

PEFC N 03:2022

Requirements for individual and group certification

Organisation

Articles of Association for PEFC Norway

PEFC N 06
Procedures for development and auditing of Norwegian PEFC certification system

PEFC N 07
Instructions for notification of certification bodies

Forest certification

PEFC N 01
Norwegian PEFC certification system for sustainable forestry

PEFC N 02
Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard

PEFC N 03
Requirements for individual and group certification

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Requirements for certification bodies and accreditation bodies

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Glossary and definitions

Traceability and trademark use

PEFC ST 2002 Chain of Custody for Forest and Tree based products - requirements

PEFC ST 2003 Certification Body Requirements - Chain of Custody

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Trademark rules

Preface:

Revision of PEFC Norway's forest certification system

The PEFC forest certification system is revised every 5 years and PEFC Norway started the revision process February 14th 2020 with an open invitation for input to the process and participation in the working committee.

In the period June 2020 to June 2022, the working committee has revised the Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard and other standards included in the system.

The working committee has consisted of representatives from the following organisations:

- The United Federation of Trade Unions
- National Association of Outdoor Recreation Councils
- Women in forestry
- Norwegian Association of Heavy Equipment Contractors
- Nature and Youth - Young Friends of the Earth Norway
- Norwegian Forest Owners' Federation
- NORSKOG – forest owner member organisation
- The Norwegian Association for Outdoor Organisations
- Statskog SF
- Sabima - umbrella organisation for the biological associations in Norway
- Skognæringa Kyst
- Norwegian Pulp and Paper Association
- Norwegian Wood Industry Federation
- WWF Norway
- ZERO - Zero Emission Resource Organisation

In addition, the following have been represented as observers in the working committee:

- The Norwegian Environment Agency
- The Norwegian Agriculture Agency
- NIBIO - Norwegian Institute of Bioeconomy Research
- NINA - Norwegian Institute for Nature Research
- The Forestry Extension Institute
- Statsbygg

Oslo, 30 June 2022

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The official version of the document is in Norwegian but is also translated into English. In case of doubt, the Norwegian version that takes precedence.

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1 Introduction

This document is part of the PEFC Norway's certification system for sustainable forestry. The requirements are normative for group certificate holders which manage group certification of forest owners in Norway.

Group certification involves certification of forest owners under a joint certificate which is managed by a group certificate holder. An organisation of this kind allows the group to share the costs of certification and be part of a community for information and advice linked to the scheme.

The ownership structure in Norway, with a major variation in property size, and the use of contractors makes group certification a sensible and rational way of organizing forest certification. Group certification has been a dominant form of certification since PEFC Norway established the forest certification system and had the system approved for the first time on 24 May 2000.

2 Scope

This document defines the requirements for group certificate holders and affiliated members of the group certificate. The requirements must be met in order to be able to certify forest owners under a joint group certificate.

The document also applies to individual certification of individual forest properties.

3 References and definitions

3.1 References

The following steering documents are also included as a reference for group certification:

- Norwegian PEFC Forest Certification System – PEFC N 01
- Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard – PEFC N 02
- Glossary and definitions - PEFC N 05
- ISO 14001 – Environmental Management Systems

3.2 Definitions

Definitions used in this document are described in the document PEFC N 05 - Glossary and Definitions. Only the following are described here:

Group certificate holder: An organisation that organizes and manages group certification of forest owner in accordance with the PEFC Norway certification system. The group certificate holder represents all members of the group in respect of the certification body and is responsible for ensuring compliance with the requirements of the Norwegian PEFC scheme.

Group organisation: A group of participants represented through the group certificate holder for the purpose of implementation of the sustainable forest management standard and its certification.

Group members: Forest owners who have entered into an agreement with a group certificate holder to participate in group certification. Through the agreement, the forest owners undertake to manage the property in accordance with the requirements of the PEFC Norway certification system.

Group certificate: A document testifying that the group certificate holder meets the requirements for sustainable forest management and other requirements in the certification system.

Certificate holder: Forest owner who holds a valid PEFC forest management certificate (individually certified) or organisation that is a group certificate holder.

Certified area: The forest area covered by a group forest certificate representing the sum of forest areas of the participants.

Certification agreement: Agreement between the forest owner and the group certifier. Contains responsibilities and obligations for both parties.

4 Certificate holder's leadership and context

1. Leadership

The certificate holder's management shall show leadership and commitment to the certification system, see ISO 14001 Chapter 5.1. Management shall establish, implement and maintain an environmental policy within the defined scope of the certificate holder's certification system, see ISO 14001 Chapter 5.2.

The certificate holder is obligated to:

- a) comply with the Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard and other applicable requirements of the certification system;
- b) integrate the group certification requirements into the management system;
- c) continuously improve the management system;
- d) continuously contribute to the improvement of sustainable forest management among group members

The obligation shall be part of a certificate holder's environmental policy and shall be publicly available as documented information.

