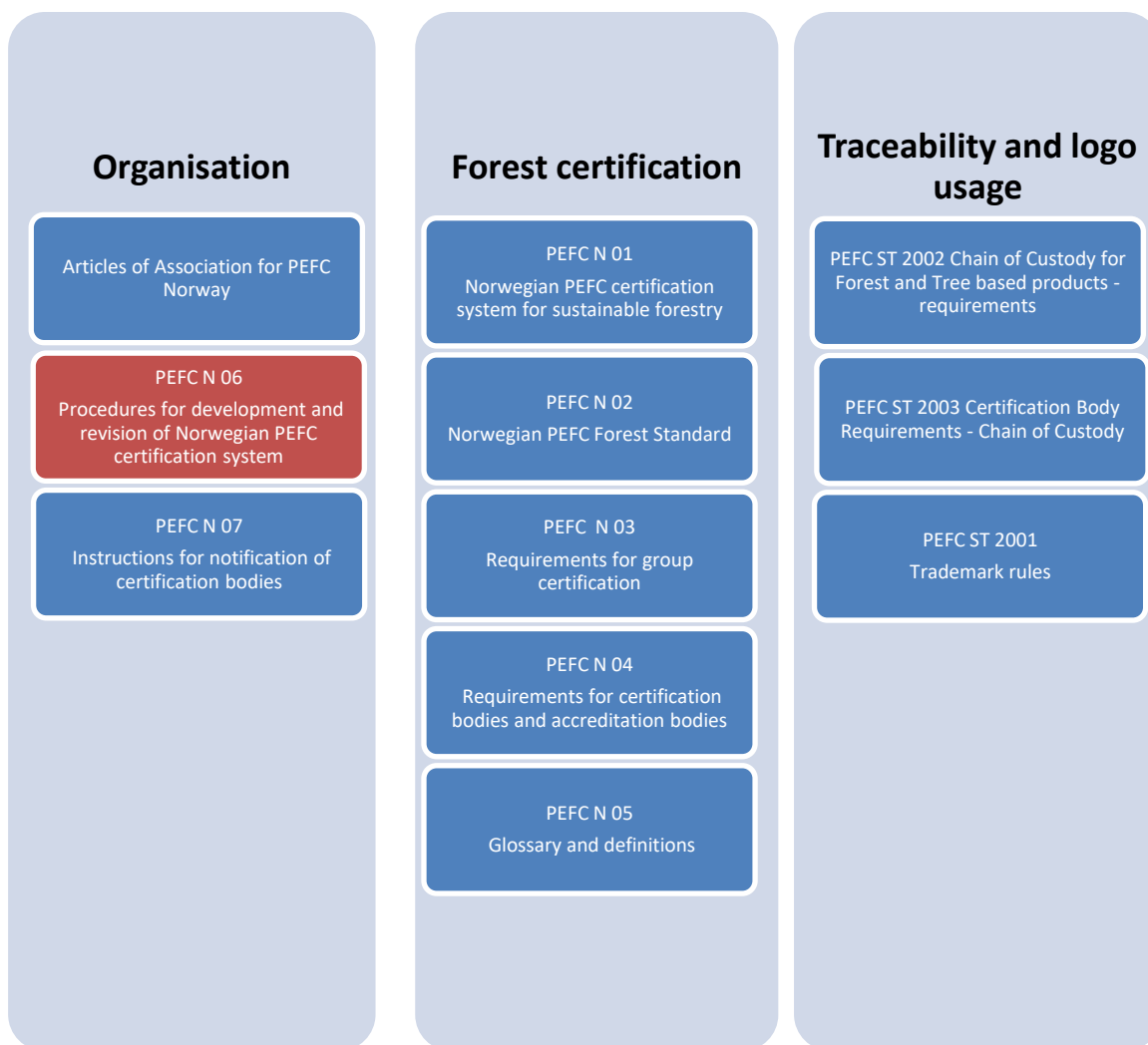


PEFC N 06:2020

Procedures for the development and revision of the Norwegian PEFC certification system



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Title of the document:	Procedures for development and revision of the Norwegian PEFC certification system	
Document number:	PEFC N 06:2020	
Approved by:	PEFC Norway	Date: 10.02.2020
Published:	20.02.2020	

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1. Introduction

The PEFC Council stipulates in "*PEFC ST 1001:2017: Standard setting – requirements*" that written procedures for the development and revision of the standards included in the Norwegian PEFC certifying system are established. As a minimum, the procedures shall meet the PEFC Council's requirements described in "*PEFC ST 1001:2017: Standard setting – requirements*".

