changes in external and internal issues that are relevant to the management system;
- c) information on the organization's performance, including trends in:
 - nonconformities and corrective actions;
 - monitoring and measurement results;
 - audit results;
- d) opportunities for continual improvement.

9.3.2 The outputs of the management review shall include decisions related to continual improvement opportunities and any need for changes to the management system.

9.3.3 Documented information as evidence of the results of management reviews shall be retained.

10. Improvement

10.1 Nonconformity and corrective action

10.1.1 When a nonconformity occurs, the organization shall:

- a) react to the nonconformity and, as applicable:
 - i. take action to control and correct it;
 - ii. deal with the consequences of the nonconformity;
- b) evaluate the need for action to eliminate the causes of the nonconformity, in order that it does not recur or occur elsewhere, by:
 - i. reviewing the nonconformity;
 - ii. determining the causes of the nonconformity;
 - iii. determining if similar nonconformities exist, or could potentially occur;
- c) implement any action needed;
- d) review the effectiveness of any corrective action taken;
- e) make changes to the management system, if necessary.

10.1.2 Corrective actions shall be appropriate to the effects of the nonconformities encountered.

10.1.3 The organization shall retain documented information as evidence of:

- a) the nature of the nonconformities and any subsequent actions taken;
- b) the results of any corrective action.

10.2 Continual improvement

The suitability, adequacy and effectiveness of the sustainable forest management system and the sustainable management of the forest shall be continuously improved.

Supplementary article

The next review of this standard shall be started on March 29th 2026 or before.

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Appendix 1

Operational guideline

Forest owners and forest management shall formulate forest management plans in conformity with this Appendix in operating this standard (SGEC Standard Document 3:2021 “Sustainable forest management – Requirements” and practice sustainable, effective and safe forest management in compliance with laws and regulations and also in accordance with the natural and social conditions of the forest concerned.

0. Identification of the forest areas which are subject to the certification, the responsible entity of the forest management and management policies

0.1 Applicants of forest management certification shall have qualification as forest managers. Such qualification includes having legal rights and capability for the management of the forest concerned as well as policies for establishing, managing and operating the management plan of the forest concerned.

0.1.1 Land registry in which forest owner or tenure right owner is registered; forest registry in which the forest concerned is registered; and the forest management plan and attached maps of the forest concerned shall be available and the sites randomly selected from the attached maps shall be identified on-site.

0.1.2 If the administrator is different from the owner or tenure right owner of the forest concerned, the responsible entity of management shall be identified through the management consignment contract, the “forest management right” or “forest management and operation implementation right”, and the applicant of forest management certification shall be clearly identified as the responsible entity of forest management concerned.

Note: In case of group forest management certification, requirements for planned and proper management of group forest concerned shall be clearly identified, through plan, organization and responsibility and others by which all forests owned by members of a group shall be uniformly managed, and requirements for group forest management certification stipulated in SGEC Standard Document 3-1 shall be met.

0.2 Forest inventory registry documents, in which location wise area of forest concerned,

distinction of man-made forest and natural forest, species composition or forest types, age and growing stock according to species composition or forest types are available, shall be provided at any time.

0.2.1 More specifically, forest registry or forest inventory registry or other equivalent registry documents on the forest concerned are provided at any time, and these documents shall be updated by implementing five year cycled forest inventory.

0.3 The location of the forest concerned shall be clearly identified on-site and in the documents.

0.3.1 More specifically, map of 1:5,000 or similar scale, in which location of forest concerned is identified by a lot number, is provided at any time and the sites randomly selected from the map shall be identified on-site.

0.4 A forest management plan shall be formulated according to this standard as 5 year plan (including 10 year plan which is established in every 5 years) which clearly describes target and policies on “green ecosystem” , and commitment to long-term compliance with the forest management stipulated in the plan concerned shall be guaranteed by the top management. Where a “authorized regional plan for promotion of Ainu policies” is established, the forest management plan shall be in compliance with the plan for Ainu policies and endeavor to promote Ainu culture.

0.4.1 Documents of the forest management plan shall be available any time and the implementation of forest management practices according to the plan shall be verified on site. Especially, basic policies on forest management shall be confirmed as long-term policies on forest management practices and verified on site. T records of implementation of forest management practices shall be confirmed on site and kept as the records verifying the conformity with this standard.

Note: With respect to relationship between the forest management plan and the forest planning system, the forest management plan needs to be in conformity with SGEC Standard “Sustainable Forest Management – Requirements” with the precondition of compliance with the regional forest plan defined in Article 5 of Forest act (the regional national forest plan defined in Article 7-2 in case of national forest) and the municipal forest development plan defined in Article 10-5 of Forest act.

0.4.2 The basic policies of forest management mentioned above shall identify management purpose of each forest in compliance with this standard and explicitly

show targeted forest structure depending on characteristics of the forest concerned for fulfilling the purpose in a consistent manner.

0.5 Management and administration system which enables forest management in line with forest management plan shall be maintained.

0.5.1 Management system and its operational organization required for implementation of the forest management plan shall be well arranged, and responsibility and authority of respective person in charge shall be clear.

0.5.2 Forest owners and managers shall try to improve the content of management of the forest concerned continuously.

1. Maintenance or appropriate enhancement of forest resources and their contribution to the prevention of global warming (global carbon cycle)

1.1 Certified forest products including non-wood forest products, as sustainable recyclable/reusable green resources, shall be effectively used in various purposes and contribute to the local economy through collaboration with local community and stake holders. Where an “regional plan for promotion of Ainu policies” is formulated, promotion of Ainu culture and invigoration of related industries shall be endeavored.

1.1.1 Use of various certified forest products shall be promoted with the COC organizations and shall disseminate the knowledge and experiences through acquisition of forest management certification into local community widely.

1.1.2 Certified forest products shall be adequately management and delivered to the users at log processing stage and delivering stage. The organization shall aim to achieve sound economic activities taking consideration of market analysis, feasibility study of new market as well as full range of goods and services of forest.

1.1.3 Conversion of forest to other land use related to forest infrastructures shall be properly conducted in accordance with relevant acts and regulations within minimum impact associated with sustainable management of the forest related.

1.2 Management, tending and use of forest shall be contributed to mitigation of climate change as a sink of carbon against the global warming.

1.2.1 Improvement of carbon sequestration capacity shall be aimed through appropriate forest treatment for increase carbon sequestration capacity or at least avoid decreasing the capacity and effective use of forest residues and thinned logs.

1.2.2 Use of fossil fuels shall be minimized as possible in forest management and

tending operations.

1.3 Forests which require forest management to enhance ecosystem services such as regulating services, cultural services and supporting services as well as provisioning services (Terms and definitions 3.6) shall be treated adequately for such purposes.

1.3.1 Zoning for recreational use, landscape conservation or disaster risk reduction shall be designed in the forest management plan. Such area shall be designed facilities layout, forest layout and its management suitable for landscape improvement, amenity improvement and disaster risk reduction.

1.3.2 The forest where its management practices are restricted in the Forest Act, Natural Park Act and other laws; or public planning system based on laws such as municipal forest development plan shall meet its rules and regulation in landscape conservation, recreational use or disaster prevention.

1.3.3 Facilities of forest recreation shall be located or planned to meet the expectation of beneficiaries, the rules and regulations of environmental conservation and forest conversion as well as rules and regulations of forest management plan for public health function.

1.3.4 Public access to forests for recreational use shall be properly arranged with due consideration of forest owner' rights and use rights, impact on forest resources and its ecosystem and balance with other functions.

1.4 Cultural and historic site and highly valued forest in terms of resources or society shall be protected.

In the northern part of Japanese archipelago, especially in Hokkaido, sites with cultural or traditional importance, or with value for tourism for Ainu people such as sites used for rituals, shall be protected.