2. Organisational structure

The group certificate holder must have described his organisational structure in accordance with his/her activities as a group administrator, e.g. by means of an organisation chart. The group certificate holder shall define and communicate roles, procedures, rights and obligations in the work as a group certificate holder. Management shall ensure that there are sufficient resources for proper completion of this work. Please see also the requirements of the environmental management system, ISO 14001.

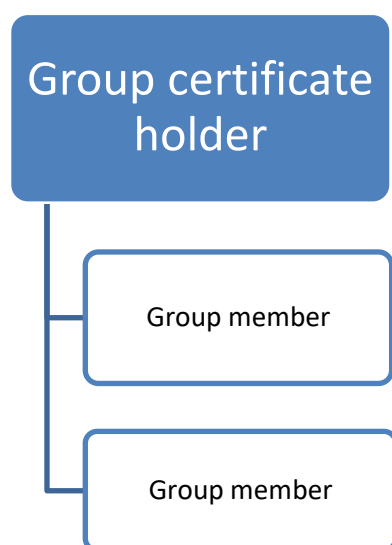


Figure 7.1: Illustration of group certification

3. The certificate holder shall determine external and internal matters relevant to its purpose, cf. ISO 14001 Chapter 4.1.
4. The certificate holder shall understand the needs and expectations of the interested parties and decide (cf. ISO 14001 Chapter 4.2):
 - a) Affected stakeholders relevant to the group certification system
 - b) The relevant needs and expectations of these interested parties
5. The certificate holder shall determine the scope of the system by delimiting and determining the scope of application of the system, cf. ISO 14001 Chapter 4.3. The scope shall be maintained as documented information and available to stakeholders.
6. For the following requirements in the Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard, parts of the requirements may be met at the group certificate level:
 - Requirement point 7 Sami rights; follow-up and dialogue with the reindeer herding stakeholders.
 - Requirement point 10 Transparency of environmental information: disclosure of environmental information and facilitation of dialogue with stakeholder groups.
 - Requirement point 11 Harvesting; competence and follow-up of targets and measures to increase the proportion of selective felling and small-scale logging.
 - Requirement point 18 Use of pesticides: expertise in integrated pest management.
 - Requirement point 23 Biologically important areas; monitor regional development of biologically important areas for properties with less than 150 hectares of productive forest.

7. If the certificate holder sells forest-based products that are not covered by the group certificate, they must have a valid PEFC Chain of Custody certificate in place.

5 Requirements for certificate holders

5.1 Formal requirements for certificate holder

For an organisation/company to be a certificate holder, it must:

1. Be registered as a legal entity.
2. Have a responsible board and a general management.
3. All parts of the organisational structure related to forest management and timber sales shall be included in the certificate.
4. Have an agreement with accredited and notified certification body for certification and annual auditing.
5. Have a valid PEFC certificate issued by a certification body and associated valid management system in compliance with PEFC N 01, Chapter 9.
6. Have a valid PEFC contract and associated PEFC logo license issued by PEFC Norway.
7. On behalf of the certification group, commit to act in accordance with the requirements determined in the standards which the Norwegian PEFC Certification System for Sustainable Forestry consists of.

5.2 Responsibilities of group certificate holders

Forest owners certified via the group certificate must be affiliated to the group certificate holder through a written forest certification agreement. The agreement obliges forest owners to manage the forest in accordance with the requirements of the Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard. The agreement shall be in accordance with PEFC Norway requirements for terms between the forest owner and the group certificate holder, as described in Chapters 5.3 and Chapter 6. No new certification can be concluded with a suspended forest owner, cf. Chapter 5.4.

The group certificate holder is responsible for:

1. Establish and maintain an effective management system that covers all members of the group
2. Be the group members' representative in the certification process, including communication and relationships related to the certification body, such as certification/auditing and contractual relationships.
3. Establish written procedures for the management of the group organisation.
4. Establish critical procedures for recording new group members. The procedures shall at least verify information about the group member in accordance with the regulations in point 7 a, b and c.