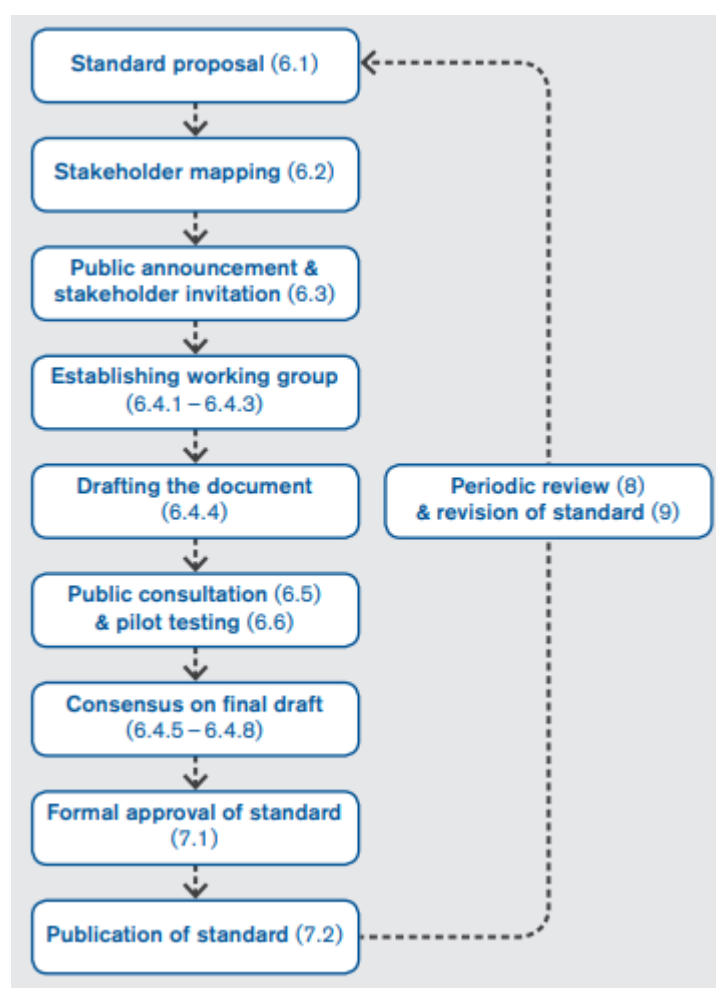


Figure 1: Overview of the Standard-setting Process

2. Scope

The document describes the procedures for developing and auditing standards included in the Norwegian PEFC certification system. The procedures shall be used for audits and the development of new standards in the Norwegian system.

PEFC Norway shall make the procedures for developing and auditing the certification system publicly available and shall review the standard setting procedures regularly. When reviewing the routines, input and feedback from stakeholders must be included in the assessment.

3. References

PEFC N 05: Glossary and Definitions

PEFC ST 1001:2017: Standard-setting – Requirements

PEFC GD 1007: Endorsement and Mutual Recognition of Certification Systems and their Revision

4. Principles for the development and revision of standards

The work on the development and revision of the standards is governed by the following main principles:

- Stakeholder participation – stakeholders are given the opportunity for meaningful participation in the process that is open to all stakeholders through participation in working groups and through public consultation.
- Balanced representation - no single stakeholder group should dominate or be dominated in the process. All stakeholders are free to decide on participation, but the standardisation body (PEFC Norway) shall make an effort to ensure that all relevant stakeholder groups are represented and strive for an appropriate gender balance.
- Consensus - standards are approved by consensus. Any persistent opposition to specific topics should be sought solved with the help of dialogue.
- Improvement – periodic review/revision of the standards shall ensure continuous improvement and shall ensure that the standards meet the expectations of the stakeholders.
- Transparency - relevant documents must be publicly available so that interested organisations can follow the work during and after the development/audit process.

5. Responsibility for development and revision

PEFC Norway is responsible for the development and maintenance of the Norwegian PEFC certification system. The Board of Directors of PEFC Norway shall, by simple majority in the Council, approve developed and revised standards cf. Section 5 of PEFC Norway's articles of association.

The Norwegian PEFC system is reviewed and/or revised in accordance with PEFC Council guidelines (PEFC GD 1007) normally every 5 years. The Board shall initiate the commencement of the audit process and shall establish a temporary working committee in connection with the audit work.