1.4.1 Forest management plan shall identify the designated cultural properties under the act on protection of cultural properties, the sites locally recognized as cultural or historical importance, the local symbolic forests popular among local community, giant trees popular among local community and high valued forests in terms of science. The guideline of treatment shall also be stated.

1.4.2 Other forests, even not regulated by the act on protection of cultural properties, shall have consideration on conservation with the content of forest management recognized appropriate by the local community. Those forests shall be served as demonstration forests or model forests which serve social benefits proactively and conduct its public relations activities.

1.5 The space and opportunity shall be provided for the citizen to come in touch with the nature seeking for, for example, forest recreation, and the environmental education or safety guidance to the visitors shall be provided. Where a “plan for promotion of Ainu policies” is formulated, promotion of tourism targeting Ainu culture and traditions related to forests shall be endeavored.

1.5.1 The space and opportunity shall be provided for the citizen to come in touch with the nature seeking for, for example, forest recreation. Large size employers (forest managers, etc.) shall have their own the environmental education programs and explanation board for the visitors. Forest roads, skid tracks and foot-paths for the visitors’ use shall provide safety facilities, sign board and explanation board.

1.5.2 Awareness raising activities for the visitors to take their garbage home with them shall be conducted and the waste shall be processed outside the forest as appropriate.

1.6 Forest management plan shall take into account the use of relevant government policies and subsidy measures for fulfilling various functions designed in the municipal forest development plan.

2. Maintenance of health and vitality of forest ecosystem

2.1 Forest manager shall assess the economic, social and ecological impact, taking account of the development process of forest management planning, forest inventory data, the implementation of the plan and the result of monitoring, build up a cycle of sustainable improvement of forest management and establish an appropriate operational structure for implementation.

2.1.1 Forest management plan shall be elaborated and implemented in a way that recognizes, maintains and promotes the importance of multiple values of the forest concerned.

2.1.2 As to planning and implementation of forest management plan, biological precaution measures associated with natural site conditions shall be fully utilized from the context of maintenance and enhancement of forest soundness and vitality. As to implementation of forest management, in particular, logging method, regeneration method and regeneration species (including resistant bred seedlings against biotic and abiotic damages) associated with soils, climate and other conditions of the site shall be selected in a way harmonizing natural environment and enhancing resilience of the forest of the site.

2.1.3 Sustainability of long term forest management shall be considered through grasping resources status based upon the result of sample plots monitoring and leveling age class composition.

2.2 Harvesting level shall be within the level of forest management plan. Harvesting shall be implemented so that large scale clear cutting is avoided; cutting blocks are dispersed; and shape and size of cutting blocks are appropriate for conditions of the forest. Non-clear cut operation shall be conducted in sites deemed necessary. Harvesting of non-wood forest products shall be set within a level of sustainable management.

2.2.1 Technical manuals for harvesting methods, age and ratio shall be developed with due consideration of conservation of soil and water, biological diversity as well as landscape conservation. Non-clear cut operation shall be conducted wherever possible and hard wood species shall be retained in soft wood species dominant forests in erosion-prone areas. Depending on the site condition, introduction of multi-storied forest or operational method with due consideration of ecosystem shall also be considered.

2.2.2 A forest manager shall formulate the forest management plan in line with the relevant regional forest plan, municipal forest development plan and the forest owners' management plan under Forest act where the plan is developed, and forest management practices shall be implemented based on the forest management plan concerned.

2.3 Regeneration after harvesting shall be carried out in compliance with related laws and regulations. Site specific suitable species shall be planted in artificial regeneration based upon the record of silvicultural operations in the past.

Note: Regeneration periods of planting of man-made forests are determined in the designated conditions of protection forest management stipulated in the Cabinet Order of Forest Act so that "planting shall be implemented within 2 years starting from the first day of the subsequent fiscal year of the last day of the harvesting operation". Regarding forests outside protection forests, regeneration periods are determined by "Notice No.851 of Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry in July 1, 1962" so that planting of man-made forest shall be implemented within 2 years starting from the first day of the subsequent fiscal year of the last day of the harvesting operation, and natural regeneration shall be implemented within 5 years

starting from the first day of the subsequent fiscal year of the last day of the harvesting operation”.

- 2.3.1** Harvesting and regeneration record in the last five or ten years shall be verified in documents in which regeneration shall be appropriately planned in correspondence to harvesting plan. Duration for regeneration shall follow the standards under municipal forest management plan.
 - 2.3.2** Technical manuals for regeneration method, species and numbers of trees regenerated shall be developed and operational plan for regeneration shall be available for identification of the site, site specific regeneration method, size of the site, species and planned period for regeneration.
 - 2.3.3** Selection of species in artificial regeneration shall be based upon the technical reasonableness such as the principle of site specific suitable species including the aspects of water resources conservation, protection from soil erosion and environmental conservation. Seeds or seedlings shall be from local provenances. Introduction of alien species shall be avoided if negative effect on the ecosystem is assumed. Genetically modified trees shall not be used for the time being.
 - 2.3.4** In artificial planting, site specific method which takes account of soil erosion prevention, site conservation as well as high survival rate and good growth shall be selected. Survival survey of the planted seedling shall be periodically conducted and fill up planting shall be done in the area of dead trees. In case of large size tree dead or bad growth, replanting by appropriate species selection shall be taken based upon the survey analysis of such causes.
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- 2.4** Appropriate forest management plan for natural forest (including stump sprouted forest) shall be elaborated while taking due consideration of characteristics of the site and appropriate operations for regeneration shall be conducted.
 - 2.4.1** Management activities in natural forest described in forest management plan shall be appropriate to regional forest management plan as well as municipal forest development plan and forest owners' management plan. Harvesting and regeneration in natural forest shall be planned in a manner of mutually coordination from technical reasonableness point of view. Operational plan for harvesting and regeneration shall be available for harvesting method, its volume and planned period for operation.
 - 2.4.2** In natural forest management, tree selection guidelines, based upon the operation methods and forest phase and type, and technical guidelines such as ratio of felling and its cycle shall be developed. In order to secure proper regeneration after

harvesting, regeneration assistance operations such as treatment of soil surface and supplementary planting shall be planned based upon forest phase and type as well as conditions after harvesting.

2.4.3 If natural ecosystem targeted to maintain and conserve is destroyed or degraded in primary forest and similar natural forest, restoration measures based upon the use of natural recovery power shall be taken.

2.5 Tending plan shall be clearly developed with appropriate implementation based upon the site condition.

2.5.1 Technical guidelines for tending methods and its timing shall be developed. In order to enhance species diversity and multi-layered root system, hardwood species or non-targeted species shall be retained in the pre-commercial thinning as appropriate.

2.5.2 Tending operation record in the last five or ten years shall be verified and upcoming sites for tending and site specific methods, volume and timing shall be available in documents.

2.5.3 If the number of wild animals inhabited is significant and causing damage to forest, precautions measures to reduce the animal pressures on the growth and biodiversity of forest shall be taken. Moreover, where forest is used for grazing, appropriate precautions measures shall be taken,

2.6 Thinning which will introduce target forest type shall be properly planned and implemented.

2.6.1 In comparison with age class composition of forest resources as well as tree density in each stand, thinning necessary stand shall be properly planned with identification of thinning sites, site specific thinning ratio, its volume and timing. Those stands designated as thinning necessary stand in municipal forest development plan shall have its implementation plan.

2.6.2 Thinning technical manuals for thinning method, its ratio, its age, its interval and stand density shall be developed. In thinning operation, hardwood species, standing dead wood, hollow trees in the site shall be retained as appropriate.

2.6.3 Thinning operation record in the last five or ten years shall be available. Judging from the status of thinning operation, thinning shall be properly conducted in comparison with stand age and density.