5. Establish critical procedures for suspension and exclusion of group members.
6. Concluding an agreement with the forest owner on forest certification via affiliation to the group certificate. The agreement is the forest owner's proof of affiliation to certification. Agreements can be concluded in connection with a timber contract or as an independent forest certification agreement.
7. Maintaining a list/register of certified forest properties with the following information about each member of the group:
 - a. The forest property's land registration and property number.
 - b. The name and address of the forest owner.
 - c. Certified forest area (productive forest area + unproductive forest area). The information can be obtained from the forestry plan or from the Gårdskart database. See <https://gardskart.nibio.no/>.
 - d. Forest owners who have non-conformities in the pipeline and which have to implement corrective or preventive measures imposed by the group certificate holder.
8. Reporting statistics from the register to PEFC Norway.
9. Ensuring that group members receive the necessary information and guidance to meet the requirements of the Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard.
10. Regularly inform the group members of amendments to the Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard.
11. Verify and document that the group's members meet the requirements of the certification system. See Chapter 8 for supplementary requirements for inspection and auditing.
12. Maintaining procedures for dealing with non-conformity and appeals.
13. Implementing corrective and/or preventive measures in the event of non-conformance among certified forest owners or in the administrative procedures of the group certificate holder. The effect of measures implemented shall be subsequently evaluated.
14. Publishing the summary of the certification body's audit report prepared in connection with certification, follow-up audit and recertification.
15. Conduct a review and create an annual environmental report on compliance certification requirements, including the results of internal audits and external audits, and on the effect of preventive and/or corrective measures. All environmental reports should be publicly available. At a minimum, the report must include:
 - a. Executive about fulfilling the certification requirements
 - b. External audit; results, non-conformities and follow-up needs
 - c. Internal control system; results of internal audits and internal control
 - d. Non-conformities and external inquiries; overview and management
 - e. Implemented preventive and/or corrective measures

16. Providing truthful and documentable information to PEFC Norway pursuant to the rules established by PEFC, including information for calculating certification fees.
17. Complying with PEFC Norway's guidelines for public disclosure in accordance with PEFC N 01.
18. The certificate holder shall promote gender equality and prevent discrimination based on gender, pregnancy, parental leave, care tasks, ethnicity, religion, beliefs, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age and other significant aspects of a person. Equality meant equality, equal opportunity and equal rights. Gender equality requires accessibility and adaptation.
19. The certificate holder shall regularly monitor working conditions and make adaptations if necessary.
20. The certificate holder shall have an overview of their greenhouse gas emissions and continuously work to reduce these through climate-positive measures. As far as possible, quantitative measurements shall be done based on the best available method.

In addition:

21. Group certification can be organized so that the forest owner can sell timber to anyone other than the group certificate holder. This assumes that the forest owner's agreement on certification clarifies the fact that the group certificate holder is responsible for supervision.
22. Group certificate holders may set additional requirements for participation in the group other than stipulated in this document and in the Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard.

5.3 Terms of agreement on participation in group certification

The agreement with each individual group member shall be made in writing and the following sections shall be included as terms:

1. The agreement may be an independent forest certification agreement or be part of a timber contract between the forest owner and group certificate holder. When the certification agreement is included in the timber contract, the header must make it clear that it is an timber contract with a certification agreement.
2. The agreement shall be signed by the forest owner or representative with authorization from the forest owner.
3. The agreement shall describe the fact that the group member undertakes to operate in compliance with Norwegian legislation relevant to forest management, the Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard and the group certificate holder's other instructions for maintaining membership of the group.
4. The agreement shall describe the rights of group certificate holder to implement any corrective or preventive measures, and to suspend or exclude members of the group in the event of serious non-conformities from the Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard. See chapter 5.4.
5. The agreement shall describe that the group member accepts third-party control and auditing.

6. PEFC Norway may further concretize the contents of the agreement.

5.4 Suspension and withdrawal of agreement on participation in group certification and forest certification evidence

The group certificate holder may suspend or terminate the agreement on participation in group certification (exclusion) if it is detected that the forest certification evidence is misused or if serious non-conformities with the Norwegian PECF Forest Standard are uncovered that are not followed up. See chapter 8.

Suspension or exclusion of the agreement is notified to the group member in writing.

The group certificate holder shall immediately inform the certification body and PEFC Norway of suspended and excluded forest certification evidence, including justification for the decision.

Suspended and excluded forest owners shall be registered with PEFC Norway, which keeps all other certificate holders up to date on this overview.

5.4.1 Repeal of suspension

Suspended forest owners cannot be included in existing group certificates or enter into a certification agreement with another group certificate holder until all non-conformities pointed out by the group certificate holder which suspended forest owner are closed and internal audit has been carried out. Special measures to prevent recurrence should be considered, for example, that the group member cannot manage new operations themselves.

5.4.2 New certification agreement in connection with exclusion

Forest owners who have been excluded from a group certificate cannot be included in a group certificate until 12 months have passed since the exclusion took effect. All nonconformities pointed out by the group certificate holder who terminated the agreement must be closed before the same or new group certificate holder can enter into a new group certification agreement. Group certificate holder shall carry out internal audit of forest owners who have been excluded from their own or others' group certificate, before the forest owner can be admitted as a group member. Internal audit cannot be done earlier than 12 months after the exclusion. Special measures to prevent recurrence should be considered, for example, that the group member cannot manage new operations themselves.

5.4.3 Complaint of suspension or exclusion

Forest owners who have been suspended or have had their group certification agreement withdrawn may complaint, cf. Chapter 6.2. The group certificate holder shall have a routine for handling such complaints. Disputes about interpretation of standards and requirements may be brought before PEFC Norway, cf. PEFC N 01 – Chapter 11.

