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PEFC Conformity Assessment

PAFC Congo Basin



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Acronyms

CAR	Corrective Action Request
CB	Certifying Body
CoC	Chain of Custody
IAF	International Accreditation Forum
ILO	International Labour Organization
N.A.	Not applicable
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NGB	National Governing Body
PAFC	Pan African Forest Certification
PEFC GD	Guidance Document of PEFC International
PEFC IGD	PEFC Informative Guide
PEFC ST	Standard Document of PEFC International
PEFC	Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification
PEFCC TD	PEFC Council Technical Document
Req.	Requirement
SFM	Sustainable Forest Management



1. Introduction

The Programme for Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes (PEFC) admits national schemes for Sustainable Forest Management to the PEFC system, after the national schemes are endorsed based on a positive evaluation by an independent Assessor. Every five years, the endorsed national schemes need to be revised after which an independent Assessor assesses whether the revised scheme is in conformity with the PEFC Council's standard and system requirements.

This report presents the results of the evaluation of the PAFC Congo Basin against PEFC Council requirements for forest certification schemes. The application for PEFC endorsement was submitted in December 2020.

PEFC Council appointed Form International as the independent Assessor to carry out the conformity assessment. This assessment report will be the basis for the decision of the PEFC Council and provides a recommendation to the PEFC Board on the formal endorsement of the PEFC Congo Basin for Sustainable Forest Management (SFM).

1.1. Form International

The assessment benefited from Form International's specific experience and expertise in certification and SFM. Form International has implemented many studies in which national or international certification standards were assessed against another standard or scheme, for example for the Forest Stewardship Council and Keurhout. Moreover, Form International has carried out conformity assessments for PEFC, such as the Certification Schemes of Australia, Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Gabon, Germany, Hungary, Indonesia, Ireland, Malaysia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, UK, Uruguay, USA and Canada.

The conformity assessment team consisted of Mr. Rutger de Wolf, Mr. Tieme Wanders and Ms. Esther Boer (Forestry Experts and Registered PEFC Assessors) and is referred to as the Assessor in this report.

1.2. Scope of the assessment

The scope and process of the assessment follow the assessment of a new system, as elaborated in PEFC GD 1007:2017 chapter 6.3.1, which means a "full assessment". The conformity of the PAFC Congo Basin is assessed against the PEFC standards and system requirements as presented in PEFC IGD 1007:2017.



1.3. Documents and resources used

Various documents and resources were used in this conformity assessment. The documents received from the Association of Tropical Timber Technical Association (ATIBT)¹ are shown in Table 1.1. Table 1.2 lists the documents used from PEFC Council. Besides these documents, the website used by ATIBT (atibt.org), and PAFC Cameroon, PAFC Congo and PAFC Gabon (pafc-certification.org) were consulted during the assessment.

Table 1.1 Documents used for the conformity assessment

Number	Title
DOC-001-2020-1	Description of the PAFC Congo Basin forest certification system
PROC-001-2019-1	Procedure for the development of PAFC certification standards for the Congo Basin; version of July 2021*
PROC-002-2020-1	Procedure for the handling of complaints and appeals
PROC-003-2020-1	Notification of Certification Bodies for sustainable forest management systems
PROC-004-2020-1	Notification of chain of custody certification bodies
PROC-005-2020-1	Licensing of the PEFC registered trademarks
PROC-006-2020	Procedure for the indexing of PAFC Congo Basin documents
NORM-001-2019-1	Sustainable forest management – Requirements; version of July 2021*
NORM-002-2020-1	Requirements for bodies carrying out PAFC sustainable forest management audits and certification; version of July 2021*
PEFC ST 2001:2020	PEFC Trademarks Rules – Requirements
PEFC ST 2002:2020	Chain of Custody of Forest and Tree Based Products – Requirements
PEFC ST 2003:2020	Requirements for Certification Bodies operating Certification against the PEFC International Chain of Custody Standard
RAP-003-2020	Development Report
(none)	PEFC Checklists for Standard-setting Procedures & process, Sustainable Forest Management, Accreditation and Certification Procedures and Scheme Administration
(none)	About 225 documents providing evidence of the standard-setting process
(none)	Additional explanation and answers to questions provided by ATIBT during the assessment

* The endorsement version is from December 2020. Additional changes were made in July 2021, to be submitted to the Forum for validation.

Table 1.2 The PEFC Council Technical documents used.

#	PEFC Council document	Date
1	PEFC GD 1007:2017 Endorsement and Mutual Recognition of National Systems and their Revision	1 November 2017
2	PEFCC TD Annex 1: Terms and Definitions	27 October 2006

¹ PAFC Cameroon, PAFC Congo and PAFC Gabon are the owners of the Scheme. ATIBT was involved as standard-setting body.



#	PEFC Council document	Date
3	PEFCC TD Annex 6: Certification and Accreditation Procedures	5 October 2007
4	PEFCC TD Annex 7: Endorsement and Mutual Recognition of National Schemes and their Revisions	5 October 2007
5	PEFC ST 1001:2017 Standard-setting – Requirements	15 November 2017
6	PEFC ST 1002:2018 Group Forest Management – Requirements	28 November 2018
7	PEFC ST 1003:2018 Sustainable Forest Management – Requirements	28 November 2018
8	PEFC ST 2001:2020 PEFC Trademarks Rules - Requirements	14 February 2020
9	PEFC ST 2002:2020 Chain of Custody of Forest and Tree Based Products - Requirements	14 February 2020
10	PEFC ST 2003:2020 Requirements for Certification Bodies operating Certification against the PEFC International Chain of Custody Standard	14 February 2020
11	PEFC GD 1005:2020 Issuance of PEFC trademarks usage licences by the PEFC Council	12 February 2020
12	PEFC Checklist – Standard-setting Procedures and process	30 November 2019
13	PEFC Checklist – Group Forest Management Certification	30 November 2019
14	PEFC Checklist – Sustainable Forest Management	30 November 2019
15	PEFC Checklist – Certification and Accreditation Procedures (Annex 6)	30 November 2019
16	PEFC Secretariat's clarification concerning the content of the assessment report (clarification 30/10/12).	30 October 2012

1.4. Methodology adopted

The work consisted of a desk study and online meetings with stakeholders in which an evaluation of the conformity was conducted. The assessment enabled the Assessor to identify any missing information, similarities and differences between the PAFC Congo Basin and the PEFC Council's standards and system requirements. Next to a general analysis of the structure of the system, the assessment consisted of:

1. Assessment of the standard-setting procedures and process

This aspect is evaluated on the basis of PEFC ST 1001:2017 Standard-setting - Requirements. The PEFC Checklist has been used to assess the compliance of the PAFC Congo Basin with the requirements of PEFC concerning the Standard-setting Procedures and the actual process. The criteria for the standard-setting procedure have been assessed in two stages:

1. compliance of the scheme documented procedures ('Procedures')
2. compliance of the standard-setting process itself with the procedures ('Process')

To assess the standard-setting process, the Report on Review, explanations from ATIBT, additional evidential records and results of stakeholder consultations are used to evaluate compliance of the standard-setting process.



The PEFC Council conducted an international public consultation on the scheme, and a stakeholder survey was organized by Form International through questionnaires that were sent out to members of the Forum and other relevant stakeholders identified by ATIBT, PAFC Cameroon, PAFC Congo and PAFC Gabon during the standard-setting process.

2. **Assessment of the sustainable forest management standard**

The compliance of PAFC Congo Basin with PEFC ST 1003:2018 Sustainable Forest Management – Requirements was assessed based on the PEFC Checklist.

3. **Assessment of the chain of custody standard**

The compliance of PAFC Congo Basin with PEFC ST 2002:2020 – Chain of Custody of Forest and Tree Based Products - Requirements was assessed based on the PEFC Checklist.

4. **Assessment of the certification and accreditation procedures**

The compliance of PAFC Congo Basin with PEFC TD Annex 6 (Certification and accreditation procedures) and PEFC ST 2003:2012 was assessed based the PEFC Checklist.

5. **Other aspects regarding functions and efficiency of the scheme**

The functions and efficiency of PAFC Congo Basin were evaluated on the basis of descriptions and information obtained in correspondence with ATIBT and stakeholders.

6. **Field assessment Congo Basin**

As this was the initial assessment of the PAFC Congo Basin, a field visit was required to meet the people who have been involved in the standard-setting process. Due to COVID-19 regulations, initial stakeholder meetings were held online during the assessment period. This was complemented by a field visit which took place after the scheme received its initial endorsement (October 2022).

By consulting various stakeholders, Form International obtained vital information on the way the standard was developed, and how it was received by stakeholders. Interviews were held with a wide range of stakeholders, including public and private forest managers, civil society actors, government organisations, and NGOs.

This assessment enabled the Assessor:

- The clarification of any outstanding issues highlighted during the initial assessment;
- Discussions with the various stakeholders, involved in the standard-setting process, and other external organisations who provided input and feedback to the Assessor.

The field assessment was completed within 18 months after initial endorsement of PAFC.

The report is written in line with the guidelines of the PEFC Council, PEFC GD 1007:2017 Appendix 2 for the content of an assessment report, and the additional PEFC Secretariat's clarification of 30 October 2012.

1.5. Assessment process

The conformity assessment process consisted of the following steps:

1. Public consultation

The international public consultation was held from 3 February to 1 April 2021. No comments were received (Annex 3).

The national stakeholder survey was held from 25 May 2021 to 14 June 2021. Form International sent out questionnaires to all stakeholders that were members of the Forum and additional stakeholders that were invited and/or participated in public consultation meetings during the revision process. In total 299 questionnaires were sent out, 27 responses were received.

2. Technical desk study

The technical desk study was carried out on the PAFC Congo Basin documentation. It comprised of a review of the documentation and a verification of the elaborated PEFC Checklist. During the assessment additional information was requested from ATIBT.

3. Elaboration of draft report

The draft report was sent to ATIBT and PEFC Council Secretariat on 24 June 2021.

4. Commenting period

Based on the draft report, ATIBT provided responses, updates in its norms and procedures, additional references, information and clarifications to the draft report.

5. Online meetings with stakeholders from Congo Basin

During the commenting period, online meetings were held with stakeholders from the Congo Basin, to interview individuals and organisations regarding the standard-setting process and specific issues and concerns.

6. Elaboration of final draft report

Based on the responses and additional references and clarifications to the draft report, a final draft report was developed and was sent to PEFC Council Secretariat on 30 July 2021.

7. Internal review of the final draft report

The PEFC Council Secretariat will conduct an internal review and contribute to the final report by providing Form International with their feedback and comments.



8. Final analysis and reporting

Based on the feedback and comments from PEFC Council Secretariat's internal review, a final report was developed and was sent to the PEFC Council Secretariat on 13 September.

A timetable of the assessment process is presented below.

Week	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1a. International public consultation	*														
1b. Stakeholder survey															
2. Technical desk study															
3. Elaboration of draft report															
4. Online meetings with stakeholders															
5. Commenting period ATIBT															
6. Elaboration of final draft report															
7. Internal review															
8. Elaboration final report															
9. Field visit to Congo Basin															**

* Already finished at the start of the Assessor's assessment process.

** Completed in October 2022 due to Covid-19 restrictions.

1.6. Report structure

The structure of the report follows the guidance of PEFC GD 1007:2017:

- Chapter 2 Explicit statement in the form of a recommendation on whether the Board of Directors of PEFC should endorse the PAFC Congo Basin.
- Chapter 3 Summary of the findings.
- Chapter 4 Overview of the key structures of the scheme.
- Chapter 5 Standard-setting Procedures – assessment results.
- Chapter 6 Standard-setting process – assessment results.



Chapter 7	Forest Management Standard – assessment results.
Chapter 8	Chain of Custody Standard – assessment results.
Chapter 9	Certification and Accreditation Procedures – assessment results.
Chapter 10	Other aspects related to the System.

The PEFC Checklists are enclosed in Annex 1. Results of the stakeholder survey and international consultation are presented in respectively Annex 2 and Annex 3. Feedback and comments of the internal review are presented in Annex 4.



2. Recommendation

Based on the results of this conformity assessment, Form International recommends the PEFC Board of Directors **to endorse the PAFC Congo Basin**, on the condition that the remaining twelve (12) nonconformities in the Forest Management Standard shall be corrected within six (6) months after endorsement.

All nonconformities are classified as minor.