2.7 Appropriate prevention measures against pests, disease and animal damage shall be

taken. The use of chemicals such as pesticides shall comply with the laws and regulations and shall limit minimum level.

2.7.1 Forest pest and disease control plan in the forest management plan shall be consistent with prefectural standard for forest pest and disease control based on Act on Forest Pest and Disease Control and the wildlife protection and management plans based on the Wildlife Protection and Proper Hunting Act, and shall be relevant to maintain biological diversity and soil and water conservation.

2.7.2 Outbreak record and associated measures of forest pests, disease and animal damage in the last five or ten years shall be available.

2.7.3 The use of forestry chemicals (including herbicide) shall be minimized. When used, a control manual shall be established in compliance with the Agricultural Chemicals Regulation Act and other relevant regulations, and the chemicals shall be used in accordance with the manual. Notwithstanding the above, the “WHO Type 1A and 1B” pesticides shall be prohibited, except where no other viable alternative is available. In this respect, the chemicals to which alternatives do not exist are defined and listed in Appendix 4 of this document as the chemicals exceptionally allowed.

2.8 Prevention and remedial measures against forest fire and severe weather disaster shall be prepared. In case of use of fire, lighting of fires in forest shall only be conducted with permission and conditions by the head of the municipal government related.

2.8.1 With reference to forest fire and severe weather disaster, forest patrol staff and insurance coverage as well as awareness raising programs for employees, volunteers shall be available.

2.8.2 Forest fire fighting training for employees shall be conducted in collaboration with related organization and equipment for fire fighting shall be stored.

2.8.3 Reforestation plan in fire damages area shall be prepared with site specific regeneration methods and its size.

3. Maintenance and Enhancement of Production Function of Forests (Wood and non-wood forest products)

3.1 The production function of forests to produce wood and non-wood forest products as well as ecosystem services shall be maintained in the sustainable level, and cycling utilization of forest resources shall be promoted.

3.1.1 Benefits obtained from ecosystems such as regulating services, cultural services,

supporting services as well as provisioning services shall be capitalized on in accordance with local conditions of forest and surrounding area in a way contributing to cycling utilization of forest resources and vitalizing local societies.

3.1.2 Certified forest products including forest ecosystems and non-wood forest products shall be efficiently utilized for diverse purposes as “green ecosystem resources”.

3.2 Sound economic outcomes shall be pursued in economic activities including those related to new markets for forest products and servicing functions.

3.2.1 Level of harvest of wood and non-wood forest products shall not exceed the long-term sustainable level. Forest products harvested shall be effectively utilized as they are precious resources.

3.2.2 Forest managers shall make efforts to introduce and expand technologies that contribute to improvement of efficiency in resource utilization and local/global environment in their capacity, and to tackle sustainable use of forest resources and utilization of biomass and natural energy.

3.3 Forest management and practices of harvest or regeneration shall be carried out in the season or in a way that does not cause damages to soil and remaining standing trees; and also does not reduce production capacity of the forest ecosystem at the site.

3.4 In formulating forest management plan, the municipal forest development plan or other plans with respect to forest management for exerting timber production function and other functions of forest to serve public interest shall be taken into account; relevant government policies and subsidy measures shall be tried to be applied; harvested forest products shall be utilized optimally; contribution to revitalization of local societies shall be endeavored.

3.4.1 Forest owners/managers shall endeavor to promote utilization of domestic and local timber and optimal utilization of the harvested forest products in collaboration with other SGEC/PEFC certified entities and administrative organizations, considering cycling of production, processing, distribution, consumption and disposal of forest products.

3.5 In managing forests, infrastructures such as roads, skid tracks, bridges shall be appropriately designed, constructed and maintained in order to ensure efficient supply of products and services with keeping adverse impact to the environment minimum.

3.5.1 In construction or maintenance of forest roads, skid tracks or check dams as well as facilities for education and recreation, certified forest products shall be effectively used.

Note: Land used for construction of infrastructures in SGEC certified forests are recognized as part of forest land subject to the forest management, and timber originated from felled trees on the land used for construction of the infrastructures is recognized as timber originated from sustainably managed forests. Forest facilities such as forest roads or skid tracks are categorized as activities of forest management and are not considered harmful to the achievement of sustainable forest management, as long as their construction is carried out with a design and method harmonizing with natural conditions of the forest (refer Appendix 3).

3.5.2 Infrastructures such as forest roads and skid tracks shall be designed, constructed and maintained for effective supply of forest products and services while minimizing negative impact on the environment.

4. Maintenance, conservation and appropriate enhancement of biological diversity in forest ecosystems

4.1 Since long-term conservation of biological diversity of forest will contribute to provide economic and social benefits, management principles for conservation of biological diversity at landscape level as well as for major forest types at stand level shall be stated.

4.1.1. The following items for biological diversity shall be stated in forest management plan:

- a) Fundamental management principles on maintenance and improvement of diversity of ecosystem, species and gene based upon character of forest,
- b) Appropriate management plan on maintenance and improvement of biological diversity at landscape level,
- c) Technical guidelines on some representative forest types in terms of maintenance and improvement of biological diversity.

4.1.2 If primary forest or similar natural forest exists in the area, strict management based upon management principles for preservation shall be conducted and adjacent buffer zone management principles shall also be available.

4.1.3 Conversion of primary forest to man-made forest shall not occur unless, in

principle, in a small area within the limit of 1% of the primary forest and in justifiable conditions such as follows:

- a) The impact of conversion deems to be negligible in light of fundamental management principles on maintenance, improvement and other aspects of diversity of ecosystem, species and gene, as defined in this standard.
- b) Conversion does not violate the regional forest plan, municipal forest development plan and relevant acts and legislations related to the conservation of ecosystem such as Nature Conservation Act and Natural Parks Act.

4.1.4 With regard to conversion of forest to other types of land use, the conversion shall be undertaken within, in principle, the limit of 1% of the certified forest area (or the limit of 5ha in case that the certified forest area is less than 500ha) in an appropriate manner based upon, in addition to the previous clause: section 8.4 Criterion 4 of this standard “Maintenance, conservation and appropriate enhancement of biological diversity in forest ecosystems”; and section 8.6 Criterion 6 of this standard “Maintenance or appropriate enhancement of socio-economic functions and conditions”; and clauses on protection forests, forest planning system, forest land conversion permission system in Forest Act, other related laws and regulations such as Nature Conservation Act and Natural Parks Act. Forest conversion also shall make a contribution to long-term conservation, economic, and social benefits.

4.1.5 Those man-made forests which does not have justifiable reasons for conversion after 31 December 2010 shall be treated as disqualified forests which failed to meet the requirements stipulated in this document.

4.1.6 Conversion of abandoned agriculture lands back to forests shall be taken into consideration if such conversion may lead to increase in economic, environmental or cultural values.

4.2 Primary elements (natural forest including primary forest, Satoyama forest, grass land, wetland, pond, farm land and so on) for securing biological diversity in the area shall be clearly identified in the map and management principles shall be stated.

4.2.1 Constituting elements in the area shall be clearly identified in the map. As to primary elements for maintaining biological diversity among them, flora and fauna in the area shall be recorded and primary species of them shall be under the technical guidelines for conservation and management.

4.2.2 Appropriate conservation plan as well as management plan for riparian forest, wetland or biotope shall be available.

4.3 Appropriate conservation measures shall be provided for the species and their habitat under the categories of Critically Endangered, Endangered, Vulnerable and Near Threatened in the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.

4.3.1 Existing information of biological diversity in the area and adjacent area shall be extensively collected and recorded. If flora and fauna in the IUCN Red List are found in the area, the habitat shall be identified and strictly protected in accordance with the protection plan. Those sites, where rare flora and fauna seem to inhabit based upon the experts' opinion, shall be conserved through protected forest establishment based upon the expert advice.