6 Requirements for group members included in group certification

6.1 Requirements for group members

All forest owners can be certified through participation in group certification under a group certificate holder, if they meet the group certificate holder's requirements to participate in the group.

A written agreement on group certification shall be concluded, either through an independent forest certification agreement or through a timber contract with a certification agreement.

Group members undertake through the agreement with the group certificate holder to:

1. Comply with Norwegian legislation relevant to forest management and the Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard for all activity on the forest property.
2. Acquire expertise in the Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard or use others who have such expertise when planning and implementing forestry operations on the property.
3. Ensure that all relevant information is notified to the executive actor or contractor.
4. Comply with the certificate holder's requirements and procedures in connection with follow-up of the certification. Felling and other forestry operations in key biotopes must be approved in advance by the certificate holder.
5. Report non-conformities on forest properties to other certificate holders if the forest owner is affiliated with more than one group certificate.
6. Provide information about other current or previous group certificate memberships
7. Inform about open non-conformities when changing to a new group certificate holder or if the forest owner is affiliated with a second group certificate.
8. Help close non-conformities occurring on the property.
9. Cooperate and assist with the implementation of internal inspections, internal audits and external audits and otherwise if relevant or have an impact on the certification system. This includes responding to all queries on relevant data/information from the certificate holder or certification body.
10. Ensure that corrective and preventive measures imposed by the certificate holder are implemented.
11. Comply with PEFC Norway's guidelines for public access to information in accordance with PEFC N 01.
12. Document harvesting and other measures in compliance with the certificate holder's requirements.
13. Provide information on all important factors such as environmental values, cultural heritage, and other aspects relevant to the planning and implementation of forestry measures on the property.

6.2 Termination of agreement

Upon termination of the certification agreement, the group certificate holder's responsibility and right to inspect the property is maintained for up to one year after termination. The group member's obligation to cooperate in the implementation of inspections and audits and the closing of any non-conformities will similarly remain in force for one year.

6.3 Appeal against suspension and withdrawal of agreement

Forest owners whose agreement have been suspended or withdrawn can appeal to the certification body with a request to have their termination assessed.

7. Certificate holder – responsibilities and obligations

7.1 Planning

Planning requirements are described in ISO 14001 Chapter, Chapter 11. 6, and deals with measures to consider risks and opportunities as well as environmental goals and planning to achieve them.

If the certificate holder is planning changes to the management system, these changes be included in the management system plan.

If the certificate holder decides to meet requirements in the Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard at group level, these requirements shall be entered and followed up in the certificate holder's plan for the management system.

7.2 Support and operation

7.2.1 Support

1. The certificate holder shall determine and provide the resources necessary to establish, implement, maintain and continuously improve the certification system, cf. ISO 14001 Chapter 7. 1.
2. The certificate holder shall have procedures to ensure that there is sufficient competence at all levels of the organisation, cf. ISO Chapter 7.2. Competence requirements are described further in Chapter PEFC N 03 Chapter 9.
3. Certificate holder shall establish communication to raise awareness among group members regarding:
 - a) certificate holder's environmental policy;
 - b) the requirements for sustainable forest management in the Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard;
 - c) their contribution to the effect of the certification system and sustainable forest management, including the benefits of improving the group's performance;

- d) the implications of not complying with the requirements of management systems, cf. PEFC N 03 7.7.
- 4. The certificate holder shall establish, implement and maintain necessary processes for internal and external communication relevant to the certification system, cf. ISO 14001 Chapter 7.4.
- 5. The certificate holder shall have appropriate mechanisms in place to resolve complaints and disputes related to the group certification system and sustainable forest management.
- 6. The certificate holder shall have procedures for documented information in accordance with ISO 14001 Chapter 7.5. The documented information relevant to the group certification system and the fulfilment of the requirements of the Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard shall be:
 - a) updated;
 - b) available and suitable for use, where and when it is needed;
 - c) adequately protected (e.g. against misuse, loss of confidentiality, or loss of integrity)

7.2.2 Operation

Operational requirements are defined in ISO 14001, Chapter 8.

- 1. The certificate holder shall establish, implement, manage and maintain processes necessary to:
 - a) meet the requirements for group certification and the Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard and
 - b) implement the measures identified in connection with planning, cf. Chapter 7.1.
- 2. Planning, implementation and control shall be done by:
 - a) defining the necessary processes and establish criteria of these;
 - b) implementing control of the processes in accordance with the criteria;
 - c) retaining documented information to the extent necessary to ensure that the processes have been implemented as planned.