Start-up of the development of new standards and/or revision of the certification system shall be communicated to the public in an appropriate and appropriate manner (via website, newsletter, etc.).

6. Standard-setting process

All organisations with an interest in sustainable forestry and forestry certification are invited to participate in the development of standards and recognition of the Norwegian PEFC certification system. It is not a requirement for the parties to be a member of the PEFC Norway.

Standard proposal

When developing a new standard, PEFC Norway shall make a proposal that includes:

- (a) the scope of the standard,
- (b) a justification for the need for the standard,
- (c) a clear description of the intended outcome,
- (d) a risk assessment of potential negative effects resulting from the implementation of the Standard, for example;
 - factors that may adversely affect the performance of the results;
 - unintended consequences of implementation;
 - measures to address identified risks, and
- (e) a description of the stages of the standard development and the expected timetable.

When revising the standard, the proposal must cover at least (a) and e) in the list above.

Stakeholder mapping

PEFC Norway shall carry out a mapping of relevant stakeholders. The mapping shall identify stakeholder groups that are relevant, likely key questions within each group and who are the most important stakeholders within each group. The identification of stakeholder groups shall be based on the UN's definition, cf. Agenda 21, Rio Convention. The following groups shall be included in the mapping;

- forest owners
- industry and trade
- Indigenous people
- non-government organisations (environment, outdoor activities, etc.)
- research/technology
- workers and trade unions

Other groups should be added if they are relevant to the scope of the standard-setting activities.

Consideration shall be given to which means of communication is best suited for sending the stakeholders an invitation. The mapping shall also uncover any disadvantaged stakeholders and if identified, PEFC shall Norway actively seek to remove obstacles to their participation in the process and proactively facilitate their participation in the audit/development process.

Public announcement of the process

Start-up of the development of new standards and/or revision of the certification system shall be communicated to the public in an appropriate and appropriate manner (via website, newsletter, etc.).

In connection with the start-up, an invitation shall be sent out, to all mapped stakeholders, to participate in the process, as well as the possibility of commenting on the content and procedures for the revision/development of the standard. Stakeholders shall be given at least a month's deadline to nominate persons to the working committee.

The announcement and invitation shall include:

- a. purpose, content and procedure for the revision/development of standards
- b. access to standard suggestions
- c. information about the opportunity for stakeholders to participate in the process
- d. encouraging stakeholders to nominate their representative(s) to the working committee. The call to disadvantaged stakeholders and key stakeholders shall be made in a way that ensures that the information reaches the intended recipients and in a format that is easy to understand,
- e. a request to comment on the standard proposal and on the process for the revision/development of the standard
- f. reference to the publicly available procedures for auditing and developing the Norwegian PEFC certification system

PEFC Norway will review the default setting process based on feedback received in response to the public announcement.

Working Committee - Requirements

On the basis of nominations from the invited stakeholders, PEFC will Norway put together the working committee. Acceptance or refusal of nominations to the Working Committee shall be justified on the basis of the requirement for balanced representation, appropriate gender balance, the organisation's relevance, the candidate's competence and relevant experience and on the basis of available resources for the work.

PEFC Norway will seek a balanced re-presentation in the working committee from the identified stakeholder groups and a balanced balance shall be sought in the committee. Furthermore, PEFC will Norway set goals for participation by the most important stakeholders and proactively seek their participation.

As far as it is appropriate, the Working Committee shall have a balanced representation of stakeholders from the various relevant stakeholder groups.

The working committee shall include stakeholders:

- with expertise relevant to the standard(s) to be developed or revised;
- directly affected by the standard,
- which may affect the implementation of the standard

Stakeholders who are directly affected by the changes to the standard being considered shall be sought to make up a meaningful proportion of the committee's members.

In addition, specialists (researchers and other experts) can be invited to participate in the work and contribute their knowledge to the working committee.

Organisation of the work and decision-making procedures in the working committee

The members of the committee constitute the working committee. The committee's choice of chair is formally approved by PEFC Norway. The role of the manager is to ensure the management of the process as well as to ensure that the procedures for the working committee are followed.

The work of the working committee shall be organised in a transparent manner and facilitated in a way were:

- All working drafts and papers relevant to the audit work are available to all members of the committee
- All members of the committee shall be given the opportunity to contribute to the work of the committee as well as provide input and comments on the casts
- All comments and input from the members of the working committee are assessed in a transparent manner where the assessments of this are documented

A consensus shall be reached on the final drafts from the committee before they can be endorsed by PEFC Norway.