3. Summary of the Findings

3.1. Overall

The PAFC Congo Basin is in general quite complete and clear. However, there were eleven (10) nonconformities found in the Forest Management Standard, all classified as minor.

3.2. Structure of the System

The PAFC Congo Basin is owned by the three national governing bodies: PAFC Cameroon, PAFC Congo and PAFC Gabon. ATIBT is the standardizing body for the development of the Congo Basin PAFC scheme documentation. ATIBT's Board of Directors is designated as the body in charge of the formal approval of forest management (FM) and chain of custody (CoC) standards. Currently the option is being investigated to establish a regional secretary to manage the system administratively on behalf of the three owners. The PAFC Congo Basin Forum (or Forum) was the temporary consultative body in charge of developing PAFC Congo Basin sustainable forest management and chain of custody standards.

3.3. Standard-setting Procedures

The Standard-setting Procedures are regulated in PROC-001-2019-1. It is a clearly structured document. The procedures comply with the PEFC Council requirements, no nonconformities are found.

3.4. Standard-setting process

The standard-setting process went well, and complies with the PEFC Council requirements, no nonconformities are found.

3.5. Forest Management Standard

The Sustainable Forest Management requirements are stipulated in NORM-001-2019-1 Sustainable forest management – Requirements. The standard is structured in different chapters, containing the specific forest management requirements, and includes two normative annexes with further directives relating to the management system and operational guidelines. Although the standard is in general quite well elaborated, twelve (12) non-conformities are found in the Forest Management Standard:

- 1) The standard includes an annex with PEFC benchmark requirements excluded in the standard. The PEFC benchmark standard does allow such exclusions;
- 2) The definition of forests does not match the intent of the standard, due to the very low canopy cover requirement of the definition;
- 3) No overview of applicable legislation is found for benchmark requirements which are not reflected in the standard (4.1i);



- 4) Insufficiently ensured that the management document shall be appropriate to size and use of the forest area (req. 6.2.1b);
- 5) No provisions are found that where wages are below the living wage of a country, steps are taken to increase wages towards a living wage level (req. 6.3.4.3);
- 6) For conversion, it is insufficiently ensured that the land use policies include consultation with affected stakeholders (req. 8.1.4a);
- 7) Insufficiently ensured that conversion shall not have negative impacts on specific areas (req. 8.1.4c);
- 8) Insufficiently ensured that conversion will contribute to conservation (req. 8.1.4e);
- 9) Insufficiently ensured that conversion shall not have negative impacts on specific areas (req. 8.1.5c);
- 10) Insufficiently ensured that conversion will contribute to conservation (req. 8.1.5f);
- 11) Not ensured that alternative methods are preferred over the use of pesticides in planted forest on non-forest land (req. 8.2.6);
- 12) Insufficiently ensured that forest management planning shall aim to maintain, conserve or enhance biodiversity on genetic levels (req. 8.4.1).

3.6. Chain of Custody Standard

PAFC Congo Basin adopts the PEFC ST 2002:2013. The standard complies with the PEFC Council requirements, no nonconformities are found.

3.7. Certification and Accreditation Procedures

The requirements for certification and accreditation are regulated in NORM-002-2020-1, PROC-003-2020-1 and PROC-004-2020-1, and include references to ISO 17021, and ISO 19011. PEFC ST 2003:2020 is furthermore adopted. The procedures comply with the PEFC Council requirements, no nonconformities are found.

3.8. Other aspects

With regards to Scheme Administration Procedures, the following procedures are found:

- Notification of Certification Procedures (PROC-003-2020-1 and PROC-004-2020-1);
- Logo Usage Rules (PROC-005-2020-1 and PEFC ST 2001:2020);
- Complaints and Dispute Resolution Procedures (PROC-002-2020-1).

These are not further assessed in detail, in accordance with the tender document for this assignment. Further assessment of these procedures is conducted by the Technical Unit of PEFC Council.



4. Structure of PAFC Congo Basin

4.1. Introduction to the forestry sector in the Congo Basin

The three countries currently under the PAFC Congo Basin scheme have a relatively equal forest area as shown in the table below. Congo and Gabon have the highest amount of forest concessions, a small percentage of which is FSC certified (see also figure below). CEB-Precious Woods in Gabon is currently the only PEFC (and FSC) certified concession since 2008 with 596,822 hectares certified.

Country	Total area of forests (mHa)	Total forest concessions (mHa)	Area of FSC concessions (mHa)	Area of PEFC concessions (mHa)
Cameroon	46.6	8.8	0.3	
Gabon	26.3	13.4	2.0	0.6
Congo	34.0	14.9	2.7	
DRC	244.1	10.2		
Total	351.0	47.3	5.0	

As the forestry sector of the PAFC Congo Basin area is country specific, the sector will be briefly described for each of the three countries.

Cameroon

Cameroon has about 22.2 million hectares of forests, or nearly 46% of the total country area. The country's forests are mainly tropical rainforests, which consists of mostly lowland evergreen forest (54%) and lowland semi-deciduous forest (28%). The forests of The Ministry of Forests and Wildlife (Ministère des Forêts et de la Faune – MINFOF) is primarily responsible for forest policy, the forest legislative framework and the enforcement of forest laws.

The Cameroonian forest is divided in to the non-permanent forest estate (domaine forestier non-permanent) and the permanent forest estate (domaine forestier permanent). The non-permanent forest estate is mostly populated by local communities and includes community forest and private forest. The permanent forest estate is mostly owned by the state (although management rights have often been transferred) and includes forest reserves, logging concessions, protected areas and council forests. Protected areas, including national parks, forest reserves and hunting zones, currently cover 20% of the national forest area.

An estimated 8.5 million hectares of land in Cameroon is dedicated to forestry production and in 2019 MINOF declared 93 forest concessions, 38 communal forests, 142 timber sales and approximately 50 community forests. These forest titles are managed by an estimated 50 large international or national companies (59), about 40



medium-sized national companies (46) and about 30 rural communities (38) that own communal forests.

Gabon

According to the FAO, Gabon has about 22.3 million hectares of forest areas, which is 87% of its land area. Nearly all forest land consists of primary or naturally regenerated forests. There are three major forest types in Gabon: evergreen rainforest in the west; closed humid central Gabonese forest, covering most of the country; and Semi-deciduous forest type in the northeast. Gabon has 13 national parks and some other protected areas, covering together approximately 12% of the country. The Ministry of Water, Forestry, the Sea, and the Environment manages and monitors Gabon's forest resources, including the attribution of forest concessions.

All of Gabon's forests are owned by the state, yet the management of the forest areas can be divided into three different categories:

1. **Production forests** which are managed by private concessionaires, although the management rights are exclusively administered by the state;
2. **Protection forests**, which are directly managed by the state;
3. **The *domain rural***, which is generally land and forest where rural communities and forest dwellers are free to exercise their customary rights, as long as they respect the conditions imposed by the forest administration.

In 2019, there were 97 forestry concessions in Gabon and an area of 12,739,939 hectares of managed forest concessions. Gabon has now the only certified PEFC plantation in the Congo Basin covering an area of 596,822 hectares.

Republic of the Congo

Congo has an estimated forest cover of 22.4 million hectares, representing 65% of the country's land surface. Nearly all forest land is primary or otherwise naturally regenerated forest, and only a relatively small part of (71,000 ha) is planted forest. Congo has two principal forest zones, one in the south and the main area in the north. The Ministry of Forest Economy (MEF) is the main institution in charge of Congo's forest management.

Practically all natural forests in Congo are publicly owned, but the rights of indigenous peoples living in those forests are recognized by law (Indigenous Peoples Rights Law). The forest areas of the State consist of forests owned by the state, the local authorities and by public bodies. The law also recognizes private property of forest areas, including private forests and private forest plantations.

Congo has started the process of revising its Forest Code in 2012. The new code was validated by the Council of Ministers on 27 February 2019 and was adopted by Parliament in April 2020. The law was promulgated in 2020 and the reflections concerning the application texts have begun.



In 2019, Congo had an estimate 13 million hectares that are attributed as forest concessions and a total of 60 forest concessions. These forest concessions are attributed to 37 logging companies. Three major companies in terms of attributed areas are CIB with over 2 million ha, and IFO and SEFYD with over 1 million hectares each.

4.2. Organisation of PAFC Congo Basin

The PAFC Congo Basin is owned by the three national governing bodies: PAFC Cameroon, PAFC Congo and PAFC Gabon. ATIBT is the standardizing body for the development of the Congo Basin PAFC scheme documentation. ATIBT's Board of Directors is designated as the body in charge of the formal approval of forest management (FM) and chain of custody (CoC) standards. Currently the option is being investigated to establish a regional secretary to manage the system administratively on behalf of the three owners. The PAFC Congo Basin Forum (or Forum) was the temporary consultative body in charge of developing PAFC Congo Basin sustainable forest management and chain of custody standards.

At the national level, the PAFC scheme is administered by the PAFC associations at the country level of Gabon, Cameroon and Congo. To do so they have signed an administration delegation contract with the PEFC Council. The PAFC associations are involved in activities related to the governance of their structure (General Assembly, Board of Directors and Executive Board meetings) and undertake activities related to the administration of the PAFC system in their countries, including:

- Notification of certification bodies;
- Issuance of licenses to users for the use of PEFC trademarks;
- Handling of complaints and appeals related to these activities;
- Participation in the PEFC Registration System.

The national PAFCs are also in charge of promoting the PAFC Congo Basin certification system. The PAFC Congo basin forest management certification standard is a regional system which will be applicable to forest management and logging operations in forest concessions of Cameroon, Republic of Congo and Gabon. The Central African Republic (CAR) and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) could later adopt the PAFC Congo Basin forest management standard once national governing bodies are set up if they intend to operate under the PAFC CB certification scheme.

4.3. The PAFC Congo Basin scheme

The scheme currently contains a regional standard for sustainable forest management and a chain of custody standard. The PAFC Congo Basin provides for independent assessment of forest management practices and audit of timber product manufacturers or exporters to ensure that timber products manufactured or exported



are sourced from sustainably managed forests and meet the criteria for certified timber products.

The PAFC Congo Basin scheme is based on a number of documents, which define the requirements for forest and traceability certification. The document structure is shown in the figure below.

Standards for operators	Standards for certifying bodies	Scheme governance
<p>PAFC/NORM-001-2019-1 Sustainable Forest Management – Requirements</p> <p>PEFC ST 2002:2020 Chain of Custody of Forest and Tree Based Products – Requirements</p> <p>PEFC ST 2001:2020 PEFC Trademarks Rules – Requirements</p>	<p>NORM-002-2020-1 Requirements for bodies carrying out PAFC sustainable forest management audits and certification</p> <p>PROC-003-2020-1 Notification of certification bodies for sustainable forest management systems</p> <p>PROC-004-2020-1 Notification of chain of custody certification bodies</p> <p>PEFC ST 2003:2020 Requirements for Certification Bodies operating Certification against the PEFC International Chain of Custody Standard</p>	<p>PROC-001-2020-1 Procedure for the development of PAFC certification standards for the Congo Basin</p> <p>PROC-002-2020-1 Handling of complaints and appeals</p> <p>PROC-005-2020 Licensing of PEFC registered trademarks</p>



5. Standard-setting Procedures

This chapter presents the findings of the assessment of the Standard-setting Procedures. No nonconformities are found. The PEFC Checklist related to the Standard-setting Procedures can be found in Annex 1 part I, which presents all the conformities and related references.

5.1. Analysis

The procedures for standard-setting are regulated in PROC-001-2019-1. This is a clearly structured document, with clear overviews and tables on the process. Two observations² are made:

- Clause 9b states that “upon receipt of a complaint or an appeal, ATIBT will gather and verify all information necessary to validate the complaint/appeal, impartially and objectively assess the purpose of the complaint/appeal”. The wording “assess the purpose of the complaint/appeal” can be confusing as it is multi-interpretable: it could either refer to 1) the subject matter or 2) the intent of the complaint/appeal. The PEFC benchmark requirement (5.3.1b) requires “the subject matter of the complaint” to be evaluated.
- Clause 4.5 states that “particular attention will be paid to ensuring access to these documents by key disadvantaged stakeholders”. The wording “particular attention” remains a bit general, whereas part of the stakeholders are living in remote areas and require specific methods to be reached, which could have been further elaborated in the procedures.