7.3. *Routines and responsibilities for compliance with the Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard*

The certificate holder shall have the following routines and responsibilities:

1. The certificate holder shall have routines to ensure that the forest owner has complied with the requirement point in the Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard. Group members' fulfilment of the requirements shall be centrally managed and controlled by the group certificate holder.
2. The certificate holder shall help ensure that non-conformities by the forest owner for which another certificate holder is responsible are followed up and dealt with.
3. The certificate holder shall have routines for informing other relevant certificate holders if there are special conditions on a forest property that are of significant importance for certification of the specific property.
4. The certificate holder shall have documented routine for treating and following up non-conformities, including notifying certification bodies and timber purchaser in the event of serious non-conformities, cf. Chapter 8.2.1.
5. The certificate holder must document the processing of external inquiries/complaints. The sender shall be informed of how the inquiry has been assessed and followed up.
6. Where the standard requires a person with forest biology expertise to make assessments, these must be documented.
7. The certificate holder shall have an internal control system that is adapted to how all the requirements in Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard together cover requirements for sustainable forestry, and all group members shall be included in this system. See chapter 8. For requirements related to felling and forestry measures, the certificate holder may have routines and description for corrective forestry measures as part of the forest owner's obligations in the event of a default.
8. If circumstances relating to the property make it necessary to make adjustments to local conditions, these shall be presented to the Norwegian PEFC for approval. The same applies if there may be doubts about compliance with the Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard.
9. Important information and assessments when harvesting at least 100 cubic meters must be documented. The group certificate holder shall have routines for follow-up.
10. The forest owner who harvests/manages forestry measures themselves shall retain documentation about the operation, so it can be presented upon request.
11. The documentation must be kept for a minimum of 10 years.
12. The certificate holder shall submit an annual overview of complaints and their processing to PEFC Norway.
13. The certificate holder shall cooperate and effectively respond to requests from the certification body, accreditation body, PEFC International or PEFC Norway on relevant data and document cooperation. They shall also provide access to the certified forest areas in connection with formal audits, checks and otherwise related to the certification system.
14. The certificate holder shall ensure that information on the practice of the Norwegian PEFC forest standard is made available to the public and relevant interest

organisations (this will be stated in the annual environmental report, cf. Chapter 5.2, item 15), and that the conditions are facilitated so affected organisations can be heard regarding professional input or views relating to the certified activities. All inquiries or complaints relating to certified activities must be documented and answered in accordance with ISO 14001, requirement point 10 of PEFC N 02 and the provisions of the Environmental Information Act.

15. If interest groups contact the certificate holder with request for information and/or dialogue, the certificate holder shall find an appropriate way to accommodate this.
16. The certificate holder shall prepare a plan with guidelines for the use of various forestry management measures. The guidelines shall be based on the cycle of inventory and planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation and include an appropriate assessment of the social, environmental and economic impacts of forestry management operations. This shall form the basis for a continuous improvement to minimize or avoid negative impacts. The guidelines shall be assessed and if needed revised annually, based on an evaluation of experience with the guidelines, statistics for measures implemented, the governments result-control of forestry measures, and developments in forests regionally based on the results from the National Forest Inventory. The guidelines shall ensure a periodic evaluation of forestry measures and the use of results in further planning process. The guidelines shall be publicly available.
17. The group certificate holder shall have the necessary expertise on selective felling methods, and describe how the goal of increasing the proportion of selective felling and small-scale logging in their forest owners' properties can be achieved in the short and long term, e.g. when planning and implementing joint measures. The forest owner should be able to be offered a product with planning and implementation of selective felling.
18. When planning and carrying out logging in important outdoor recreation areas, the certificate holder shall strengthen the use of various measures to mitigate the negative effects of logging with regard to experience qualities for the outdoors. Below is a non-exhaustive list of measures to be considered:
 - a) Deliberately plan the size and form of clear-cut harvesting and seed tree fellings to adapt to the shapes and lines of the landscape
 - b) In particular consider, and use, the possibilities for the use of selective felling methods and the combination of various harvesting methods.
 - c) Limit the harvest area, for example, by dividing harvests over several years.
 - d) Leave as many stable retention trees as possible on the harvested area itself, alternatively as high stumps where tree stability is weak.
 - e) Reinforce set aside of retention trees in groups.
 - f) Save stable trees on hills, in moist areas and in connection with other landscape forms that can contribute to variation in the forest landscape.
 - g) Through tending of young stands help create stable trees that provide a basis for flexibility in future forest measures.
 - h) Planning the harvest so off-road transport can be carried out with the least possible risk of terrain damage. The threshold for stopping off-road transport

in the event of terrain damage shall be lower and any correction shall be carried out immediately or as soon as possible.

19. The certificate holder shall prepare a routine, which has been clarified with the National Association of Norwegian Reindeer Herders, for periodic dialogue with the reindeer herding interests. The periodic dialogue shall be a meeting point in order to provide mutual information. The periodic dialogue will also uncover any conflicts between the reindeer herding interests and forestry. In the event of conflicts, the certificate holder shall seek to resolve these through dialogue and improvement of routines.
20. The certificate holder shall have the necessary expertise in integrated pest management to supervise the group members.
21. For forest properties under 150 hectares of productive forest and for forest properties larger than 150 hectares of productive forest that have not yet carried out BIA mapping, cf. phasing-in plan in requirement point 23, the certificate holder shall monitor the development of biologically important areas through statistics from the National Forest Inventory. If the monitoring shows that there are less than 10% biologically important areas in the monitoring area, measures must be taken to reach 10%. Certificate holders can collaborate on this monitoring.
22. In the case of large calamities in a region where the clean-up work will take a long time, PEFC Norway may be sought for exemption from requirement related to dead trees, cf. requirement 13 Retention trees and dead trees.