Consensus does not require unanimity, but according to the PEFC Council's definition (section 3.1 of PEFC ST 1001:2017) of the consensus, there must be no sustained resistance from different stakeholders on significant points and one must, in the process of seeking to take all pairs views are taken into account, as well as attempt to resolve any conflicting views.

If there is sustained opposition from significant stakeholders at significant points, the committee shall adopt one or a combination of the following possibility:

- a physical meeting of the committee with an oral yes/no vote, a handwringing for yes/no; a declaration of agreement from the leader in which no divergent opinions are notified (verbally or by hand-raising); a formal reconciliation process, etc.
- a conference call with a verbal yes/no vote
- e-mail correspondence within the working committee, where a request for acceptance or objections is made to which the members submit a written response.

No single stakeholder can dominate the process and no organization can veto it.

When voting is used in the decision-making process, the procedures shall determine and include decision limits that quantify consensus. The threshold must conform to the consensus definition (section 3.1 of PEFC ST 1001:2017). However, a majority of the votes cannot override sustained opposition to reach agreement.

In the event of sustained resistance at significant points, the resistance shall be justified and then/relevant conflict points shall be sought through:

- a) Discussion and negotiation in the committee with a view to finding a compromise
- b) Direct negotiation between stakeholders who put forward the opposition and stakeholders with conflicting views with a view to reaching a compromise
- c) Further round(s) of public consultation (if necessary) where additional stakeholders can help to reach agreement on unresolved issues. The standardization body determines the scope and duration of any further public consultation.

When a significant issue cannot be resolved and sustained resistance persists, PEFC shall Norway initiate dispute resolution in accordance with the procedures described in Chapter 10.

7. Hearing

Drafts of new or revised standards are sent out for public consultation in an appropriate manner (via website, newsletter, etc.) for a minimum of 60 days. Information about the consultation is sent directly to all stakeholders identified at the start of the audit/development. Potentially disadvantaged stakeholders and identified key stakeholders shall now be sought on the way PEFC Norway have defined as appropriate in connection with the stakeholder mapping.

All consultation responses must be presented to the working committee, discussed and relevant comments to be incorporated. A summary of comments and comments received as well as the working committee's consideration of these shall be published on PEFC Norway's website. Information about this summary must be sent directly to the parties that have contributed consultation responses.

In the development of new standards, PEFC shall Norway organize a further public consultation of at least 30 days.

8. Pilot trials

When developing new standards, PEFC shall Norway organize pilot experiments to assess the clarity, possibility and feasibility of the requirements. The working committee shall assess the result of pilot test.

When auditing standards, significant new elements shall be tested in the field, provided that the working committee considers that previous experience from certification indicates that no further testing is needed. Results from pilot experiments and field trials must be published on PEFC Norway's website. The experience from pilot experiments and field trials shall be set out in the final standards.

9. Documentation

To ensure transparency in the process:

- A report is prepared describing the audit process in order to document that the procedures have been followed.
- All completed drafts and the final documents approved by PEFC Norway including the report describing the audit process, must be published on PEFC Norge's website.
- Documented information must be archived until the next review/audit is completed. In excess of that, documented information must be archived for at least 5 years after the standards have been published.
- Documented information shall be handed out upon request

PEFC Norway shall retain documented information relevant to the development/audit process. Documentation for compliance with the requirements of this standard and PEFC Norway's own procedures include:

- (a) Prose animals for the development and revision of the Norwegian PEFC certification system (this standard),
- (b) Stakeholder mapping,
- (c) Contacted and/or invited stakeholders,

- (d) Stakeholders involved in the standard work including participants at each working committee meeting
- (e) Feedback received and an overview of how feedback was addressed
- (f) All drafts and final versions of the standard
- (g) The results of the working committee's considerations
- (h) Documentation of consensus on the final version of standard(s)
- (i) Documentation relating to periodic review
- (j) Final approval of PEFC Norway

10. Complaints mechanism

In connection with the audit and development of standards under the Norwegian PEFC certification system, PEFC shall Norway appoint a contact person for all inquiries concerning the standard development/audit. The contact person must be made readily available via PEFC Norway's website. Complaints about procedural or nouns in relation to development or audit must be sent in writing to the contact person. The complaint shall be justified.