5.1. Results: Nonconformities

The Standard-setting Procedures comply with the PEFC requirements. No nonconformities are found.

5.2. Results: Selection of Conformities

In the tables below, a selection of conformities is presented that are considered sensitive issues in the forest context of the Congo Basin and/or illustrative examples of the Standard-setting Procedures.

Requirement	5.1.1 The standardising body shall have written procedures for standard-setting activities describing: (e) the mechanism for reaching consensus,
Evidence	PROC-001-2019-1 “3.5.1. Voting rights Within the Forum, each represented member has the right to one vote (one represented member = one vote). Observers may be accepted in an

² Observations are weaknesses found in the Scheme, which are not considered to be a nonconformity.



	<p>advisory capacity, but may not - under any circumstances - take part in the vote, which is reserved for Forum members only.</p> <p>If a member is unable to attend a meeting, he or she may give a proxy to another member representing the same interest category to vote on his or her behalf. To do so, they must inform ATIBT in writing no later than 24 hours prior to the meeting; ATIBT will then make a statement at the meeting regarding the proxies that have been received.</p> <p>3.5.2. Dialogue – Reaching a consensus</p> <p>There are several opportunities for Forum members to express their views on a working document:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Either during a face-to-face meeting: the absence of opposition will then be established by an oral vote (yes/no), or a vote by show of hands, or by ballot ; • Or during a teleconference with a verbal vote (yes/no); • Or by email, when a request for agreement is made: members indicate their agreement or opposition in writing; • Or in a combination of the three previous processes. <p>In the case of face-to-face meetings or teleconferences, a quorum shall be considered as reached when a simple majority (50%) of the members of each Forum category is present or represented. If this is not the case, no consensus can be reached.</p> <p>In the case of face-to-face meetings or teleconferences, the Forum Chairperson shall judge whether a consensus has been reached in the absence of sustained opposition.</p> <p>In the case of email queries, ATIBT will formally report the results to the Chairperson. The latter will then be in a position to decide whether or not a consensus has been reached. Forum members will then be informed. A document or the substantive elements of a document will be considered to be validated if there is no sustained opposition on a fundamental issue by any Forum members.”</p>
Assessors' comments	(none)
Result	Does conform

Requirement	<p>6.2.1 The standardising body shall identify stakeholders relevant to the objectives and scope of the standard-setting activities by means of a stakeholder identification mapping exercise. It shall define which stakeholder groups are relevant to the subject matter and why. For each stakeholder group the standardising body shall identify the likely key issues, key stakeholders, and which means of communication would be best to reach them.</p>
Evidence	<p>PROC-001-2019-1</p> <p>“4.1. Preliminary steps</p> <p>✓ The stakeholder mapping, which identifies - at both the national and sub-regional levels - the stakeholders of the forest-timber sector relevant to the scope and objective of the definition of standards (...) and defines the relevance of each group in relation to forest management in the Congo Basin. For each group, the mapping presents the likely major</p>



	issues, key stakeholders, disadvantaged stakeholders and the most appropriate means of communication to be used.”
Assessors' comments	(none)
Result	Does conform

Requirement	6.2.3 The standardising body shall identify disadvantaged stakeholders and key stakeholders and address any constraints to their participation in standard-setting activities.
Evidence	<p>PROC-001-2019-1</p> <p>“4.1. Preliminary steps</p> <p>✓ The stakeholder mapping (...) For each group, the mapping presents the (...) key stakeholders, disadvantaged stakeholders and the most appropriate means of communication to be used.</p> <p>4.4 Development of a version of the standards for public consultation</p> <p>In order for the Forum to work in an open and transparent manner, ATIBT shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate the participation of disadvantaged stakeholders as well as the other members of the working group (by covering their travel, accommodation, and food costs).”
Assessors' comments	(none)
Result	Does conform

Requirement	6.4.1 The standardising body shall establish a permanent or temporary working group or adjust the composition of an already existing working group based on nominations it received. Acceptance and refusal of nominations shall be justified in relation to the requirements for balanced representation of the working group, considerations of an appropriate gender balance, relevance of the organisation, an individual's competence, an individual's relevant experience and resources available for standard-setting.
Evidence	<p>PROC-001-2019-1</p> <p>“3.2. How the Forum is set up</p> <p>The members of the Forum are divided into four categories of interest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interests of owners and the administration; • Interests of loggers and timber processors; • Interests linked to the preservation of nature; • Interests linked to the preservation of people's livelihoods and workers' living and working conditions. <p>The members of the Forum are selected from those stakeholders who have expressed interest and designated a representative. The composition of the Forum shall be done as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in a balanced manner: in order to achieve this balance, the number of members from the various categories of interest presented above will be equivalent (+ or - one person); • integrating stakeholders from each country covered by the PAFC Congo Basin standards and regional stakeholders;



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • integrating, as much as possible, at least one representative from each identified stakeholder group (see paragraph 4.1). If this is not possible, alternatives will be explored; • including at least 50% of stakeholders identified as key stakeholders. Their participation will be proactively sought. If this is not possible, alternatives will be explored; • including at least 40% of stakeholders identified as directly and materially affected by the implementation of the standards. <p>The participation of stakeholders with relevant expertise in sustainable forest management and standard setting, and stakeholders who can influence its implementation will also be favoured.</p> <p>Any inclusion or rejection of a stakeholder in the Forum will have to be justified on the basis of - for example - criteria such as the balanced representation among the categories of stakeholders (as mentioned above), gender balance, the organisation's relevance, a representative's personal skill or relevant experience and the resources available for the standard-setting process.</p> <p>4.3. Creation of the Forum and review of the development process</p> <p>Based on an analysis of the expressions of interest received and in order to comply with the guidelines and requirements established in section 3.5 of this procedure, ATIBT shall set up the PAFC Congo Basin Forum and publish (on its website) a list of the members of the Forum as well as the results of its analysis including, if necessary, the justification for the inclusion or rejection of an expression of interest.</p> <p>ATIBT will ensure that it meets the requirements of this procedure, in particular as regards the representation of each stakeholder group in the Forum as well as the proportions of key and affected stakeholders that are involved.”</p>
Assessors' comments	(none)
Result	Does conform

Requirement	6.4.3 In order to achieve balanced representation, the standardising body shall strive to have all identified stakeholder groups (refer to 6.2) represented. The standardising body shall set targets for the participation of key stakeholders and proactively seek their participation by using outreach such as (but not limited to) personal emails, phone calls, meeting invitations etc.
Evidence	<p>PROC-001-2019-1</p> <p>“3.2. How the Forum is set up</p> <p>The composition of the Forum shall be done as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • integrating, as much as possible, at least one representative from each identified stakeholder group (see paragraph 4.1). If this is not possible, alternatives will be explored; • including at least 50% of stakeholders identified as key stakeholders. Their participation will be proactively sought. If this is not possible, alternatives will be explored; <p>4.1. Preliminary steps</p>



	<p>✓ The stakeholder mapping, (...) taking into account the nine main groups defined in Agenda 21 of the UNCED (United Nations Conference on Environment and Development)</p> <p>PEFC International's requirements stipulate that the following stakeholders, at the very least, be covered by the stakeholder mapping: forest owners, companies and industrial players, local populations and indigenous people, NGOs, the scientific and technological community, and workers and trade unions."</p>
Assessors' comments	(none)
Result	Does conform

Requirement	7.1 The standardising body shall approve the standard(s)/normative document(s) formally when there is evidence of consensus among the working group.
Evidence	<p>PROC-001-2019-1</p> <p>"5.1. Formal approval of the standards by ATIBT</p> <p>The final version of the PAFC Congo Basin standards is submitted to ATIBT's Board of Directors for formal approval.</p> <p>For this, ATIBT's Board of Directors will need to have the final version of the PAFC Congo Basin Standards and proof that a consensus was reached regarding the final version of the standards two weeks before."</p>
Assessors' comments	(none)
Result	Does conform

Requirement	7.2.2 Standard(s) shall include: (c) a note that when there is inconsistency between versions, the English version of the standard as endorsed by the PEFC Council is the reference.
Evidence	<p>PROC-001-2019-1</p> <p>"5.4.1. Publication of the standards</p> <p>Moreover, the standards specify that if there are contradictions between the English and French versions of the standards, it is the English version recognised by PEFC that is used as a reference."</p>
Assessors' comments	(none)
Result	Does conform



6. Standard-setting process

This chapter presents the findings of the assessment of the standard-setting process. No nonconformities are found. The PEFC Checklist related to the standard-setting process can be found in Annex 1 part I, which presents all the conformities and related references.

6.1. Analysis

The standard-setting process started in 2019 and was built upon the experiences and results of the systems developed by PAFC Gabon and PAFC Cameroon. In the standard-setting process stakeholders were identified per country (Cameroon, Congo, Gabon) as well as regional operating stakeholders (Congo Basin and beyond). At the start, an announcement was sent to all identified stakeholders and included an invitation to express the interest to participate in the standard-setting process. Based on the responses, a Forum was established to function as the working group to develop the system and standards. The Forum consisted of equal representation of four categories and the three countries plus regional stakeholder representatives.

A first version of the SFM standard was developed during the first Forum meeting in November 2019 and used for the first public consultation round, which was held from December 2019 to February 2020. Comments received were considered in the second meeting of the Forum, after which the draft standard was pilot tested during a desk assessment in April – May 2020. Outcomes were further discussed by the Forum and an updated version of the standard was used for the second public consultation round which was held from May – June 2020. A pre-validation meeting of the Forum was held in September to consider the comments received during public consultation. Three meetings were organized to discuss several sensitive issues and reach consensus with specific stakeholder groups, after which consensus was reached in the final meeting of the Forum in October 2020. The standard was finally approved by the Extraordinary General Assemblies of PAFC Cameroon, PAFC Congo and PAFC Gabon (November – December 2020), and finally validated by ATIBT board members.

The process was conducted according to the Standard-setting Procedures. The standard development report provides clear overview and details on the standard-setting process, including reference to evidential documents (appendices). The standard-setting process went well. Three observations³ are made:

- Based on PROC-001-2019-1, clause 9, it would be expected that the E-mail address of ATIBT's Director would be provided as contact point, instead the E-mail address of the project coordination is given (req. 5.3.2);

³ Observations are weaknesses found in the Scheme, which are not considered to be a nonconformity.



- The invitation to submit feedback on the proposed process is only found in the announcement on the PAFC Congo Basin website. It is not found in the announcement on the ATBIT website, nor found in DOC-103-2020 (req. 6.3.1e);
- The standard itself does not contain contact details (such as postal address, telephone address or E-mail address), it only contains a website. Contact details can only be found by following the webpage and searching for the contact details (req. 7.2.2a).

6.2. Results: Nonconformities

The standard-setting process complies with the PEFC requirements. No nonconformities are found.

6.3. Results: Selection of Conformities

In the tables below, a selection of conformities is presented that are considered sensitive issues in the forest context of Congo Basin and/or illustrative examples of the standard-setting process.