8 Performance evaluation

8.1 *Monitoring, measurement, analysis and evaluation*

The certificate holder shall monitor, measure, analyze and evaluate his/her performance, cf. ISO 14001 Chapter 9.1.

8.2 *Certificate holder's internal control system*

The certificate holder shall implement an internal control system for controlling the entire group's compliance with the Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard, PEFC N 02 and the certificate holders' requirements for its management system.

Purpose

The purpose of the internal control system should be:

1. Ensuring that requirements and activities are implemented correctly
2. Ensuring there is a sufficiently opportunity to preventing and detecting errors
3. To provide an adequate view of the situation
4. Providing a foundation for improvements

The primary task of self-control is related to target 1. The internal control could help to meet all the goals. The internal audit, in turn, will be able to help meet the last three targets, but will be particularly important in accordance to target 4.

Self-control

Self-control is the individual forest owner, forestry worker or contractor's control of his/her own work.

Internal control

Internal control in this context is the internal quality control carried out by the party responsible for the task for which he/she is responsible.

Internal audit

Internal audits are done by the certificate holder but shall be carried out by persons who have not been directly involved in the task being audited.

The result of internal audits shall be an issue at the management's review.

Follow-up of subcontractors

In connection with the follow-up of subcontractors, such as forestry contractors, ISO 14001 states that the organisation shall establish and implement procedures in connection with the identified essential environmental aspects associated with goods and services used by the organisation. Furthermore, the group certificate holder shall communicate relevant procedures and requirements to suppliers, including contractual partners.

Control system

The overall control system can be described by means of the following matrix:

Control form	Object	Responsible	Frequency
Self-control	The specific measures in the forest the individual have completed	Executing person, contractor or forestry worker	All measures
Internal control (Supervision)	Carried out self-control and complete forestry operations for which the individual is responsible, via his own employees or subcontractors	Client such as forest official, operations manager, forest owner, etc.	Frequency adapted to the risk of serious errors; cf. minimum norm specified below.
Internal audit	Carried out self-control and internal control. Completed forestry operations. The environmental management system as it functions for the locality in question.	Own personnel or specially hired staff with training in the fields of environmental audit, forestry and the environment.	Selection-based, with frequency suited to the estimated risk of errors, and sufficient to provide an adequate view of operations.

It is important to emphasize the importance of each organisation itself having an ownership of the control system that is being followed and has a responsibility to adapt it to its own operations. It is therefore neither possible nor appropriate to provide detailed rules for how the control system will be built. Nevertheless, there is reason to clarify the targets of the control operations and provide some concrete guidelines. The differences between the organisations that are certified mean that internal control will have to be organized in different ways. While the forestry manager will be an important resource in the forest owner cooperatives, the forest owners or representatives of these will often be the ones who carry out the internal control in other organisations. Self-control will also have to vary depending on the different groups that carry out the work.

Self-control, internal control and internal audits must always be documented. When assessing the frequency of control, the entire overall internal control system must be assessed as a single unit. The internal control together with internal audits is a way of checking/assessing whether the properties and certificate holder perform the operations in accordance with set goals and intentions. If errors or ambiguities are found in connection with internal audits, this will be reported as non-conformities/observations or comments. Such a reporting procedure has two effects:

1. As any nonconformities/observations discovered during internal audits are disclosed during management's review, this is the management's way to be up to date on the "status of the system and any weaknesses" within the organisation.
2. Non-conformities/observations discovered during internal audits will reduce the risk of a repetition of inappropriate practices of the individual employee/subcontractor/forest owner.

Internal audits must also provide a basis for documentation of development within the organisation over time. In this context, it is important to highlight both the positive and negative aspects revealed during internal audits.

Internal control requirements

Frequency of internal control is adapted to the risk of serious errors. At a minimum, the following frequency should be used:

- 10 % of completed harvesting and soil scarification assignments
- 5 % of other forest measures assignments

Where self-control is uncertain or there is little documentation, the frequency shall be increased accordingly.

Requirements for internal auditing

Requirements for planning the audit

The requirement for internal auditing is stated in chapter 9.2 of ISO 14001.

Level to be included in internal audit

The internal audit of forest certification consists of both an inspection of the system within the organisation and a sample control in the forest with emphasis on checking whether there is compliance with the Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard.

The system element of the audit must be set up so that all departments/ district units are audited within a certain time. Knowledge and understanding of the Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard and the procedures established to implement these as well as the internal control must be central.