4.3.2 As a part of rare flora and fauna protection, measures shall be taken through protection of the standing trees worthy for nest tree, protection of standing dead wood, hollow trees and fallen dead wood worthy for bait of insects and birds and improvement of their habitat environment.

4.4 Appropriate conservation measures shall be provided for natural vegetation and wild flora and fauna including understory vegetation.

4.4.1 In order to maintain and improve the habitat environment for wild flora and fauna, understory and forest edge vegetation shall be maintained. Measures for protection of rare natural vegetation shall be taken.

4.4.2 Collection of wild flora and fauna shall be limited within the level of sustainability and improper actions shall be prevented. If the forest manager assumes the responsibility over picking of wild life, he/ she shall regulate, monitor and control such activities.

4.4.3 New introduction of alien species shall be carefully considered to avoid its negative effect on the ecosystem. If introduction is decided, careful monitoring of its negative effect shall be conducted.

4.4.4 On the construction of infrastructures such as forest roads or check dams, precaution measures (side ditch and crossing ditch of forest road and fish ladder) not hampering growth and propagation of small animals shall be conducted. The constructional materials for such infrastructures shall be from bio-materials as appropriate and those infrastructures shall be designed with environmental integrity and minimizing the damage to the ecosystem.

5. Maintenance or appropriate enhancement of protective functions in forest management (notably soil and water)

5.1 Impact of activities on soil and water resources conservation shall be conducted in advance for minimizing the negative impact in forest management plan and its operational process.

5.1.1 While recognizing change in the environment or level of conservation in connection to forestry operations such as logging and forest road construction, items related to the environmental consideration shall be put in order and be fully disseminated into the contractors and operators.

5.1.2 The area requested for special consideration in soil and basin system conservation shall be identified in the map and the appropriate measures for enhancing soil conservation functions shall be taken.

5.1.3 In the case of forest road and bridge construction design, exposure of bare soils shall be minimized, soil flow into water course shall be avoided and water course and its bed shall be maintained. Also appropriate surface water drainage of forest road shall be allocated and maintained.

5.2 Appropriate protection forest belt shall be set up and trees on the edge of the belt shall be conserved and maintained in the healthy condition in case of logging in the area of windswept ridges, basin system (including seasonal ones) and road side.

5.2.1 Protection forest belt shall be properly set up and trees on the edge of the belt shall be conserved and maintained in the healthy condition in the area of ridges and streams for soil, water resources, biological diversity and landscape conservation. Such protection forest belt shall be identified on-site based upon the map in the forest management plan.

5.2.2 Vegetation in protection forest belt shall be maintained with the vegetation associated with site specific conditions. If soft wood artificial plantation forms current vegetation, introduction to soft wood and hard wood mixture forest shall be planned.

5.3 In the course of logging, skidding and log transporting, upon considering effect on adjacent water resources and protection function against debris flow, measures for protection of forest floor surface shall be carefully taken.

5.3.1 If logging is planned in the area requested for consideration in soil and basin system conservation such as forest with high protection function against disaster in mountain or high risk area of disaster in mountain, type of logging and size of logging area shall be consistent with soil and water resources conservation. In the case of forest designated as water resources maintenance and improvement forest

under municipal forest development plan, logging plan shall be fit to the standards and models under the municipal forest development plan. In the case of other forest shall also be taken care of water resources conservation in the basin if logging or planting operations are planned.

5.3.2 As to method and season of logging, skidding and log transporting, measures for protection of forest floor surface and prevention of water pollution shall be carefully taken in accordance with technical manuals appropriately made by the environmentally friendly methods reflecting the site conditions such as geographical features, soil and vegetation.

5.4 Measures shall be taken to avoid spillage of chemical materials such as fuel and oil for machinery or other contaminant as well as agricultural chemical into basin system. Conservation of inland freshwater ecosystems, marine ecosystems and their services as well as human health and terrestrial ecosystems shall be pursued.

5.4.1 Measures shall be taken to avoid soil or water pollution based upon the manuals in which storage place, storage method and usage rules of fuel, oil and other chemicals are regulated. Leakage and unregulated dumping of oil during forest management operation shall be strictly avoided in accordance with the manuals. Non-organic waste shall be collected and stored in designated area with environmentally sound method.

5.4.2 In case of fertilizer use, it shall be applied in controlled manner and with ample consideration of the environment.

5.5 Soil and water conservation measures shall be taken for forest road and skid track construction.

5.5.1 In the course of road and skid track planning, technical manuals based upon the rules and regulations of forest road and of forest conversion shall be taken into account. Such planning shall be conducted in a way that minimizes the environmental impact on the natural conditions of the site and the characteristics of water use in downstream thereby paying full attention to water and soil conservation.

5.5.2 Structure of management of forest road and skid track shall be organized and appropriate maintenance service shall be conducted.

6. Maintenance or appropriate enhancement of socio-economic functions and conditions

- 6.1** All domestic acts and international conventions (including UN declarations and international customary laws) ratified by Japanese government shall be complied with. International conventions, etc. which are not ratified or agreed by Japanese government shall be respected and Japanese domestic laws including customary laws with respect to the related fields of these conventions shall be applied and followed.
- 6.1.1** Laws and regulations related forest management including those with respect to implementation of forest management; protection and conservation of forest ecosystem; tenure rights on land and forest; issues of health, labor and safety; and tax system.
- 6.1.2** All acts relevant to forest management shall be ready to refer and the documents and records justifying law compliance shall be available.
- 6.1.3** Forest manager shall promote to prevent unauthorized activities, including illegal ones by setting sign boards and other media for proper protection of forest.
- 6.1.4** Forest manager shall set up opportunities for hearing the opinions of local people or regarding gender equalities, etc. and define the procedure for resolving complaints and disputes from them in relation to forest management.
- 6.1.5** In the northern part of Japan, especially in Hokkaido, considering that forests are closely related with promotion of Ainu culture and advancement of Ainu policies to create the environment enabling it, and also recognizing that Ainu people are indigenous people in Japan, forest managers shall makes effort in forest management planning to contribute to effective and smooth implementation of “regional plans for promotion of Ainu policies” based on Act on Promotion of Policies for Realizing the Society in which the Pride of Ainu People (Ainu Policy Promotion Act) in close cooperation with relevant municipal governments, as well as to comply with international conventions such as Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention (ILO 169), UN Declaration on the Right of Indigenous Peoples, International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, International Covenants on Human Rights – International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights; Article 6 (Efforts by citizens) of Act on Promotion of Policies for Realizing the Society in which the Pride of Ainu People. In order to secure FPIC to Ainu people, procedures to provide sufficient prior information, hear opinions and requests and carry out consultation when necessary through meetings and communication measures, etc. shall be prepared. Ainu people and their regional organizations for whom FPIC is required shall be identified as far as possible by inquiring relevant municipal governments and organizations (refer 6.3.2.1 and 6.3.2.2 of this document).

6.2 Legal, customary or traditional rights to use local forest property and resources shall be respected through applying international conventions, Japanese domestic laws including customary laws, etc.

6.2.1 Existence of common rights and fishing rights or other customary rights in the forest (“forests for community use” in national forests) applied for certification shall be clarified and its status in the forest management plan shall be available.

In the northern part of Japanese archipelago, especially in Hokkaido, such rights shall be adequately dealt with based on Article 16 “National forests and forests for community use” and Article 17 “Consideration of permissions based on Fisheries Act and Act for Protection of Fisheries Resources” as well as relevant laws and regulations including international and domestic customary laws.

Note: Ainu Policy Promotion Act

Article 16: “When coordination between the national forest management and the designated municipal governments (municipal governments having formulated the designated regional plans for promotion of Ainu policies in which items defined in Section 4 of Article 10 are described) deems necessary for improving land utilization, Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries may permit residents of the designated municipalities concerned and areas inside the municipalities to jointly collect forest products utilized for rituals traditionally implemented by Ainu people and other activities for promotion of Ainu culture carried out in the national forests relating to the items defined in Section 4 of Article 10 of the said law.”