Requirement	5.1.2 The standardising body shall make its standard-setting procedures publicly available and shall review its standard-setting procedures regularly. The review shall consider feedback from stakeholders.
Evidence	See Assessors' comment.
Assessors' comments	PROC-001-2019-1 could be found on the ATIBT website (atibt.org). As this is the initial development of the scheme, a review is not applicable.
Result	Does conform

Requirement	5.3.1 The standardising body shall establish procedure(s) for dealing with any substantial and process complaints and appeals relating to its standard-setting activities. It must make procedure(s) accessible to stakeholders. Upon receipt of a complaint or appeal, the standardising body shall: (a) acknowledge receipt of the complaint or appeal to the complainant,
Evidence	(none)
Assessors' comments	According to ATIBT no formal complaint was received during the process. This is confirmed by respondents to the stakeholder survey. One respondent indicated there was a complaint and confirmed it was validated and objectively evaluated, but the respondent did not provide further explanation on the complaint, and it is unclear whether this was a formal complaint.
Result	Does conform

Requirement	6.2.2 Identification of stakeholder groups shall be based on nine major stakeholder groups as defined by Agenda 21 of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de
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	<p>Janeiro in 1992. At least the following groups shall be included in the stakeholder mapping:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • forest owners, • business and industry, • indigenous people, • non-government organisations, • scientific and technological community, • workers and trade unions. <p>Other groups shall be added if relevant to the scope of standard-setting activities.</p>
Evidence	<p>RAP-099-2020-1</p> <p>“2. The stakeholder mapping will identify the actors in forest management to whom the call for expressions of interest will be sent for the selection of members of the regional working group in charge of the development of PAFC Congo Basin standards. This mapping will also be used to contact stakeholders during the public consultation of documents that must be submitted for comments and proposals from stakeholders. Categories of forest-timber stakeholders in the Congo Basin</p> <p>2.1. The economic players (...)</p> <p>2.2. The various administrations (...)</p> <p>2.3. Environmental NGOs (...)</p> <p>2.4. Social stakeholders</p> <p>In the Congo Basin, two types of social stakeholders that are relevant to forest management can be distinguished, depending on their field, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those that defend the rights of local populations and indigenous peoples, via NGOs; (...) • Those that defend workers' rights, through workers' unions. (...) <p>2.5. The scientific and technical community and higher education (...)</p> <p>2.6. Donors and the international community”</p>
Assessors' comments	(none)
Result	Does conform

Requirement	<p>6.4.1 The standardising body shall establish a permanent or temporary working group or adjust the composition of an already existing working group based on nominations it received. Acceptance and refusal of nominations shall be justified in relation to the requirements for balanced representation of the working group, considerations of an appropriate gender balance, relevance of the organisation, an individual's competence, an individual's relevant experience and resources available for standard-setting.</p>
Evidence	<p>RAP-103-2020-1</p> <p>“3. Expressions of interest that were received</p> <p>Of the 293 stakeholders that were contacted, 88 formally expressed their interest in participating in the process as a member of the Forum by submitting their expression of interest form.</p> <p>4. Forum members: selection criteria</p>



In keeping with the requirements of the PAFC Congo Basin standards development and revision process, the Forum's composition is established on the basis of the following considerations:

- the balance between the interests of the various stakeholders: in order to achieve this balance, the number of members of the various interest categories listed above shall be equivalent (+ or - one person);
- the geographical distribution: includes stakeholders from each country covered by the PAFC Congo Basin standards and regional stakeholders;
- the presence of key stakeholders: includes at least 50% of stakeholders identified as key stakeholders. Their participation will be proactively sought.
- the presence of affected stakeholders: includes at least 40% of stakeholders identified as materially and directly affected by the implementation of the standards.

5. Analysis of the expressions of interest that were received

The selection of members for the PAFC Congo Basin Forum was therefore based on the above criteria as well as on gender parity, the organisation's relevance, the representative's personal skills or relevant experience and the resources available for the standards development process.

In order to constitute the Forum, and in order to work as effectively as possible, it was decided that one representative from each category per country - including regional representatives - should be included in the Forum. Thus the Forum will consist of 16 members (4 geographical areas x interest categories).

The two "best" applicants (based on key stakeholder or affected stakeholder status and expertise) were selected according to their geographical area and interest category. Thus, in the event that the first choice is not available for the first round of work, the second choice will be selected.

The considerations, the criteria and the process and results of the analysis of the expressions of interest are presented in the analytical table in the appendix.

Distribution of women/men among the selected Forum members

<i>Women</i>	<i>Men</i>
<i>6/16</i>	<i>10/16</i>
<i>37.5%</i>	<i>62.5%</i>

Distribution according to stakeholder status

<i>Key stakeholders</i>	<i>Affected stakeholders</i>	<i>Disadvantaged stakeholders</i>
<i>16/16</i>	<i>8/16</i>	<i>7/16</i>
<i>100% (compliant, 50% threshold)</i>	<i>50% (compliant, 40% threshold)</i>	<i>44%</i>

6. Composition of the Forum

In terms of members, the chosen chamber and on the basis of the pre-selection made to date, the Forum is as follows:



		Industry	Social	Administration	Environment
	Cameroon stakeholders	Pallisco (Cécile Ngoue)	CERAD (Patrice Bigombe / Francis Nkoumbele)	Director of Forestry (Anicet Ngomin)	WCS (Grâce Mbenda)
	Congo stakeholders	CIB-OLAM (Vincent Istac)	PGDF (Sylvie Mfoutou)	DVRF (Paulette Ebina)	CAGDF (Alfred Nkodia)
	Gabon stakeholders	PW-CEB (David Zakamdi)	UTB TP BSP (Léon Mebiame)	DGF (Béatrice Minanga)	IRAF (Protet Essono)
	Regional stakeholders	Groupe Vicwood Thanry (Niçaise Azo'o)	REPALEAC (Diwa Kapupu)	REPAR (Mathurin Essama)	FLAG (Cyrille Owada)
	Some members are from the "scientific and technological community".				
Assessors' comments	(none)				
Result	Does conform				

Requirement	6.4.2 The working group shall: (a) have balanced representation and decision-making by stakeholder categories, relevant to the subject matter and geographical scope of the standard, where no single concerned stakeholder group can dominate, nor be dominated in the process, and																									
Evidence	RAP-103-2020-1 "6. Composition of the Forum In terms of members, the chosen chamber and on the basis of the pre-selection made to date, the Forum is as follows: <table><tr><td></td><td>Industry</td><td>Social</td><td>Administration</td><td>Environment</td></tr><tr><td>Cameroon stakeholders</td><td>Pallisco (Cécile Ngoue)</td><td>CERAD (Patrice Bigombe / Francis Nkoumbele)</td><td>Director of Forestry (Anicet Ngomin)</td><td>WCS (Grâce Mbenda)</td></tr><tr><td>Congo stakeholders</td><td>CIB-OLAM (Vincent Istac)</td><td>PGDF (Sylvie Mfoutou)</td><td>DVRF (Paulette Ebina)</td><td>CAGDF (Alfred Nkodia)</td></tr><tr><td>Gabon stakeholders</td><td>PW-CEB (David Zakamdi)</td><td>UTB TP BSP (Léon Mebiame)</td><td>DGF (Béatrice Minanga)</td><td>IRAF (Protet Essono)</td></tr><tr><td>Regional stakeholders</td><td>Groupe Vicwood Thanry (Niçaise Azo'o)</td><td>REPALEAC (Diwa Kapupu)</td><td>REPAR (Mathurin Essama)</td><td>FLAG (Cyrille Owada)</td></tr></table> "		Industry	Social	Administration	Environment	Cameroon stakeholders	Pallisco (Cécile Ngoue)	CERAD (Patrice Bigombe / Francis Nkoumbele)	Director of Forestry (Anicet Ngomin)	WCS (Grâce Mbenda)	Congo stakeholders	CIB-OLAM (Vincent Istac)	PGDF (Sylvie Mfoutou)	DVRF (Paulette Ebina)	CAGDF (Alfred Nkodia)	Gabon stakeholders	PW-CEB (David Zakamdi)	UTB TP BSP (Léon Mebiame)	DGF (Béatrice Minanga)	IRAF (Protet Essono)	Regional stakeholders	Groupe Vicwood Thanry (Niçaise Azo'o)	REPALEAC (Diwa Kapupu)	REPAR (Mathurin Essama)	FLAG (Cyrille Owada)
	Industry	Social	Administration	Environment																						
Cameroon stakeholders	Pallisco (Cécile Ngoue)	CERAD (Patrice Bigombe / Francis Nkoumbele)	Director of Forestry (Anicet Ngomin)	WCS (Grâce Mbenda)																						
Congo stakeholders	CIB-OLAM (Vincent Istac)	PGDF (Sylvie Mfoutou)	DVRF (Paulette Ebina)	CAGDF (Alfred Nkodia)																						
Gabon stakeholders	PW-CEB (David Zakamdi)	UTB TP BSP (Léon Mebiame)	DGF (Béatrice Minanga)	IRAF (Protet Essono)																						
Regional stakeholders	Groupe Vicwood Thanry (Niçaise Azo'o)	REPALEAC (Diwa Kapupu)	REPAR (Mathurin Essama)	FLAG (Cyrille Owada)																						
Assessors' comments	Respondents to the stakeholder survey confirmed that the stakeholder representatives in the Forum represented the relevant regions from the Congo Basin (covered by the scheme). Several respondents to the stakeholder survey indicated that the indigenous peoples could have been better represented, as there were only two indigenous people's representative in the Forum (PGDF and REPALEAC).																									
Result	Does conform																									

Requirement	6.4.5 The decision of the working group to recommend the final draft for formal approval shall be taken on the basis of consensus. In order to determine whether there is any sustained opposition, the working group can utilise the following methods: (b) telephone conference meeting(s) where there is a verbal yes/no vote,
Evidence	Minutes of the last Forum meeting held on 26 and 27 October 2020 (translated with Google Translate) "From October 26 to 27, 2020, the final validation workshop of the PAFC Congo Basin forest management certification standard was held by videoconference (...)"



	<p>CONDUCT OF WORK</p> <p>The exchanges and debates during the first phase of the work focused on: Review and validation of the PAFC Congo Basin certification standard</p> <p>After a reminder from Pauline DEBERES of TEREa on the requirements previously validated after the second public consultation, the first phase of the workshop's work began.</p> <p>This first phase of work focused on the review and validation of the requirements of the forest management certification standard by Forum members on a consensus basis. (...) At the end of the discussions on the requirements and appendices indicated above, the forest certification standard PAFC BC was validated by consensus of the members of the Forum.”</p>
Assessors' comments	Respondents to the stakeholder survey who were part of the Forum, confirmed that the decision of the Forum to recommend the final draft for formal approval was taken on the basis of consensus.
Result	Does conform

Requirement	6.4.6 Where a vote is used in decision-making, the standard-setting procedures shall determine and include decision-making thresholds that quantifies consensus. The threshold must be consistent with the consensus definition (refer to 3.1). However, a majority vote cannot override sustained opposition in order to achieve consensus.
Evidence	<p>RAP-101-2020-1 (translated with Google Translate)</p> <p>“2.3. Discussion and validation of the “Sustainable forest management” standard</p> <p>(...) in order to adopt an indicator, the Forum president had to ensure that there was no sustained opposition. (...) At the end of the workshop, only one requirement was not agreed upon. It was decided to postpone the vote on this requirement until later when more time has been devoted to reflection on this new subject in certification.</p> <p>3. CONCLUSION</p> <p>In conclusion, the certification standard for sustainable forest management could not be adopted because there was sustained opposition to indicator 7.3.2 (...) The arguments put forward are relevant and this indicator was left for public consultation. The Forum expressed a reservation on the feasibility or the “achievable” nature of this indicator. It therefore deferred its adoption pending comments from the two public consultations provided for by the PAFC Congo Basin standards development process.”</p>
Assessors' comments	The minutes of the first Forum meeting (RAP-101-2020-1) provide an example how sustained opposition did not override any vote. Appendix 10a presents the draft standard ready for public consultation, signed by all (but one) Forum members.
Result	Does conform



Requirement	6.5.1 The standardising body shall organise public consultation on the enquiry draft and shall ensure that: (f) all feedback is considered by the working group in an objective manner,
Evidence	E-mail 3 from ATIBT to Forum members, March 2020 “Following our telephone exchanges in relation to the validation or not (sustained objection / non-objection) of the proposals for modifications to the forest management standard induced by the comments received from PC1, I ask you to find in attachments: - an Excel file with the responses to the comments of the PPs and the proposed modifications with the name "SGFD with response prop" (...)We strongly suggest that you read these documents before the skype meeting because this meeting will be an opportunity, as we have agreed, to focus on the proposed modifications inspired by CP1 so that each member of the Forum decides for the validation or the opposition to each modification.”
Assessors' comments	Respondents to the stakeholder survey that were members of the Forum, confirmed that comments received from other stakeholders were considered in an objective manner by the Forum.
Result	Does conform

Requirement	7.1 The standardising body shall approve the standard(s)/normative document(s) formally when there is evidence of consensus among the working group.
Evidence	E-mail from ATIBT Board of Directors to Coordinator of standard-setting process, 21 December 2020 “The standard development process is completed in the field with the validation of the forest management standard on 27 October 2020 by the regional working group in charge of its development during the Forum. (...) the procedure for drawing up the forest management standard provides that the standardisation body, ATIBT in this case, through its Board of Directors (BoD), approves this standard validated by the regional working group (...) Thus, the Board was called to a meeting on December 18, 2020, and one of the items on the agenda was to decide on the PAFC BC forest management certification standard. The following documents were sent to all directors on 30 November 2020: <input type="checkbox"/> The main document : PAFC-BC_NORM-001-2019-SFM_Standard_VF_ENG (...) <input type="checkbox"/> The minutes of the final workshop, which constitute the proof of consensus: Atelierfinal_CR Forum PAFC-BC_26-27-oct-2020_VF (...) The Board reviewed the above documents, and voted favourably on the approval of this standard.”
Assessors' comments	(none)
Result	Does conform



7. Forest Management Standard

This chapter presents the findings of the assessment of the Sustainable Forest Management Standard. In total twelve (12) nonconformities are found, which are all classified as minor. Corrective action requests are formulated for each of the nonconformities raised. The PEFC Checklist related to the Sustainable Forest Management Standard can be found in Annex 1 part III, which presents all the conformities, nonconformities and related references.