The number of samples shall normally be the square root of the number of group members. A minimum of 25% of the sample shall be from a random selection. In the remaining sample, the following points shall be considered, among other things:

- Risk and opportunity areas from, among other things, mapping of environmental aspects
- Previous findings from external and internal audits, including results from the internal controls
- Registered non-conformities and external inquiries

- Group members who carry out forest operations with great impact, where the certificate holder to a limited extent is involved in the process

The basis for the audit is compliance with the Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard. When designing the control scheme, priority shall be given to the impact and consequences of the operations. Implementation of forest harvesting will therefore be the most important control element. The control object forest harvesting should not be lower represented than 70% of the number of samples in each year. The certificate holder shall, based on influence and consequence, document the choice of the number of samples for the various forestry operations/sample categories.

Personnel used for internal auditing must have good insight into relevant standards and certificate holder systems. In addition, the person concerned must have a good understanding of forestry ecology and in-depth knowledge of forestry. Independence in relation to what/who is being revised, is central to internal audits. Internal auditing differs from internal control in this regard.

8.2.1 Guidelines for the management of certification non-conformities in forest owners with a group certification agreement

The guidelines describe how group certificate holders should assess and manage certification discrepancies in forest owners who have a group certification agreement. The guidelines are normative and shall contribute to the most equal treatment of certification non-conformities among the group certificate holders.

The group certificate holder shall have procedures for inspecting and uncovering possible certification non-conformities, see Chapter 7. 3 and 8.2, and the forest owner shall correct errors see Chapter 6. The forest owner may appeal against any suspension or termination of the certification agreement in chapter 6. 3.

Errors discovered by anyone other than the forest owner and group certificate holder and reported as a complaint shall be dealt with in the same procedures.

Types of non-conformities

Non-conformities are divided into three categories:

- Minor non-conformities
- Significant non-conformities
- Serious non-conformity

Minor non-conformities: These are non-conformities that do not present a significant risk of negative impact on forest production, environmental and outdoor recreation qualities, or of pollution. The group certificate holder shall describe how the responsible party shall correct the non-conformity. The person concerned shall, within the specified deadline, correct the nonconformity, or with mitigation measures. The deadline shall not be longer than what is necessary after the season to correct the deviation. Timber from the last contract with the forest owner may be purchased and traded as certified. Recurrence of several minor errors or failure to create can cause significant non-conformities.

Significant non-conformities: This may be a recurrence of several minor non-conformities or that minor non-conformities are not corrected in accordance with the group certificate holder's requirements or within the deadline. Furthermore, errors that lead to a significant risk of negative impact on forest production, environmental and outdoor recreation qualities or to pollution. Timber from the last contract with the forest owner may be purchased and traded as certified, provided that the nonconformity is corrected according to the group certificate holder's instructions and deadline. A control must be carried out to ensure that the non-conformity has been closed. Documentation of completed closure of the non-conformity is a prerequisite for entering into a new agreement to purchase of timber. Significant non-conformities can be corrected by mitigation measures. Furthermore, the responsible actor/forest owner must carry out courses on the Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard or other relevant training and/or follow-up measures. Inadequate closing or repetition of significant non-conformity can lead to serious non-conformities.

Serious non-conformities: This may be a recurrence of several significant non-conformities or that significant non-conformities are not corrected in accordance with the group certificate holder's requirements or within the deadline. Furthermore, errors that have led to a significant negative impact on forest production, environmental and outdoor recreation qualities and cultural artefacts or to pollution. These are errors that may also be offences or in violation of approved management, e.g.; harvested in ecological functional area for priority species, selected nature type, nature reserve, national park or key habitat or damage of protected cultural heritage. In such cases, the group certificate holder must report possible offences to the public authority as well as notify the certification body. For cases reported as a possible offence, the group certificate holder shall inform the public authorities of how the non-conformity is closed, no later than 14 days after the nonconformity extinguishment.

In the event of serious non-conformity where the forest owner is responsible, the forest owner shall be suspended from the sale of timber until the nonconformity is closed and any criminal offences have been resolved. Where other parties have been responsible, contractual and liability conditions must be adapted to the degree of severity of the agreement. Timber from a contract where there is a serious nonconformity shall not be traded as certified. Serious non-conformities can be closed with remedial measures. Such measures must have at least the same timber value/volume and environmental value as originally considered. When the nonconformity is closed and remedial measures are implemented, the suspension can be lifted and timber from the current contract can be sold as certified. This only applies where it is substantiated that the error after being rectified has not led to significant and permanent negative impact on forest production, environmental or outdoor recreation qualities or cultural artefacts or led to pollution. Furthermore, the timber buyer(s) shall be informed of the closing of the non-conformity and decide for themselves whether to purchase the timber in accordance with their PEFC Chain of Custody certificate.