Article 17: “When permission stipulated in Ordinance of Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries or the prefectural regulations based on Section 1 or 2 of Article 65 of Fisheries Act, or Section 1 or 2 of Article 4 of Act for Protection of Fisheries Resources in order for practicing the projects for salmon fishing in inland waters as described in authorized regional plans for Ainu policy promotion, Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries or governors shall give adequate consideration on the smooth implementation of the projects for salmon fishing in inland waters concerned in responding to the application of the permission concerned.”

6.2.2 When the common rights recognized, users’ right and benefits shall be properly secured in the forest management plan based upon the status of use.

6.2.3 Forest management shall be associated with promotion of long-term health and welfare of the communities within and adjacent the said forest.

6.2.4 Forest manager shall respect traditional forest management practices in Satoyama and other area as far as economically feasible, and redress inequality in opportunity and results.

6.2.5 Forest manager shall procedures to identify the stakeholders by using appropriate information, provide explanation to those stakeholders who are potentially affected by the forest management, hear their views on the matters related to forest management and make consultation when necessary. If necessary, forest manager shall also hear from the municipal office concerned the process of discussions by experts who review the municipal forest management plan.

In the course of developing forest management plan, forest manager shall make the best use of local forest-related experience and knowledge, such as those of local communities, forest owners, NGOs and local people.

6.3 Employees and contractors shall be properly trained and guided on biological diversity in the course of management plan implementation.

6.3.1 Training and guiding texts on work safety and biological diversity shall be available and employees and contractors training shall be conducted.

6.4 Forest manger shall assure that the employees and contractors follow the forest management criteria, indicators and guidelines (forest management standard) and take necessary measures for improving the employment environment such as professional skill up training or registration to the social security system and recognize the status of the implementation of such measures.

6.4.1 Entities implementing practices relating to certified forests shall comply with the fundamental ILO conventions ratified by the Japanese government, Article 3 and Article 5 of Labor Standards Act related to ILO No. 105 and No. 111, both of which are not ratified by Japan, as well as other relevant domestic acts and shall enroll social security system such as employee's unemployment insurance, health insurance, pension insurance and retirement allowance mutual fund. The entities shall try to let the employees, who do not legally satisfy the requirements, enroll such systems. Status of social security enrollment in contractor's employee shall be reported.

Note: Labour Standard Act

Article 3 Employers shall not conduct discriminatory treatment to labor conditions such as wages, working time and others due to employees nationality, beliefs, social positions (principle of same wages for men and women).

Article 5 Employers shall not force workers to work against their will through the use of violence, intimidation, confinement, or any other means which unfairly restrict the mental or physical freedom of said workers.

6.4.2 Employees' skill up training and guidance policy for log processing, forest management, forest inventory, field supervising, management planning and sales shall be available and such training shall be conducted.

6.5 Necessary training and guidance of employees and contractors on work safety shall be conducted in order to establish safe working environment.

6.5.1 Work safety manuals and guidance, its check sheet, its daily report, risk assessment report and record of accident while at work shall be provided to employees and contractors. Work safety training, self-daily work safety check, risk assessment, work safety inspection and work safety and health training shall be conducted.

6.5.2 Employer shall have institutional safety and health management structure based upon Labor Safe and Health Act and associated rules and regulations.

7. Performance evaluation and improvement by monitoring

7.1 Forest owners/managers shall endeavor to evaluate and improve the performance of forest management and the management organization through in situ verification by establishing a checklist for evaluating achievement of the forest management plan. In case performance evaluation and improvement is not conducted appropriately, its causes and counter-measures shall be identified, and self-examination/evaluation as well as consideration of improvement measures shall be conducted through internal audits. Where a "regional plan for promotion of Ainu polity" is formulated, monitoring of compliance status regarding the plan, customary joint utilization of forests by Ainu people, protection of cultural and traditional heritage of Ainu people related to forests and so on shall be carried out.

7.1.1 Periodical monitoring of implementation of the forest management plan and performance of the management organization shall be carried out. The result of the monitoring shall be reviewed by the top management of the organization, and resulted in necessary improvement by reflecting the monitoring to implementation and revision of the management plan as well as to management of the organization.

7.1.2 The Check list of monitoring shall include the items which verify the performance

of forest management plan's achievement such as pest/disease/animal damage; frost/snow damage; forest fire including natural fire; operations' impact on ecosystem soundness and vitality (including non-wood forest products); labor safety; and collaboration with stakeholders.

7.2 Forest management plan and its monitoring results shall be confidential in general; however, the summary information shall be open to the public in principle. Various kinds of information related to the managed forests shall be kept as much as possible, and various data related to the forest concerned shall be recorded and kept as much as possible. In case of forest operations conducted, category-wise, fiscal year-wise and site-wise operational record shall be kept.

Collaborative monitoring system shall be established with the local governments, if they conduct the indicator species monitoring for estimating holistic biological diversity in the region.

7.2.1 Documents defining the method of publicizing the forest management plan, its operation record and check list for biological diversity (including the venue, the perusal method and procedures) shall exist or be planned to be formulated. However, such documents shall not be open to be public as personal information, secret documents stipulated in relevant acts and regulation, and secret information linked with natural environmental conservation.

7.2.2 Site-wise and fiscal year-wise operational record shall be kept. Site-wise and fiscal year-wise damage status of pests and disease, animals, forest fire, severe weather shall be recorded. Status of enrollment in and compensation from forest insurance shall be recorded. The contents of collaboration and status of operations with the third parties who conduct biological diversity monitoring shall be verified.

7.2.3 Forest managers shall actively and properly contribute to data collection related to research activities in sustainable forest management, in consideration of the principle that forest management shall be conducted based upon scientific research results.

Appendix 2

Procedures of Certification Audit with respect to “6.1.5 (Ainu people)” of Appendix 1 of SGEC Standard Document 3

1. General principle

Considering that Ainu people are recognized as “indigenous people residing in the northern part of Japanese Archipelago, especially in Hokkaido” in Ainu Policy Promotion Act, in conducting forest management in an area where Ainu people reside in Hokkaido, forest managers shall make consultation with Ainu people or a regional organization(s) of Ainu people in the area concerned in order to secure free, prior, informed consent (FPIC) of Ainu people as well as effective and smooth implementation of the “regional plans for promotion of Ainu policies” formulated by the designated municipal governments, based on Section 6.1.5 of Appendix 1 “Operational guideline” of SGEC Standard Document 3 “Sustainable Forest Management – Requirements”. Forest managers shall pay attention to rights under customary law which are generated or being generated through general customary practices recognized internationally and domestically.

2. Certification Evaluation Process

In conducting certification evaluation related to Section 6.1.5 (Ainu people) of the operational guideline, the following points are evaluated in order to confirm whether forest managers secure FPIC of Ainu people or not.

(Activities based on the “regional plans for promotion of Ainu policies”)

- (1) Forest managers shall make effort to effectively and smoothly implement the items under their responsibility among those related to forest management defined in the “regional plans for promotion of Ainu policies” stipulated by municipal governments by coordinating with the municipal governments administering the forest management area and reflecting the item to the forest management plans concerned.

(Identifying Ainu people residing in the area concerned)

- (2) Forest managers shall identify Ainu people who reside in the area of forest management concerned or local organization(s) of Ainu people located in the area as

stakeholders. In identifying these stakeholders, the forest managers shall conduct necessary survey by, for example, acquiring information from local governments and/or other relevant organizations such as Ainu Association of Hokkaido.