7.1. Analysis

The Sustainable Forest Management Certification requirements are stipulated in NORM-001-2019-1 Sustainable forest management - Requirements. The standard does not differentiate the application for natural and plantation forests, therefore all requirements also apply for forest plantations.. The standard is structured in different chapters, containing the specific forest management requirements. The chapters contain the following subjects:

1. Scope
2. Normative references
3. Terms and definitions
4. Management system
5. Compliance with legislation and ratified international conventions
6. Sustainable forestry activities
7. Minimising impacts on biodiversity and protective functions of forests
8. Improvement of living conditions of affected local communities and indigenous people
9. Decent work and living conditions
10. Bibliography

Three annexes are added to the standard:

- Annex 1 provides directives relating to the sustainable forest management system
- Annex 2 provides operational guidelines
- Annex 3 provides explanation on which PEFC requirements are not included in the standard and why

Exclusion of PEFC benchmark requirements

Annex 3 further explains that “an analysis of PEFC requirements demonstrated that some requirements were not adapted to the context, risks and level of knowledge available in the Congo Basin. A table is provided with benchmark requirements for which are either entirely or partly excluded from the standard. Concise justification is provided. The PEFC benchmark standard does not allow for such exclusions, and including such an overview in an Annex to a standard is not acceptable. This is evaluated as a minor nonconformity.



It shall be noted that certain requirement might not be relevant in the context of Congo Basin, this shall however be extensively justified and very clear to all readers. For several requirements, the Assessor (already) evaluated the requirement as “not applicable” based on expert knowledge and experience of the Assessor with the forest situation in Congo Basin. Further justification of the Scheme is however required for each case.

Forest definition

The standard includes a quite broad definition for forests which seems to be based on the FAO FRA 2020 forest definition: “In the absence of a national definition, land occupying an area of over 0.5 hectares with trees reaching a height of over 5 metres and a forest cover⁴ of over 10%, or with trees capable of reaching these thresholds in situ. Land for predominantly agricultural or urban use is excluded.” In the Congo Basin context this might also include savannah vegetation, or maybe agroforestry systems. As no further explanation is provided on the definition, there might be quite some grey areas. This does not match the intent of the standard (which is written for densely forested areas, for which a much higher canopy cover requirement would be expected), and likely does not correspond with forest definitions used in applicable forest legislation. Due to this mismatch, this is evaluated as a minor nonconformity.

Observations and additional nonconformities

In general, NORM-001-2019-1 is clearly structured and auditable. Five observations⁵ are made:

1. A list of acronyms is missing;
2. The wording in clauses 6.1.3, 7.1.1, and 7.1.2 is aiming at maintaining and not at enhancing or increasing forests and their ecosystem services and values, such as in the situation of degraded forests (req. 8.1.1);
3. The wording “damaged, non-regenerable proven forests” in clause 7.3.8 is a bit vague, as it is expected it should read as “proven damaged and proven non-regenerable forests” (req. 8.1.6h).;
4. It is assumed that the word “parks” in clause 6.3.5 are locations to stack logs (log ponds);
5. The reference to afforestation in clause 7.2.13 is strange, as the clause already refers to forest land (though in a degraded state), where afforestation is not applicable.

In addition to the two nonconformities raised above, ten (10) non-conformities were identified, which are all classified as minor.

7.2. Results: Nonconformities

⁴ The reference to *forest cover* does not seem to be correct. This should likely be *canopy cover*.

⁵ Observations are weaknesses found in the Scheme, which are not considered to be a nonconformity.



The nonconformities found in the Forest Management Standard are presented in the tables below.

Requirement	4.1 General The requirements for sustainable forest management defined by regional, national or sub-national forest management standards shall: i) include an overview of applicable legislation, if requirements of this benchmark are not reflected in the regional, national or sub-national standard, because they are already addressed through the legislation.
Evidence	(None)
Assessors' comments	No such overview is found, whereas part of the evidence for conformity is based on references to legislation, which is at least applicable for requirements 6.2.1a, 6.2.1b, 6.3.4.3, and 8.3.4 (further justification of sustainable yields).
Result	Does not conform – minor
CAR	Provide evidence to show conformity or update the standard

Requirement	6.2.1 The standard requires that management plans shall be: b) appropriate to the size and use of the forest area;
Evidence	Explanation provided by ATIBT (translated with Google translate) "Cameroon: art 29 law 1994 Congo: Art 75 law of 2020 Gabon: Art 20 and 21 law 16-2001"
Assessors' comments	It is insufficiently ensured that the management document shall be appropriate to size and use of the forest area, as no reference is found in the standard, and the references to national legislation could not be assessed as they were not provided.
Result	Does not conform – minor
CAR	Provide evidence to show conformity or update the standard

Requirement	6.3.4.3 The standard requires that wages of local and migrant forest workers as well as of contractors and other operators operating in PEFC-certified areas shall meet or exceed at least legal, industry minimum standards or, where applicable, collective bargaining agreements. Note: Where wages are below the living wage of a country, steps should be taken to attain increased wages towards a living wage level over time in addition to increases for inflation.
Evidence	NORM-001-2019-1 "9.1.2 The organisation must - at the very least - comply with legal and regulatory requirements, including those of collective agreements where applicable and the ILO's fundamental conventions on working conditions." Explanation provided by ATIBT (partly translated with Google translate) "No official agreed references exist regarding living wages internationally. in the global living wage website, there is no references concerning



	<p>Gabon and Congo. For Cameroun that website mentioned an amount around 105 000Fcfa (three times above the minimum wage defined in the country). (...) As no reference exists it is difficult to set a value for living wages.</p> <p>Gabon: Decree n ° 855 / PR / MTE of November 9, 2006, fixing the guaranteed minimum inter-professional wage: 80,000 CFA francs / month</p> <p>Decree n ° 127 / PR / MTEPS of 23 April 2010 fixing the minimum monthly income in the Republic of Gabon - 150,000 CFA francs / month</p> <p>Congo: Decree n ° 2008-942 of 12/31/2008 fixing the amount of the guaranteed minimum interprofessional wage: 50,400 CFA francs / month</p> <p>Cameroon: Decree n ° 2014/2217 of 07/24/2014 revalorizing the guaranteed minimum interprofessional wage: 36,270 CFA francs / month"</p>
Assessors' comments	No provisions are found that where wages are below the living wage of a country (such as in Cameroon), steps are taken to increase wages towards a living wage level over time.
Result	Does not conform – minor
CAR	Provide evidence to show conformity or update the standard

Requirement	<p>8.1.4 The standard requires that forest conversion shall not occur unless in justified circumstances where the conversion:</p> <p>a) is in compliance with national and regional policy and legislation applicable for land use and forest management and is a result of national or regional land-use planning governed by a governmental or other official authority including consultation with affected stakeholders; and</p>
Evidence	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>"7.3.6 In the event of a forest conversion within the FMU, (...) The conversion must also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comply with national land use and forest management policies and regulations and comply with the management plan; <p>Note: plantations established as a result of a forest conversion after 31 December 2010 are not eligible for certification."</p> <p>Explanation provided by ATIBT</p> <p>"The destination of the land in the countries covered by the standard (logging, conversion, plantation, etc.) is a government choice. If the choice of conversion is made, stakeholders have no opportunity to give their opinions."</p>
Assessors' comments	It is insufficiently ensured that the land use policies include consultation with affected stakeholders. It shall be noted that when national / regional policy and legislation does not include requirements for consultation with affected stakeholders, the organisation shall include consultation with affected stakeholders. This could for instance apply in the case of road constructions, labour camps, log landings.
Result	Does not conform – minor
CAR	Provide evidence to show conformity or update the standard



Requirement	8.1.4 The standard requires that forest conversion shall not occur unless in justified circumstances where the conversion: c) does not have negative impacts on ecologically important forest areas, culturally and socially significant areas, or other protected areas; and
Evidence	NORM-001-2019-1 “7.3.6 In the event of a forest conversion within the FMU, (...) The conversion must also: - Contribute to enhance ecologically, socially or culturally important forest areas and/or other protected areas on the long term”
Assessors' comments	It is insufficiently ensured that conversion shall not have negative impacts on the specific areas, the more as the wording “or” in the clause leaves the option open to have a contribution to the one function, while having negative impact on the other.
Result	Does not conform – minor
CAR	Provide evidence to show conformity or update the standard

Requirement	8.1.4 The standard requires that forest conversion shall not occur unless in justified circumstances where the conversion: e) makes a contribution to long-term conservation, economic, and social benefits.
Evidence	NORM-001-2019-1 “7.3.6 In the event of a forest conversion within the FMU, (...) The conversion must also: - Contribute to enhance ecologically, socially or culturally important forest areas and/or other protected areas on the long term; - Contribute to the long term preservation of socio-economic benefits.”
Assessors' comments	It is insufficiently ensured that the conversion will contribute to conservation, as: - The wording “or” and “and/or” in the first clause does insufficiently ensure a contribution to conservation. For instance, it allows for contribution to socially important forest areas only. - The second clause only refers to the preservation of socio-economic benefits.
Result	Does not conform – minor
CAR	Provide evidence to show conformity or update the standard

Requirement	8.1.5 The standard requires that afforestation of ecologically important non-forest ecosystems shall not occur unless in justified circumstances where the conversion: c) does not have negative impacts on threatened (including vulnerable, rare or endangered) nonforest ecosystems, culturally and socially significant areas, important habitats of threatened species or other protected areas; and
Evidence	NORM-001-2019-1 “7.3.7 In the case of forest plantations established on non-forest ecosystems, (...) Plantations must:



	- Make a positive contribution to threatened (vulnerable, rare, endangered) non-forest ecosystems, areas of important social and cultural interest, significant habitats of threatened species and/or other protected areas;"
Assessors' comments	It is insufficiently ensured that conversion shall not have negative impacts on the specific areas, the more as the wording "or" in the clause leaves the option open to have a positive contribution to one forest type, while having negative impact on the other.
Result	Does not conform – minor
CAR	Provide evidence to show conformity or update the standard

Requirement	8.1.5 The standard requires that afforestation of ecologically important non-forest ecosystems shall not occur unless in justified circumstances where the conversion: f) makes a contribution to long-term conservation, economic, and social benefits.
Evidence	NORM-001-2019-1 "7.3.7 In the case of forest plantations established on non-forest ecosystems, (...) Plantations must: - Make a positive contribution to threatened (vulnerable, rare, endangered) non-forest ecosystems, areas of important social and cultural interest, significant habitats of threatened species and/or other protected areas; - Contribute to the preservation of socio-economic benefits over the long term."
Assessors' comments	It is insufficiently ensured that the conversion will contribute to conservation, as: - The wording "and/or" in the first clause does insufficiently ensure a contribution to conservation. For instance, it allows for contribution to socially important forest areas only. - The second clause only refers to the preservation of socio-economic benefits.
Result	Does not conform – minor
CAR	Provide evidence to show conformity or update the standard

Requirement	8.2.6 The standard requires that integrated pest management, appropriate silviculture alternatives and other biological measures shall be preferred to minimise the use of pesticides.
Evidence	NORM-001-2019-1 "7.2.13 In the case of a degraded forest, the organisation must take measures to maintain or improve the stability of the forest by - encouraging afforestation, reforestation and other planting activities. - promoting pest control operations, silvicultural alternatives and biological measures to minimise the use of pesticides"
Assessors' comments	For relatively intact natural forests in the Congo Basin, the pest management could be considered an integral part of the functioning ecosystem. However, this is not ensured for planted forests on non-forest



	land, as clause 7.2.13 specifically relates to afforestation / reforestation of degraded forest. It is not ensured that integrated pest management, appropriate silviculture alternatives and other biological measures shall be preferred in planted forests.
Result	Does not conform – minor
CAR	Provide evidence to show conformity or update the standard

Requirement	8.4.1 The standard requires that management planning shall aim to maintain, conserve or enhance biodiversity on landscape, ecosystem, species and genetic levels.
Evidence	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>“6.1.x Management planning shall aim to maintain, conserve or enhance diversity and biodiversity on landscape, ecosystem, species.</p> <p>Annex 3: PEFC requirements not included in the PAFC Congo Basin sustainable forest management standard</p> <p>An analysis of PEFC requirements demonstrated that some requirements were not adapted to the context, risks and level of knowledge available in the Congo Basin. The justifications are detailed below.</p> <p>Requirements partially excluded from the standard</p> <p>8.4.1 (...) All of the requirements related to the taking into account of species/population genetics are impossible to monitor in the Congo Basin given the current state of knowledge on the subject.”</p>
Assessors' comments	It is insufficiently ensured that forest management planning shall aim to maintain, conserve or enhance biodiversity on genetic levels.
Result	Does not conform – minor
CAR	Provide evidence to show conformity or update the standard

7.3. Results: Selection of Conformities

In the tables below, a selection of conformities is presented that are considered sensitive issues in the context of Congo Basin and/or illustrative examples of the Forest Management Standard.