Upon receipt of the complaint, PEFC shall Norway do the following:

- Sign that the complaint has been received
- Collect and verify the information to validate the complaint
- Appoint a complaints body with the necessary expertise to objectively and impartially assess the complaint, which within a month of being appointed should come up with a recommended solution.
- On the basis of the recommendation of the appeals body make a decision regarding the complaint
- Formally notify the result of the complaint and information about the appeal process to the complainants.

11. Approval and publication

Once the working committee has concluded its work, the committee shall present the agreed standards/normative documents to the board of PEFC Norway for approval and subsequent consideration in the PEFC system.

The formally approved standards/normative documents shall be published in an appropriate manner and made publicly available no later than 14 days after approval

The standard shall contain:

- Identification and contact information to PEFC Norway
- Official language
- Note that if there is a discrepancy between the Norwegian and English versions, it is the English version – approved by the PEFC Council – that is the reference.
- Approved date and date of next periodic review

PEFC Norway shall determine the effective date and transition period of the revised standards/normative documents.

The period from publication of the Standards up to the effective date shall not exceed one year. This period is necessary for international recognition of the revised standards/normative documents, to introduce the amendments and for information dissemination and training.

The transition period shall not exceed one year, except in reasoned exceptional cases where the implementation of the revised standards/normative documents requires a longer period.

12 Periodic review of standards

Generally

Standard/normative document(s) shall be reviewed at intervals not exceeding a five-year period. The review should be based on assessment of feedback received during the time the standard has been implemented and a gap analysis. If necessary, a consultation shall be carried out by stakeholders in order to receive further feedback and input.

PEFC Norway shall announce the periodic review within the stipulated start-up deadline.

Instead of a periodic review, PEFC Norway may decide to directly start an audit process within the periodic review deadline (cf. PEFC GD 1007).

Input mechanism

PEFC Norway will establish and maintain a permanent mechanism for collecting and recording feedback on the standards. The mechanism should be available on PEFC Norway's website with clear instructions on how to provide feedback.

All feedback received through all channels, including meetings, courses, etc. should be recorded and assessed.

Gap analysis

At the start of a periodic review, PEFC Norway shall evaluate the standard against PEFC's international standards, national laws and regulations and other relevant standards to identify potential deviations/gaps in the standard.

PEFC Norway will assess the latest scientific knowledge, research and relevant new topics.

Consultation of stakeholders

If the feedback and gap analysis do not identify a need to revise the standard, PEFC Norway shall organize a consultation of stakeholders to determine whether stakeholders see a need to revise the standard. PEFC Norway should include the gap analysis in the stakeholder consultation.

At the start of the periodic review, PEFC Norway shall update the mapping of stakeholders (see Chapter 6).

PEFC Norway will organize:

- (a) a public consultation period of at least 30 days (in compliance with section 6.5.1) and/or,
- (b) stakeholder meetings.

Decision making

Based on the feedback received during the time the standard has been implemented, the outcome of the gap analysis and consultations with stakeholders, PEFC Norway shall decide whether the standard is confirmed or whether revision of the standard is necessary.

The decision shall be made at the highest decision level for PEFC Norway

When the decision confirms the continuation, PEFC shall Norway provide a justification for the decision and make the justification publicly available.

When the decision is to revise the standard, the standardization body shall specify the type of audit (normal or editorial audit).

13 Audit of standards

Normal auditing

Procedures for auditing the standard(s) / normative document(s) shall be in accordance with those specified in Chapter 6.

A normal audit may occur at the deadline for periodic review, or between periodic reviews, but does not include editorial revisions and time-critical revisions.

Editorial audit

Editorial revisions can be done without triggering the normal audit process. The standardization body shall formally approve editorial changes and publish a change or a new version of the standard.

Time-critical audit

A time-critical audit is an audit between two periodic reviews using a fast-track process.

A time-critical audit can only be performed in the following situations:

- (a) Change in national laws and regulations affecting compliance with PEFC International requirements
- (b) Instruction from PEFC International to meet specific or new PEFC requirements within a period of time that is too short for a normal audit.

The time-critical revision should follow these steps:

- (a) PEFC Norway shall prepare the revised standard,
- (b) PEFC Norway can consult stakeholders, but it is not mandatory,
- (c) The revised standard shall be formally approved at the highest appropriate decision level for PEFC Norway,
- (d) PEFC Norway shall explain the rationale for the hasty change and make the justification publicly available.