(Explanation of forest management plans and implementation of FPIC)

(3) Forest managers shall deliver explanation through meetings and/or other communication measures regarding forest management plans (timber harvesting, forest road construction, etc.) which are subject to certification to the stakeholders identified in the way described in the (2) above; confirm their views and requests; and make consultation with them when necessary. If forest managers are not able to identify Ainu people as being stakeholders, they shall explain the forest management plans to the municipal governments at the location of their forest management areas so that local residents are able to acquire information on the forest management plans through the municipal governments. Forest managers shall pay particular attention to the following issues in managing the forests;

- ① protection of customary practices of Ainu people in the forest concerned such as hunting or gathering of plants used as dye or food
- ② protection of sites of spiritual significance for Ainu people such as “chiminoshiri” (sites for prayer)
- ③ protection of other culture and customs of Ainu people related to the forest concerned

<references> Board of Education, Hokkaido

- List of cultural assets designated by the national government, Hokkaido prefectural government and municipal governments
- Candidates of designated cultural or scenic sites related to Ainu culture
- List of historical remains or monuments of Ainu people
- Other Ainu concerned documents related to particular attention shown in (3) above

(Measures in case a solution is not reached)

(4) In case that a solution is not reached through the consultation described in the above, the forest managers shall seek advice from relevant organizations such as municipal governments and make further effort to reach an appropriate and fair solution through, for example, additional explanation based on a field survey and document survey

upon necessity.

(Contracts on customary practices in forests)

- (5) In case of customary practices described in (3) above, contracts based on the consultation between the both sides shall be agreed on upon necessity.

(Record of consultation)

- (6) Forest managers shall keep written records of the content and process of the consultation with Ainu people or the local Ainu organization(s). When necessary, a written record agreed by the both sides shall be made.

(Continuous review of the procedures)

- (7) These procedures are under continuous review based on the actual situation of certification audits and opinions of stakeholders.

Note: “Hokkaido Ainu Living Conditions Survey”

The report of “Hokkaido Ainu Living Conditions Survey” compiled by Ainu Policy Division, Ainu Measures Promotion Bureau, Department of Environment and Lifestyle, Hokkaido Prefectural Government, include the data on “number of targeted households and people”. However, this number shows only number of households or people who answered the survey and does not necessarily reflect number of Ainu households and people living in Hokkaido. Thus, there is possibility that Ainu people actually live in the area where “number of targeted households and people” in the survey was recorded “zero” or “–”, and, therefore, forest managers shall make efforts to secure FPIC of Ainu people even in such areas when formulating a forest management plan.

Appendix 3

Handling wood products produced by infrastructure construction in forest

The area for infrastructure construction in SGEC certified forests shall be regarded as a part of forest area designated for forest management. Wood cut from the area of infrastructure construction shall be treated as the wood products produced under sustainable forest management (SFM) of SGEC scheme.

In this connection, the infrastructures in such area shall be designed and be constructed in site specific condition friendly manner as a part of SFM. These constructional activities shall be, therefore, taken under the category of sustainable forest management and considered not harmful to materialization of SFM.

Note 1: “Guidance for administrative procedures with respect to protection forests and protection forest facilities stipulated in Forest Act” (Notification No790 from Vice Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries to prefectural governors dated on April 27, 2000, last amendment in April 1, 2013)

Note 2: In Section 4.2.2(a) of the notification above, “forest roads, skid tracks, log yards and waking trails” are listed as “facilities necessary for forest management and practices” which are subject to permission of alteration of land shape in protection forests. This clause defines facilities which can be approved to be constructed without cancelling designation as protection forests. Considering these facilities are allowed as “necessary for forest management and practices” even in protection forests, it is reasonable assumption that such facilities are also allowed in forests other than protection forests in general as “facilities necessary for forest management and practices”.

Appendix4

The chemicals classified as WHO Type 1A and 1B the use of which are exceptionally allowed by the provision given in Section 8.2.8 of SGECS Standard Document 3 “SGECS Sustainable Forest Management – Requirements”

The chemicals the use of which are exceptionally allowed are limited to the following;

- Zinc Phosphide

When using this chemical, forest manager shall establish the control manual in compliance with the Agricultural Chemicals Regulation Act and fully assure not only the prevention of accidents but also the conservation of natural and living environment.

SGEC Guide Document 3-1

SGEC Guide on FPIC Implementation for Ainu People

Forward

Ainu people, residing in northern part of Japanese Archipelago, particularly in Hokkaido, had been nurturing and developing their unique culture in which deep spiritual and religious bond with nature was the precious element. However, after Meiji Restoration, Japanese government in Meiji era, which rushed to modernize Japan, renamed “Ezo”, the original name of the land, to Hokkaido and annexed Hokkaido, where Ainu people had been living, into the Japanese territory; integrated Ainu people into Japanese nationals through compilation of family register; and promoted transmigration into and development of Hokkaido. In this process, Ainu people, being deprived of their culture and forced to assimilation, lost their land and livelihood, and was placed at political, economic and social disadvantage. Despite severe discrimination which Ainu people have been suffering from since then and even after the World War II, they have been protecting and maintaining their identity and culture such as Ainu language; they currently call for revitalization of their culture, improvement of their political, economic, and social status, security of rights as indigenous people and so forth.

Since the adoption of “United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People” on the Right of Indigenous Peoples” in 2007 UN General Assembly, the countries where indigenous people reside are now share common understanding that it was injustice of these countries to have annexed the land of indigenous people, integrated them to nationals, damaged their original culture seriously and put them into political, economic and social disadvantage. In view of such international trend and cultural, social and economic importance of forest and rivers for Ainu people, sufficient consideration should be given to the culture, customs, etc. of Ainu people. In order to secure effective consideration for Ainu people, it should be endeavored that FPIC to Ainu people as stakeholders is conducted and thereby contribute to materialization of the society in which the pride of Ainu people is respected.

In the light of the above, this guide is to explain concrete procedures of FPIC defined in 6.1.4 of SGEC Standard Document 3 “SGEC Sustainable Forest Management — Requirements”, 6.1.5 of Appendix 1 “Operational Guideline” and Appendix 2

“Procedures of Certification Audit with respect to ‘6.1.5 (Ainu people)’ of Appendix 1 of SGECC Standard Document 3” of SEGCC Standard Document 3.

1. Necessity of FPIC to Ainu people

(1) International trend

In 1970s, indigenous peoples across the world started to join hands together towards improvement of their political, economic and social status internationally and domestically, and guarantee of the “rights of indigenous peoples”. Since 1980s, such issues had been discussed in the United Nations with representatives from national governments and indigenous peoples gathering all together. The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples adopted in September 2007 embodies the achievement of the discussion, which had lasted more than 20 years, and FPIC is clearly stated in the declaration.

In 1992, Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit adopted Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, which admitted importance of the participation by citizens to the decision making process related to environmental issues by proclaiming in Article 10 that “environmental issues are best handled with the participation of all concerned citizens, at the relevant level and at the national level, each individual shall have appropriate access to information concerning the environment that is held by public authorities, the opportunity to participate in decision-making processes”.

Article 8 of Convention of Biological Diversity, which entered into force in 1993, also stipulates that “each contracting parties shall, subject to its national legislation, respect, preserve and maintain knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities embodying traditional lifestyles relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and promote their wider application with the approval and involvement of the holders of such knowledge, innovations and practices and encourage the equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of such knowledge, innovations and practices”.

Necessity of citizens’ participation and FPIC of indigenous peoples in decision making processes of policies related to environment and development is now internationally recognized, having been affirmed in negotiations under the “UN Framework Convention on Climate Change” since 1992, more specifically, for example, “Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation and role of conservation, sustainable forest management and enhancement of carbon stocks in developing countries (REDD+)” agreed in COP 15 in 2009, as well as in 169 targets of the “Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)” adopted in the UN Summit in 2015.