Requirement	6.2.8 The standard requires that 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.
Evidence	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>“6.1.4 A public summary of the long term management document (...) must be developed. Confidential information (which is commercial, personal or legally confidential in nature, or aimed at the protection of sensitive cultural sites or natural sites) may be excluded from this summary.”</p>
Assessors' comments	None
Result	Does conform



Requirement	<p>6.3.2.1 The standard requires that 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, recognised and respected.</p> <p>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.</p>
Evidence	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>“5.1.2 The organisation must identify and document the land ownership situation within the FMU, taking into account possible titles of ownership as well as the customary rights of indigenous peoples and local communities within the FMU recognised by applicable national laws and regulations.</p> <p>8.1.7 Trees whose harvest would compete with the use made by indigenous peoples and local communities for a product other than lumber must be identified, mapped and materialised at the appropriate scale in cooperation with them, and prior to any harvesting activity. They may only be harvested with the consent of the affected indigenous peoples and local communities prior to harvesting.”</p>
Assessors' comments	None
Result	Does conform

Requirement	<p>6.3.2.2 The standard requires 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. 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.</p>
Evidence	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>“5.1.2 The organisation must identify and document the land ownership situation within the FMU, taking into account possible titles of ownership as well as the customary rights of indigenous peoples and local communities within the FMU recognised by applicable national laws and regulations.</p> <p>8.1.3 The provisions of the forest management documents relating to the exercise of usage rights and/or the series dedicated to the activities of indigenous peoples and local communities must be complied with.</p> <p>8.1.4 The organisation must develop a procedure and implement an ongoing FPIC process to ensure that it conducts the full activities for which it is responsible (related operations and works, road openings,</p>



	<p>installations of living bases and industrial sites, etc.) in accordance with the customary rights of the affected indigenous peoples and local communities, including those defined in legal and regulatory texts, in ILO convention 169 and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. This procedure can include a collective compensatory system.</p> <p>Annexe 1</p> <p>Grievance, complaint and conflict management process (requirement 4.1.8)</p> <p>These processes must cover grievances, complaints and conflicts relating to (...) legal usage rights (...) and take into account any applicable national legal and regulatory requirements. (...) In the case of damage to the legal rights, property, resources and livelihoods of local people, a just and fair resolution must be found - according to the applicable regulations - and in the meantime, interim solutions must be worked out with the affected stakeholders.”</p>
Assessors' comments	None
Result	Does conform

Requirement	<p>6.3.3.1 The standard requires that forest practices and operations shall comply with fundamental ILO conventions.</p> <p>Note: In countries where the fundamental ILO conventions have been ratified, the requirements of 6.3.3.1 apply. In countries where a fundamental convention has not been ratified and its content is not covered by applicable legislation, specific requirements shall be included in the forest management standard.</p>
Evidence	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>“9.1. The working conditions of workers and subcontracted workers comply with the applicable laws and regulations and the requirements of the ILO's basic conventions.”</p>
Assessors' comments	It shall be noted that Cameroon, Congo and Gabon ratified all fundamental ILO conventions.
Result	Does conform

Requirement	<p>6.3.4.1 The standard requires that forest operations shall be planned, organised 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.</p>
Evidence	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>“9.2.1 The organisation must identify its workers' health and safety needs and expectations.</p> <p>9.2.2 The risks of occupational illnesses and accidents, as well as the best occupational health and safety practices and equipment that minimise these risks, must be identified for all workstations.</p>



	9.2.3 The organisation's workers and subcontracted workers must be informed and regularly kept up to date on the sustainable management measures referred to in this standard that are directly relevant to them in their activity(ies), in particular the risks related to the performance of their task(s) and on the appropriate preventive measures in terms of Occupational Health and Safety."
Assessors' comments	None
Result	Does conform

Requirement	8.1.2 The standard requires that 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 minimise adverse impacts on forest resources.
Evidence	NORM-001-2019-1 "7.3.3 The forest's ability to store and isolate carbon in the medium to long term must be safeguarded by balancing harvest rates with growth, using appropriate management measures and reduced impact logging measures."
Assessors' comments	None
Result	Does conform

Requirement	8.1.6 The standard requires that if conversion of severely degraded forests to forest plantations is being considered, it must add economic, ecological, social and/or cultural value. Precondition of adding such value are circumstances where the conversion: g) has a land history providing evidence that the degradation is not the consequence of deliberate poor forest management practices;
Evidence	NORM-001-2019-1 "7.3.8 (...) Plantations resulting from the conversion of damaged forests, whose state of damage is the result of deliberately poor management, for the purpose of conversion, are not eligible for certification.
Assessors' comments	None
Result	Does conform

Requirement	8.2.8 The standard requires that the WHO Class 1A and 1B pesticides and other highly toxic pesticides shall be prohibited, except where no other viable alternative is available. Any exception to the usage of WHO Class 1A and 1B pesticides shall be defined in the national/regional standard.
Evidence	NORM-001-2019-1 "Annex 2 Use of chemical products (requirement 7.2.3) The organisation must prohibit the use of Type 1A and 1B (WHO classification) pesticides and other highly toxic pesticides identified in



	legal and regulatory texts, unless no viable alternatives are available. In the event of force majeure, and in the absence of any other technical alternative and on the basis of a detailed justification, these products may be used after the Certification Body has been informed.”
Assessors' comments	None
Result	Does conform

Requirement	8.3.4 The standard requires that 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.
Evidence	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>“6. The organisation conducts its forestry activities in a sustainable manner within the FMU.</p> <p>6.1. Logging operations are planned in a sustainable manner in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.</p> <p>6.1.2 If the applicable national legislation and regulations allow it and if the organisation makes or contributes to a commercial use of NTFPs (including fishing and hunting products), the organisation shall establish and adhere to provisions regarding their harvest, ensuring the long-term maintenance of production, established in consultation with affected indigenous peoples and local communities.</p> <p>6.1.3 The organisation must ensure that its forest management maintains a harvestable volume of lumber and a species distribution that will sustain economic activity beyond the rotation.</p> <p>6.3. The logging activities ensure of the sustainable production of the forest products that are harvested.</p> <p>6.3.1 The provisions of the management documents relating to the production series enabling the long-term preservation of exploitable forest resources must be complied with, in particular the list of managed species, minimum diameter cutting limits and the cutting sequence.</p> <p>6.3.2 The organisation must optimise the use of the products it harvests.”</p>
Assessors' comments	None
Result	Does conform

Requirement	8.4.8 The standard requires that 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.
Evidence	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>“Annex 3: PEFC requirements not included in the PAFC Congo Basin sustainable forest management standard</p> <p>An analysis of PEFC requirements demonstrated that some requirements were not adapted to the context, risks and level of knowledge available in the Congo Basin. The justifications are detailed below.</p> <p>Requirements partially excluded from the standard</p>



	8.4.8 (...) The vast majority of the forests that could be PAFC-certified and those where sustainable harvesting practices are used are natural tropical forests in which issues of genetics, horizontal/vertical structures, dead wood, etc. are not relevant yet..”
Assessors' comments	It is concluded that the natural forests of the Congo Basin already contain high diversity in structures and species, which also applies to set aside areas in forest plantations, which makes the requirement redundant for the Congo Basin forests.
Result	Not applicable

Requirement	8.4.9 The standard requires that traditional management practices that create valuable ecosystems on appropriate sites shall be supported, where appropriate.
Evidence	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>“Annex 3: PEFC requirements not included in the PAFC Congo Basin sustainable forest management standard</p> <p>An analysis of PEFC requirements demonstrated that some requirements were not adapted to the context, risks and level of knowledge available in the Congo Basin. The justifications are detailed below.</p> <p>Requirements entirely excluded from this standard</p> <p>8.4.8 (...) These types of valuable ecosystems do not appear to be present in the Forest Management Units covered by the PAFC Congo Basin standard”</p>
Assessors' comments	It is concluded that the absence of such management practices makes the requirement redundant for the Congo Basin forests.
Result	Not applicable

Requirement	8.4.12 The standard requires that, 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.
Evidence	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>“Annex 3: PEFC requirements not included in the PAFC Congo Basin sustainable forest management standard</p> <p>An analysis of PEFC requirements demonstrated that some requirements were not adapted to the context, risks and level of knowledge available in the Congo Basin. The justifications are detailed below.</p> <p>Requirements entirely excluded from this standard</p> <p>8.4.12 (...) The vast majority of the forests that could be PAFC-certified and those where sustainable harvesting practices are used are natural tropical forests in which issues of genetics, horizontal/vertical structures, dead wood, etc. have not yet been addressed. The same is true of (...) the pressure of animal populations on the forest's growth and regeneration.”</p>
Assessors' comments	It is concluded that in natural forests in the Congo Basin, pressure of animal populations on forest regeneration and biodiversity is not an issue, due to the high complexity and diversity of the forest ecosystems present.
Result	Not applicable



Requirement	8.4.13 The standard requires that 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.
Evidence	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>“Annex 3: PEFC requirements not included in the PAFC Congo Basin sustainable forest management standard</p> <p>An analysis of PEFC requirements demonstrated that some requirements were not adapted to the context, risks and level of knowledge available in the Congo Basin. The justifications are detailed below.</p> <p>Requirements entirely excluded from this standard</p> <p>8.4.13 (...) The vast majority of the forests that could be PAFC-certified and those where sustainable harvesting practices are used are natural tropical forests in which issues of genetics, horizontal/vertical structures, dead wood, etc. have not yet been addressed.”</p>
Assessors' comments	It is concluded that the natural state of forests in the Congo Basin already sufficiently provide for standing and fallen dead wood, hollow trees, old groves and rare tree species.
Result	Not applicable

Requirement	8.5.3 The standard requires that special care shall be given to forestry operations on sensitive soils and erosion-prone areas as well as in areas where operations might lead to excessive erosion of soil into watercourses. Techniques applied and the machinery used shall be suitable for such areas. Special measures shall be taken to minimise the pressure of animal populations on these areas.
Evidence	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>“7.1.5 Specific measures must be established and implemented in order to minimise damage to soil and watercourses within the FMU, in accordance with applicable laws and regulations and according to the relevant guidelines listed in annex 2.</p> <p>Annex 2:</p> <p>Measures to minimise damage to soil and watercourses within the FMU (requirement 7.1.5)</p> <p>The measures referred to here are reduced impact logging measures that minimise negative impacts on erosion-prone areas, sensitive soils, and the quality and quantity of water resources so as to not significantly affect the water balance and downstream water quality.</p> <p>The measures referred to in indicator 7.1.5 include, at a minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ the construction and maintenance of infrastructures (e.g. installation and regular maintenance of drainage systems), ✓ operating rules on the banks of watercourses and on steep slopes, ✓ the use of adapted logging techniques and equipment (use of appropriate heavy equipment, "high shovel" skidding, etc.). <p>Balance must be sought between the implementation of these techniques and the efficient conduct of logging operations.”</p>