If a serious non-conformity is not closed within the deadline or it is concluded that the forest owner is directly responsible for the non-conformity, the group certification agreement shall be withdrawn. Timber from harvest with serious non-conformity, which are not closed, cannot be traded as certified.

8.3 Management review

The certificate holder's senior management shall annually review the management system to ensure that it is continuously suitable, adequate and effective. The requirements for what the review shall include are described in more detail in ISO 14001 Chapter 9.3.

9 Requirements relating to competence of forest owners, contractors /forestry workers, officials and management

The group certificate holder shall have procedures to ensure that there is sufficient competence at all levels of the organisation.

Target groups:

According to requirements and rules in PEFC Norway's forest certification system, ISO 14001 and the Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard, the following target groups must be used for competence:

1. Forest owner
2. Contractor/forest worker
3. Persons responsible for planning and implementation of forestry operations
4. Environmental responsible management/forest biological competence

The target groups have different roles in accordance with administrative and practical functions but can from their own point of view break rules and the Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard if they do not have the necessary expertise.

In the event of non-conformities in respect of requirements and rules and the Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard, the need for training shall be assessed.

Requirements for competence and follow-up

Forest owners

Forest owners shall have the expertise on the Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard that is necessary to plan and implement the relevant forest measures in compliance with the requirements. By completing courses in the Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard, the forest owner will normally be able to meet this need for competence.

If the forest owner does not have the necessary expertise, decisions concerning measures in the forest shall be made with the assistance of people with expertise.

Group certificate holder shall be able to offer the forest owner satisfactory training on the Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard.

Persons responsible for planning and implementation of operational forestry measures

Requirements for this target group are that they have in-depth knowledge of forestry.

Courses in the Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard must be completed. They should have basic knowledge of the routines and procedures related to the environmental management system and of their role and responsibilities.

Certificate holders may be required to follow up this group annually,

Contractor and forest workers

For this target group, the certificate specifies requirements for completed courses and knowledge of his/her role and responsibility in the environmental management system in respect of the collaborative target group. Experience or other relevant training may replace the requirements specified.

There are currently courses that provide certificates and offers shorter, more professional courses for forestry workers and machine operators. Based on the status of the competence in the target group, the group certificate holder must prepare the necessary plan of education to satisfy the requirements set by the organisation.

If the target group engages in harvesting or ground preparation, courses in the Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard must be completed.

Full-time workers with independent responsibility must have a certificate of apprenticeship. Experience or other relevant training may replace this. Such an assessment must be documented. Where the requirements are not met, the training plan shall highlight indicate when this will take place.

Requirements for training towards the target group shall distinguish differentiate between the nature of the work (felling, driving, soil scarification, planting and tending of young stands) and how great a volume is handled by the individual. Seasonal forestry workers shall have knowledge of the Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard in the fields in which their work relates to requirements.

Forest workers who carry out work management and administrative tasks related to forestry in addition to ordinary forestry work must have a certificate or equivalent competence.

Environmental responsible management/forest biology expertise

The environmental officer of the group certificate holder shall have in-depth knowledge of PEFC Norway's certification system specified in the documents PEFC N 01-06, ISO 14001 standard as well as Norwegian forestry and environmental legislation.

The environmental officer shall also have knowledge of how the environmental work operates within the organisation, as well as in the Norwegian forestry in general, and contribute to coordinated practice internally and externally. In addition, there are requirements for access to expertise, e.g., for selective felling and integrated pest management, cf. Chapter 7.3.

A person with "forest biology expertise approved by the certificate holder" who is used when complying with the requirements for key habitats (req.22), birds of prey and owls (req. 24) and capercaillie leks (req. 25) in the Norwegian PEFC Standard, shall have relevant biology background and experience and have in-depth knowledge of the Norwegian PEFC Forest Standard.

10 Improvement

1. The certificate holder shall define opportunities for improvement and implement necessary measures to achieve the intended results of its certification system, cf. ISO 14001 Chapter 14001. 10.1.
2. The certificate holder shall have routines for handling non-conformities and corrective measures, cf. ISO 14001 Chapter 10.2.

When non-conformities occur, the certificate holder shall:

- a) Respond to the non-conformity and take action to control and correct it as well as address the consequences of the non-conformity, including counteracting adverse environmental impact.
 - b) Evaluate the need for measures to eliminate the causes of the non-conformity so that it does not repeat or occur elsewhere, by:
 - i. Investigate the non-conformity
 - ii. Determine the causes of the non-conformity
 - iii. Determine if similar non-conformities exist or may occur
 - c) Implement any measures needed
 - d) Review the impact of the corrective measures implemented
 - e) If necessary, make changes to the certificate holder's management system.
3. The certificate holder shall retain documented information as proof of:
 - a) The nature of the non-conformities and any measures taken as a result of them
 - b) The results of any corrective action.
 4. The certificate holder shall continuously improve the suitability, adequacy, impact and effectiveness of the certification system and the sustainable management of the forest shall be continuously improved.