(2) Domestic trend

On June 6th, 2008, subsequent year of the UN declaration, both the House of Councilors and the House of Representatives of Japanese Diet unanimously adopt the “Diet Resolution Calling for Recognition of Ainu People as Indigenous People”. On the same day, Cabinet Secretary publicized the statement saying “The Government of Japan makes efforts to establish integrated policies on Ainu people by promoting previous policies by referring related clauses of the UN declaration under the recognition that Ainu people is indigenous people who reside in the northern part of Japanese Archipelago, particularly in Hokkaido, have their own language and maintain the uniqueness of their religion and culture”, and established the “Expert Council on Ainu Policies”.

The report of the expert council submitted to Cabinet Secretary in July 2009 defined indigenous people as “people having been residing in a certain region of a country historically since before the reign of the country reached over the region as people having different culture and identity from the majority people of the country, and currently living in the same region without losing their unique culture and identity even under the domination of the majority people forced to them regardless of their intention” and recognized Ainu people as indigenous people “who have been living in the northern part of Japanese Archipelago, particularly in Hokkaido, since before the reign of Japan reached over there as independent people free from control and restraints from outside and maintaining their unique culture”. The report pointed out that “Japanese government had strong responsibility to pay attention to restoration of the culture of Ainu people as indigenous people, considering the history that the modernization as the national strategy had serious adverse impact to Ainu culture”. The report also says that the culture mentioned in the report meant integrated lifestyle as a whole including language, music, dancing, handicrafts, etc. in addition to the forms of land use, and that a certain consideration should be given to the utilization of land and resources based on opinions of Ainu people and their living conditions, because Ainu people had strong ties with land where they utilized as the source of livelihood and places for rituals.

Afterwards, “Ainu Policy Promotion Council” chaired by Cabinet Secretary made consideration toward the realization of the proposals made in the report above, and as an outcome, the symbolic space for coexistence of peoples and the national museum of Ainu people were constructed and opened in April 2020. Also, in April 2019, “Act on promotion of policies for realizing the society in which the pride of Ainu people is

respected” (hereinafter referred as “Ainu Promotion Act”) was enacted in order for Ainu policies to be promoted with “the purpose of contributing to achieve societies in which Ainu people are able to live with the pride as a people and their pride is respected, and all the citizens coexist with mutual respect of personality and character” (Article 1) . Article 6 of the same act stipulates that “Japanese citizens should make efforts to contribute to attainment of societies in which Ainu people are able to live with the pride as a people and such pride is respected”, and Article 16 stipulates the special measure to enable provision of the right to jointly use national forests for gathering forest products utilized for revitalization of Ainu culture such as implementation of traditional rituals and so on to citizens living in designated municipalities (municipalities where Ainu policy promotion regional plans are formulated and approved by Prime Minister)”.

(3) Policies for the operation of SGEC certification system

In operating SGEC certification system, international conventions such as the UN declaration, Racial Discrimination Elimination Convention, International Covenants on Human Rights, and domestic laws and regulations such as Ainu policy Promotion Act, basic governmental policies relating the act, prefectural policies, Ainu policy promotion regional plans and their measures formulated by designated municipal governments should be considered, and by understanding significance of the importance of forests for Ainu people and the fact that Ainu people are recognized as indigenous people in Japan, it should be endeavored to contribute to materialization of societies in which the pride of Ainu people is respected.

In order for that, SGEC forest certification system should be operated so that the forest managers and forestry practitioners (hereinafter referred as “forest managers”) secure sufficient consideration of Ainu people in forest management and practices stipulated in forest management plans (hereinafter referred as “forest management”), and that Ainu people affected by forest management are ensured to be able to deliver their opinions and requests to forest managers. Under such system, it is important that forest managers respond to requests from Ainu people in a faithful manner as possible and make efforts to establish relationship based on mutual trust with Ainu people.

2. Description of “Free, Prior, Informed Consent (FPIC) in various documents

(1) FPIC defined in the UN declaration

Article 19 of the UN declaration adopted in September 2007 stipulates that “states shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the indigenous peoples concerned

through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free, prior and informed consent before adopting and implementing legislative or administrative measures that may affect them” and urges sovereign nations to conduct FPIC of indigenous people.

(2) FPIC described in PEFC certification standard “ST 1003:2010”

PEFC, taking such international trend seriously, and stipulated that “forest practices and operations shall be conducted in recognition of the established framework of legal, customary and traditional rights such as outlined in ILO 169 and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which shall not be infringed upon without the free, prior and informed consent of the holders of the rights, including the provision of compensation where applicable”; “where the extent of rights is not yet resolved, or is in dispute, there are processes for just and fair resolution”; and “in such cases forest managers shall, in the interim, provide meaningful opportunities for parties to be engaged in forest management decisions whilst respecting the processes and roles and responsibilities laid out in the policies and laws where the certification takes place” in “6.3.2.2.” of PEFC standard ST 1003:2018 “Sustainable Forest Management — Requirements”. This standard also stipulates that “sites with recognized specific historical, cultural or spiritual significance and areas fundamental to meeting the needs of indigenous peoples and local communities (e.g. health, subsistence) shall be protected or managed in a way that takes due regard of the significance of the site” in 8.6.3.

(3) FPIC described in SGEC Standard Document 3 “SGEC Sustainable Forest management —Requirements”

SGEC/PEFC Japan stipulates the clause equivalent to that of PEFC standard in 6.3.2.2. of SGEC Standard Document 3 “SGEC Sustainable Forest management — Requirements”, and stipulates concrete procedures for FPIC such that “in order to secure FPIC by Ainu people, procedures to provide sufficient prior information, hear opinions and requests and carry out consultation when necessary through meetings and communication measures, etc. shall be prepared” and that “Ainu people and their regional organizations for whom FPIC is required shall be identified as far as possible by inquiring relevant municipal governments and organizations”.

SGEC/PEFC Japan also defines necessary procedures such that “in conducting forest management in an area where Ainu people reside, forest managers shall make consultation with Ainu people or a regional organization(s) of Ainu people in the area

concerned in order to secure free, prior, informed consent (FPIC) of Ainu people based on Section 6.1.5 of Appendix 1 ‘Operational guideline’ of SGEC Standard Document 3 ‘Sustainable Forest Management – Requirements’ in Appendix 2 “Procedures of Certification Audit with respect to ‘6.1.5 (Ainu people)’ of Appendix 1 of SGEC Standard Document 3” of SGEC Standard Document 3.

3. Process of FPIC

(1) Free, Prior and Informed Consent

FPIC is acronym of Free, Prior and Informed Consent and comprised of three elements, that is, “free consent”, “prior consent” and “informed consent”. “Consent” means “to accept opinions or proposals of others”, and therefore forest managers have to get forest management plans accepted by Ainu people. FPIC for Ainu people is to be implemented according to procedures described in (2) below, also for Ainu people who do not come forward, in consideration of the fact that not a few Ainu people refrain from coming forward publicly in spite of their identity as Ainu people under the circumstances they had been suffered from severe discrimination.

Meaning of the elements of FPIC in SGEC certification system is as follows:

- i) “Free consent” means “consent done without pressure or interference from the other side of the consultation or third parties”. Therefore, forest managers shall try to make sure that Ainu people residing within or in the vicinity of the forest area subject to the forest management plan concerned (hereinafter referred as “Ainu people”) are not receive pressure from forest managers or other third parties with respect to consent of the forest management plan.
- ii) “Prior consent” means “consent prior to implementation of something”. Therefore, forest managers shall provide meaningful opportunities for Ainu people to engage in decision making on the forest management plans.
- iii) “Informed consent” means “consent given under the condition that the subject is well understood based on provision of explanation or information which is clear and easy to understand”. Therefore, forest managers shall provide explanation and information in a transparent and easy-to-understand way regarding the substantial and potential influence of the forest management implemented by the forest management plan incurred to customs, daily life and environment of Ainu people.