Assessors' comments	None
Result	Does conform

Requirement	8.6.2 The standard requires that 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.
Evidence	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>“Annex 3: PEFC requirements not included in the PAFC Congo Basin sustainable forest management standard</p> <p>An analysis of PEFC requirements demonstrated that some requirements were not adapted to the context, risks and level of knowledge available in the Congo Basin. The justifications are detailed below.</p> <p>Requirements entirely excluded from this standard</p> <p>8.6.2 (...) The vast majority of the forests that could be PAFC-certified and those where sustainable harvesting practices are used are natural tropical forests in which issues of genetics, horizontal/vertical structures, dead wood, etc. are not relevant yet. The same is true of public access, the recreational functions of the forests”</p>
Assessors' comments	In the Congo Basin, forest do not have a recreational function for society. The requirement is therefore considered not applicable.
Result	Not applicable

Requirement	9.1.3 The standard requires that 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.
Evidence	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>“6.1.2 If the applicable national legislation and regulations allow it and if the organisation makes or contributes to a commercial use of NTFPs (including fishing and hunting products), the organisation shall establish and adhere to provisions regarding their harvest, ensuring the long-term maintenance of production, established in consultation with affected indigenous peoples and local communities.</p> <p>7.2.7 The organisation must develop and implement a wildlife and hunting management plan aimed at reducing the direct and indirect impacts of the organisation's activities on the animal populations present in the FMU, in accordance with the applicable laws and regulations, and according to the relevant guidelines listed in annex 2.</p> <p>Annexe 1</p> <p>The monitoring, measurement, analysis and evaluation system (requirement 4.3.1)</p> <p>The SFMS monitoring, measurement, analysis and evaluation system must include, at a minimum:</p>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • monitoring of NTFP collections if the activity is carried out under the conditions of 6.1.2. <p>Annex 2</p> <p>The wildlife and hunting management plan (requirement 7.2.7)</p> <p>The purpose of the wildlife and hunting management plan is to oversee, monitor and control hunting activities within the organization's FMU.</p> <p>The wildlife and hunting management plan must identify and map the usage and customary rights of local communities and indigenous peoples as well as areas where hunting activity is subject to regulatory restrictions (hunting reserves, national park buffer zones, etc.). Where legislation and/or regulations permit, areas where hunting is permitted to workers and/or their beneficiaries must be defined.”</p>
Assessors' comments	None
Result	Does conform

Requirement	9.1.4 The standard requires that working conditions shall be regularly monitored and adapted as necessary.
Evidence	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>“4.3.1 The organisation must establish and implement a mechanism for the internal monitoring, measurement, analysis and evaluation of the sustainable forest management system that is adapted to the scale, intensity and risks of the activities, according to the relevant guidelines listed in annex 1.</p> <p>Annexe 1</p> <p>The monitoring, measurement, analysis and evaluation system (requirement 4.3.1)</p> <p>The SFMS monitoring, measurement, analysis and evaluation system must include, at a minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • monitoring of the quality of life and work of workers and their beneficiaries, in particular based on a register of work accidents and evacuations carried out, making it possible to adapt working conditions if necessary;”
Assessors' comments	None
Result	Does conform



8. Chain of Custody

The Description of the PAFC Congo Basin forest certification system (DOC-001-2020-1) provides further explanation on systems documentation. Clause 4.4.2 defines the applicable chain of custody standard:

“The chain of custody requirements are the PEFC Council's requirements: PEFC ST 2002-2020. A translation of these requirements has been done by PEFC France and is the one used by PAFC but the reference in the event of a dispute remains the English language version of these requirements (PEFC Council document).”

The Chain of Custody Standard of the PAFC Congo Basin does therefore comply with the PEFC Council requirements, no further assessment was carried out.



9. Certification and Accreditation Procedures

This chapter presents the findings of the assessment of the Certification and Accreditation Procedures. No nonconformities are found. The PEFC Checklist related to the Certification and Accreditation Procedures can be found in Annex 1 part IV, which presents all conformities and related references.

9.1. Analysis

The requirements for accreditation and certification are regulated in:

- NORM-002-2020-1 Requirements for bodies carrying out PAFC sustainable forest management audits and certification
- PROC-003-2020-1 Notification of certification bodies for sustainable forest management systems
- PROC-004-2020-1 Notification of chain of custody certification bodies

PROC-003-2020-1 also sets out requirements for Certification and Accreditation procedures, including:

“The requirements for these bodies and their accreditation are specified in the PEFC Council document entitled "Requirements for certification bodies carrying out certification according to the PEFC international chain of custody standard" PEFC ST 2003:2020.”

And:

“4. Terms of the notification by PAFC COUNTRY

The certification body requesting the notification issued by PAFC COUNTRY must:

- hold a valid accreditation for PEFC – ST 2002:2020 chain of custody certification, issued by an accreditation body that has signed the Multilateral Recognition Arrangement for the certification of products of the International Accreditation Forum (IAF). Note: Accreditation must be issued in accordance with ISO/IEC 17065 requirements (current version) for bodies certifying products, processes and services, and also be in accordance with the Requirements for Certification Bodies operating Certification against the PEFC International Chain of Custody Standard (PEFC ST 2003:2020).”

This sufficiently ensures that the requirements of PEFC ST 2003:2020 are met by the PAFC Congo Basin.

The following steering documents are included as references for requirements for certification organizations:

- ISO/IEC 17011 (Requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies)
- ISO/IEC 17021-1 (Requirements for certification bodies providing forest management certification)



- ISO/IEC 17065 (Requirements for certification bodies providing chain of custody certification)
- ISO 19011 (Competence requirements for chain of custody certification auditors)

9.2. Results

The Certification and Accreditation Procedures comply with the PEFC requirements. No nonconformities are found.



10. Other aspects

This chapter presents other findings of the assessment of the Scheme. With regards to Scheme Administration Procedures, the following procedures were found:

- **Notification of Certification Procedures**

These procedures are elaborated in PROC-003-2020-1 Notification of certification bodies for sustainable forest management systems and PROC-004-2020-1 Notification of chain of custody certification bodies;

- **PEFC Logo Usage Licensing**

These procedures are elaborated in PROC-005-2020 Licensing of PEFC registered trademarks, where applicants for PEFC Trademarks shall comply with the PEFC requirements as stipulated in PEFC ST 2001:2020 PEFC Trademarks Rules – Requirements.

- **Complaints and Dispute Resolution Procedures**

These procedures are elaborated in PROC-002-2020-1 Handling of complaints and appeals.

It shall be noted that the conformity of these procedures with respectively chapter 5, 6 and 8 of PEFC GD 1004:2009 Administration of PEFC scheme is not further assessed in detail, in accordance with tender document for this assignment. Further assessment of these procedures is conducted by the Technical Unit of PEFC Council.



Annex 1 PEFC Checklists

The tables below present the PEFC Checklists, in which the following formatting is applied in the “reference” column:

- **Bold text** – Source of the quotation
- “Text between quotation marks” – Quotation from either standard, procedures, legislation, response from Applicant Scheme, minutes etc.
- *Italic text* – Comments made by the Assessor.

Part I: PEFC Checklist for Standard-setting Procedures and process

1 Scope

Part I covers the requirements for Standard-setting Procedures and process as defined in the revised 2017 issue of PEFC ST 1001, Standard-setting – Requirements.