(2) Concrete procedures of FPIC

FPIC is implemented with 5 steps shown below. The following points should be

considered in its implementation.

- i) Content and implementation order of the steps are not fixed, but flexibly changeable depending on consultation with Ainu people and their organizations
- ii) FPIC is continuous process aiming at construction and maintenance of good relationship with Ainu people.
- iii) The record of FPIC process should be kept and used as explanation material when needed

STEP 1: Identifying stakeholders

Forest managers applying for new certification or recertification of SGEC forest management shall identify Ainu people or organization(s) who are living within or in the vicinity of the forest area concerned and affected by the forest management substantially or potentially as stakeholders, according to the following procedure:

- i) In case that it is possible to identify a local organization of Ainu people who are living within or in the vicinity of the forest area concerned, the organization concerned becomes a stakeholder.
- ii) In case that the local organization stipulated in i) above cannot be identified, but individual Ainu person(s) who are living within or in the vicinity of the forest area concerned can be identified, then the Ainu person(s) become stakeholders.
- iii) In case that both the regional organization and individual Ainu person(s) stipulated in i) and ii) above can be identified, both become stakeholders.
- iv) In case that neither a local organization nor individual Ainu person(s) stipulated in i) and ii) above is identified despite survey conducted by acquiring information on the local organization and Ainu people, the process of the survey shall be recorded and kept. Furthermore, even in such cases, it should be noted that the possibility of Ainu people living in the area concerned cannot be denied. The information acquired through the process of the survey shall be controlled appropriately in view of the privacy protection.
- v) In identifying stakeholders, forest managers should ask information from organizations related to Ainu people, municipal governments governing the forest area concerned, local research institutes, so on. Forest managers are also recommended to explain those organizations the location, boundary, area/growing stock by forest types (man-made forests or natural forests), as well as, if possible, history of ownership and management.

STEP 2: Grasp of influence on stakeholders

For formulation of the forest management plan, forest managers shall ask for opinions from organizations related to Ainu people, related municipal governments, local research institutes, forestry and forest product industry organizations, tourism associations, chambers of commerce, NPOs, etc. and grasp substantial or potential influence of the forest management to preservation of customs of Ainu people related to forests; conservation of natural, cultural and social environment; promotion of business and industries; promotion of tourism, etc. for Ainu people. In order for the above, forest managers shall take following steps.

- i) Forest managers shall grasp influence to the following matters, considering deep spiritual and religious bond between Ainu people and nature.
 - Preservation of customs such as hunting, collection of forest products for food, dye or for other materials, etc.
 - Preservation of sites which is important for Ainu people spiritually or religiously such as “chinomishiri” (place for prayer)
 - Other preservation of culture and customs of Ainu people related to the forest concerned
- ii) Forest managers shall collect information on tree species, vegetation, geography, soil etc. of the forest area, and sufficiently consider influence to daily life of Ainu people, public functions of forests such as headwater conservation and erosion control, conservation of biological diversity such as protection of rare species.
- iii) Influence to forest environment, customs and living environment of Ainu people, and implementation of Ainu policies by designated municipal governments shall be sufficiently considered, with respect to conversion of forest land use, timber harvesting and construction of infrastructure such as forest roads.
- iv) Forest managers shall identify naturally, culturally and socially important forest resources within the forest area concerned; examine influence of forest management plans to promotion of industries including tourism, promotion of Ainu culture, etc.; and in case of the municipality designated based on Ainu Policy Promotion Act, pay attention to effective and smooth implementation of Ainu policies.
- v) Forest managers shall recognize international conventions such as the UN declaration, observe domestic laws such as Labor Standards Act and make

efforts to establish labor environment in which discrimination and forced labor are eliminated, equality of working opportunity and conditions is secured, and health and safety of laborer are not threatened.

STEP 3: Explanation to stakeholders and acceptance of opinions and requests

Forest managers shall conduct the following explanation, confirmation of opinions and requests, consultation, etc. related to the influence grasped in step 2 in order to secure effective consideration responding to concrete needs of Ainu people. In that case, proposed documents such as forest management plans shall include concrete information of the forest concerned (location, ownership/management, legal constraints, area/growing stock by forest types <man-made forest or natural forest>) and maps.

- i) Forest managers shall explain in a way easy to understand regarding forest management plans, influence described in step 2, etc., to stakeholders through meetings, visits, telephone explanation as well as sending materials by post. In each case, it shall be widely informed that opinions from stakeholders are invited for a sufficient period of time via phone, post, e-mail, direct visits, etc. When opinions or request are submitted, forest managers shall consult with stakeholders in a faithful manner. If there is no opinions or requests submitted for around 2 months, it is recognized that “a sufficient period of time” has passed. If the explanation is done by “sending materials by post” and even after one month since the sending of materials there is no opinions or requests submitted, then forest managers shall send the materials again by post.
- ii) In case that no stakeholders are identified, in order to secure FPIC to potential Ainu people, forest managers shall explain forest management plans and their influence described in step 2 to the related municipal governments (and requesting municipal governments to carry the information on municipality’s public relations magazines), and let municipal governments widely distribute the information that opinions or requests are invited from Ainu people for two months via telephone, post, e-mail, visiting offices, etc. If opinions or requests are submitted, forest managers shall consult with the person(s) who submitted the opinions or requests in a faithful manner.

STEP 4: Securing consent by stakeholders

Forest managers shall handle opinions or requests submitted from stakeholders or other persons in a faithful manner as possible, and make efforts to get consent of

stakeholders or other persons who submitted opinions or requests with respect to the forest management plans and forest management according to the plans. In case that consultation with stakeholders or other persons who submitted opinions or requests is not settled, forest managers shall make efforts to settle the consultation in an appropriate and fair manner by asking advice from related organizations such as municipal governments and by, when needed, provide supplementary explanation based on on-site or document survey.

- i) If there is no opinion or request submitted during “a sufficient period of time” described in step 3 i) or “2 months” described in step 3 ii), and if forest managers do not receive additional information from organizations related to Ainu people such as Hokkaido Ainu Association and related municipal governments after reporting the situation to them, then it can be regarded that FPIC was fulfilled from stakeholders or potential Ainu people.
- ii) If opinions or requests are submitted from stakeholders or potential Ainu people after it was judged that FPIC was fulfilled according to i), that judgement is not rescinded.

However, forest managers should handle the opinions or requests submitted after the judgment of i) above appropriately by consulting with the persons who submitted the opinions or requests in a faithful manner.

STEP 5: Keeping the record and monitoring

(1) Keeping the record

Forest managers shall record the content and the sequence of events with stakeholders or persons who submitted opinions or requests in written documents and keep these documents. When needed, forest managers shall prepare documents confirmed by stakeholders or persons who submit opinions or requests.

(2) Monitoring

Forest managers shall conduct periodical monitoring regarding implementation of forest management and its influence to Ainu people. The results of the monitoring shall be reflected to the implementation of forest management plans and, when needed, the forest management plans shall be amended.

Particularly, in case of matters related to preservation of customs of Ainu people and conservation of places which have cultural, social and economic values for Ainu people in forests, and in case that the related municipal governments are designated based on Ainu Policy Promotion Act, forest managers shall conduct monitoring based

on the record of consultation with stakeholders or other persons who submitted opinions or requests, and try to make the consideration of Ainu people in forest management effective.

4. Supplementary Article

- (1) This guide is to be amended, when needed, based on result of monitoring and opinions from persons concerned.
- (2) This guide becomes effective from January 1st, 2020, with the transition period from January 1st until April 1st, 2020.
- (3) Auditors of SGEC forest management certification shall apply this guide in re-certification audits after this guide became effective (or after the transition period). When surveillance audits are implemented before the earliest re-certification audits, this guide shall be applied to the surveillance audits.

(end of the document)