Checklist

PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
Standardising Body			
5.1.1 The standardising body shall have written procedures for standard-setting activities describing:			
(a) its legal status and organisational structure, including a body responsible for consensus-building (working group, refer to 6.4) and procedures for formal adoption of the standard (refer to 7.1),	Procedures	YES	<p>PROC-001-2019-1</p> <p>“2. ATIBT's role in the development of the PAFC Congo Basin standards</p> <p>The International Tropical Timber Technical Association (ATIBT - Association Technique Internationale des Bois Tropicaux) is the standards body for the development of the PAFC Congo Basin standards on account of its reputation and experience in the field of sustainable and certified forest management for over 20 years in the various countries of the sub-region.</p> <p>2.1. ATIBT's legal status</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p>(...) ATIBT has registered its existence with the relevant Prefecture departments that oversee its head office.</p> <p>2.2. ATIBT's organisational structure</p> <p>The Association consists of several bodies (...):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ the General Assembly: consists of all Members of the Association or their representatives; it approves in particular the orientations of the activities that enable the Association to achieve its aims and objectives; ✓ the Board of Directors: the members of the Board are elected by the General Assembly, they handle the General Administration; ✓ the Executive Board: consists of five directors appointed by the Board of Directors; it is - on behalf of the Board of Directors - the Executive Secretariat's supervisory, orientation and advisory body; ✓ the Secretariat: the Association's executive entity; it consists of all of ATIBT's salaried staff. <p>The Board of Directors is designated as the body in charge of the formal approval of forest management (FM) and chain of custody (CoC) standards.</p> <p>3.1. Responsibilities of the PAFC Congo Basin Forum</p> <p>The PAFC Congo Basin Forum (or Forum) is the temporary consultative body responsible for developing (by consensus) PAFC Congo Basin forest management and chain of custody standards. It must recommend a final version of the standards, established by consensus, for approval by ATIBT."</p>
(b) procedures for keeping documented information,	Procedures	YES	<p>PROC-001-2019-1</p> <p>"8. Archiving of the documentation related to the development or revision process</p> <p>ATIBT is responsible for archiving documented information relating to the standards development and revision process. Proof of compliance with the requirements of this procedure and with ATIBT's internal requirements includes: (...)</p> <p>These documents are archived and retained until the next review or revision of the standards to which they refer, or otherwise for a minimum of 5 years after the publication of the standards."</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
(c) procedures for balanced representation of stakeholders,	Procedures	YES	<p>PROC-001-2019-1</p> <p>“3.2. How the Forum is set up</p> <p>The members of the Forum are divided into four categories of interest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interests of owners and the administration; • Interests of loggers and timber processors; • Interests linked to the preservation of nature; • Interests linked to the preservation of people's livelihoods and workers' living and working conditions. <p>The members of the Forum are selected from those stakeholders who have expressed interest and designated a representative. The composition of the Forum shall be done as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in a balanced manner: in order to achieve this balance, the number of members from the various categories of interest presented above will be equivalent (+ or - one person); • integrating stakeholders from each country covered by the PAFC Congo Basin standards and regional stakeholders; • integrating, as much as possible, at least one representative from each identified stakeholder group (see paragraph 4.1). If this is not possible, alternatives will be explored; • including at least 50% of stakeholders identified as key stakeholders. Their participation will be proactively sought. If this is not possible, alternatives will be explored; • including at least 40% of stakeholders identified as directly and materially affected by the implementation of the standards.”
(d) the standard-setting process,	Procedures	YES	<p>PROC-001-2019-1</p> <p>“4. The PAFC Congo Basin standards development process</p> <p>Table 1 – Presentation of the various steps and responsibilities in the PAFC Congo Basin standards development process”</p> <p><i>Table 1 describes all the steps of a standard-setting process.</i></p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
(e) the mechanism for reaching consensus, and	Procedures	YES	<p>PROC-001-2019-1</p> <p>“3.5.1. Voting rights</p> <p>Within the Forum, each represented member has the right to one vote (one represented member = one vote). Observers may be accepted in an advisory capacity, but may not - under any circumstances - take part in the vote, which is reserved for Forum members only.</p> <p>If a member is unable to attend a meeting, he or she may give a proxy to another member representing the same interest category to vote on his or her behalf. To do so, they must inform ATIBT in writing no later than 24 hours prior to the meeting; ATIBT will then make a statement at the meeting regarding the proxies that have been received.</p> <p>3.5.2. Dialogue – Reaching a consensus</p> <p>There are several opportunities for Forum members to express their views on a working document:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Either during a face-to-face meeting: the absence of opposition will then be established by an oral vote (yes/no), or a vote by show of hands, or by ballot ; • Or during a teleconference with a verbal vote (yes/no); • Or by email, when a request for agreement is made: members indicate their agreement or opposition in writing; • Or in a combination of the three previous processes. <p>In the case of face-to-face meetings or teleconferences, a quorum shall be considered as reached when a simple majority (50%) of the members of each Forum category is present or represented. If this is not the case, no consensus can be reached.</p> <p>In the case of face-to-face meetings or teleconferences, the Forum Chairperson shall judge whether a consensus has been reached in the absence of sustained opposition.</p> <p>In the case of email queries, ATIBT will formally report the results to the Chairperson. The latter will then be in a position to decide whether or not a consensus has been reached. Forum members will then be informed.</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			A document or the substantive elements of a document will be considered to be validated if there is no sustained opposition on a fundamental issue by any Forum members.”
(f) review and revision of standard(s)/normative document(s).	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1 “6 Periodic review of the standards 7. Revision of the standards” <i>Chapter 6 and 7 further elaborate on the review and revision of standards.</i>
5.1.2 The standardising body shall make its standard-setting procedures publicly available and shall review its standard-setting procedures regularly. The review shall consider feedback from stakeholders.	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1 “1. Purpose of the present procedure This procedure is publicly available on the ATIBT website. It is reviewed regularly, taking into account input from stakeholders.”
	Process	YES	<i>PROC-001-2019-1 could be found on the ATIBT website (atibt.org). As this is the initial development of the scheme, a review is not applicable.</i>
5.2.1 The standardising body shall keep documented information relevant to the standard-setting and review process. Evidence of compliance with the requirements of this standard and the standardising body’s own procedures includes:			
(a) Standard-setting procedures,	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1 “8. Archiving of the documentation related to the development or revision process ATIBT is responsible for archiving documented information relating to the standards development and revision process. Proof of compliance with the requirements of this procedure and with ATIBT's internal requirements includes: • The standards setting procedure;”
	Process	YES	<i>PROC-001-2019-1 was found in the tender dossier.</i>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
(b) Stakeholder identification mapping,	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1 “8. Archiving of the documentation related to the development or revision process Proof of compliance with the requirements of this procedure and with ATIBT's internal requirements includes: • The stakeholder identification document;”
	Process	YES	<i>A stakeholder map was found.</i>
(c) Contacted and/or invited stakeholders,	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1 “8. Archiving of the documentation related to the development or revision process Proof of compliance with the requirements of this procedure and with ATIBT's internal requirements includes: • Proof of the stakeholder invitations and communications with them;”
	Process	YES	<i>Examples of E-mails and invitations to stakeholder were found.</i>
(d) Stakeholders involved in standard-setting activities including participants in each working group meeting,	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1 “8. Archiving of the documentation related to the development or revision process Proof of compliance with the requirements of this procedure and with ATIBT's internal requirements includes: • The list of Forum members and meeting attendance lists;”
	Process	YES	<i>Examples of attendance lists of FORUM meetings were found.</i>
(e) Feedback received and a synopsis of how feedback was addressed,	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1 “8. Archiving of the documentation related to the development or revision process Proof of compliance with the requirements of this procedure and with ATIBT's internal requirements includes: • A document summarising the comments that were received and their handling;”
	Process	YES	<i>A document was found containing comments received and how the feedback was addressed.</i>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
(f) All drafts and final versions of the standard,	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1 “8. Archiving of the documentation related to the development or revision process Proof of compliance with the requirements of this procedure and with ATIBT's internal requirements includes: • All of the working versions of the standards and the final version submitted to ATIBT for approval;”
	Process	YES	<i>The various drafts and final version of the standard were found.</i>
(g) Outcomes from working group considerations,	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1 “8. Archiving of the documentation related to the development or revision process Proof of compliance with the requirements of this procedure and with ATIBT's internal requirements includes: • Minutes of the meetings or other steps in the process where the results of the Forum members' considerations were recorded;”
	Process	YES	<i>Report on the working group considerations and its outcomes were found.</i>
(h) Evidence of consensus on the final version of the standard(s),	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1 “8. Archiving of the documentation related to the development or revision process Proof of compliance with the requirements of this procedure and with ATIBT's internal requirements includes: • Proof that a consensus was reached regarding the final version of the standards;”
	Process	YES	<i>Minutes of the meeting and digital signature documents were found.</i>
(i) Evidence relating to the review process, and	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1 “8. Archiving of the documentation related to the development or revision process Proof of compliance with the requirements of this procedure and with ATIBT's internal requirements includes: • Other evidence related to the standards development or revision process.”
	Process	YES	<i>A development report was found as well as records, reports and overviews.</i>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
(j) Final approval by the standardising body.	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1 “8. Archiving of the documentation related to the development or revision process Proof of compliance with the requirements of this procedure and with ATIBT's internal requirements includes: • Proof of ATIBT's approval of the final version of the standards.”
	Process	YES	<i>Minutes of the meetings were found.</i>
5.2.2 Documented information shall be kept until completion of the next review or revision of the standard to which they refer. Otherwise the documented information must be kept for a minimum of five years after publication of the standard.	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1 “8. Archiving of the documentation related to the development or revision process These documents are archived and retained until the next review or revision of the standards to which they refer, or otherwise for a minimum of 5 years after the publication of the standards.”
	Process	N.A.	<i>Since this was the initial standard-setting process, the requirement could not be assessed yet.</i>
5.2.3 Documented information shall be available to interested parties upon request.	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1 “8. Archiving of the documentation related to the development or revision process Upon request, any natural person or legal entity may request a copy of these documents according to the progress made in the standards development process.”
	Process	YES	<i>The website of ATIBT (atibt.org) contains key documents on the process which are accessible.</i>
5.3.1 The standardising body shall establish procedure(s) for dealing with any substantial and process complaints and appeals relating to its standard-setting activities. It must make procedure(s) accessible to stakeholders. Upon receipt of a complaint or appeal, the standardising body shall:			
(a) acknowledge receipt of the complaint or	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
appeal to the complainant,			<p>“9. Handling of complaints and appeals relating to the development of the standards</p> <p>Complaints and appeals relating to standards development/revision activities must be dated, signed and addressed to ATIBT's Director by email (with acknowledgement of receipt) or via the website (if it is operational). They may relate to the content of the standards or the implementation of the standards development procedure as well as decisions that were made during the standards development process.</p> <p>Upon receipt of a complaint or an appeal, ATIBT will:</p> <p>(a) acknowledge receipt of the complainant/appeal to the complainant within two weeks;”</p>
	Process	N.A.	<p><i>According to ATIBT no formal complaint was received during the process. This is confirmed by respondents to the stakeholder survey. One respondent indicated there was a complaint and confirmed it was validated and objectively evaluated, but the respondent did not provide further explanation on the complaint, and it is unclear whether this was a formal complaint.</i></p>
(b) gather and verify all necessary information to validate the complaint or appeal, evaluate the subject matter of the complaint or appeal impartially and objectively, and make a decision regarding the complaint or appeal,	Procedures	YES	<p>PROC-001-2019-1</p> <p>“9. Handling of complaints and appeals relating to the development of the standards</p> <p>Upon receipt of a complaint or an appeal, ATIBT will:</p> <p>(b) gather and verify all information necessary to validate the complaint/appeal, impartially and objectively assess the purpose of the complaint/appeal, and make a decision regarding the complaint/appeal”</p> <p><i>Observation: the wording “assess the <u>purpose</u> of the complaint/appeal” can be confusing as it is multi-interpretable: it could either refer to 1) the subject matter or 2) the intent of the complaint/appeal.</i></p>
	Process	N.A.	<p><i>According to ATIBT no formal complaint was received during the process. This is confirmed by respondents to the stakeholder survey. One respondent indicated there was a complaint and confirmed it was validated and objectively evaluated, but the respondent did not provide further explanation on the complaint, and it is unclear whether this was a formal complaint.</i></p>
(c) formally communicate the decision on the complaint or appeal to	Procedures	YES	<p>PROC-001-2019-1</p> <p>“9. Handling of complaints and appeals relating to the development of the standards</p> <p>Upon receipt of a complaint or an appeal, ATIBT will:</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
the complainant and describe the handling process.			(c) formally communicate to the complainant the decision that was made regarding the complaint/appeal and the complaint/appeal handling process within 60 days after the acknowledgement of receipt.”
	Process	N.A.	<i>According to ATIBT no formal complaint was received during the process. This is confirmed by respondents to the stakeholder survey, although one respondent indicated there was a complaint and confirmed it was validated and objectively evaluated, but the respondent did not provide further explanation on the complaint, and it is unclear whether this was a formal complaint.</i>
5.3.2 The standardising body shall establish at least one contact point for enquiries, complaints and appeals relating to its standard-setting activities. The contact point shall be easy to access and readily available.	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1 “9. Handling of complaints and appeals relating to the development of the standards Complaints and appeals relating to standards development/revision activities must be dated, signed and addressed to ATIBT's Director by email (with acknowledgement of receipt) or via the website (if it is operational).”
	Process	YES	Contact page of PAFC Congo Basin website (pafc-certification.org) “To contact us, make a comment or express a complaint, please send an email to coordination@pafc-certification.org mentioning the following: Your Name and Surname Your postal address Your email Your phone number The subject of your message The recipient of your message (PAFC Congo Basin, PAFC Gabon, PAFC Cameroon or PAFC Congo) The text of your message We thank you in advance for your participation.” <i>Observation: Based on PROC-001-2019-1 it would be expected that the E-mail address of ATIBT's Director would be provided, instead the E-mail address of the project coordination is given.</i>
Standard-setting process			



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
6.1.1 For the creation of a new standard, the standardising body shall develop a proposal including:			
(a) the scope of the standard,	Procedures	YES	<p>PROC-001-2019-1</p> <p>“4.1. Preliminary steps</p> <p>In order to prepare the public announcement of the launch of the process, three key documents have been developed:</p> <p>✓ The project document, which describes the scope of the standards”</p>
	Process	YES	<p>DOC-102-2019-1</p> <p>“1. SCOPE OF THE STANDARDS</p> <p>The PAFC Congo Basin standards will be part of a management system and will specify requirements in terms of forest management, chains of custody and group certification in the Congo Basin. They will serve as a reference point for forest certification audits in the context of the PAFC Congo Basin scheme.</p> <p>These standards are intended to be applicable to forest management and logging operations in forest concessions titles in the Congo Basin countries of Cameroon, the Republic of Congo, Gabon, the Central African Republic (CAR) and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The PAFC Congo Basin standards can subsequently be adopted as national standards by the national organisations that are the national PAFCs.</p> <p>Thus, initially, due to the absence of national PAFCs in CAR and DRC at the time of writing, the Congo Basin PAFC standards will only be usable in Cameroon, the Republic of Congo and Gabon until PAFC initiatives are established in CAR and DRC.”</p>
(b) a justification of the need for the standard,	Procedures	YES	<p>PROC-001-2019-1</p> <p>“4.1. Preliminary steps</p> <p>✓ The project document, which describes (...) the justification of the need for new standards”</p>
	Process	YES	<p>DOC-102-2019-1</p> <p>“2. JUSTIFICATION OF THE NEED FOR STANDARDS</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			The PAFC Congo Basin regional approach will be in line with national initiatives and will be built on the basis of the experiences gained over the last 15 years while also replacing them. It will enable certification to be more firmly anchored in the Congo Basin, to reach a greater number of operators and to diversify the potential of certified operators. The PAFC Congo Basin regional initiative will therefore not simply seek to produce a tool but rather to establish the conditions for its long-term operation. Certification in the Congo Basin - which has been stagnating for several years - will thus be revived.”
(c) a clear description of the intended outcomes	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1 “4.1. Preliminary steps ✓ The project document, which describes (...) a clear description of the expected outcomes”
	Process	YES	DOC-102-2019-1 “3. DESCRIPTION OF THE EXPECTED RESULTS The expected results of the PAFC Congo Basin standards development process are at two levels. On the one hand, there will be sub-regional standards for forest management and logging in the Congo Basin. They will be developed with a twofold objective: to comply with PEFC requirements (ST 1003-2017, at the time of writing) and to be tailored to the sub-regional context. (...) Forest management standards, chain of custody standards and group certification standards will be developed. (...) On the other hand, these sub-regional standards will be supplemented by national interpretation documents which will allow for the clarification of the regional standards or for different interpretations of them to be proposed. The national interpretation documents to the regional standards will be used to specify regional level requirements (principles, criteria, indicators) and provide more details, depth and clarity by identifying specific, concrete, "tangible" elements/requirements in terms of the regulations and practices established in the relevant country.”
(d) a risk assessment of potential negative impacts arising from	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1 “4.1. Preliminary steps ✓ The project document, which describes (...) a risk analysis of the negative impacts that could result from the implementation of the standards, such as factors that could hinder the achievement of the



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
implementing the standard, such as			results, the unexpected consequences of the implementation and the actions taken to address the identified risks”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • factors that could affect the achievement of the outcomes negatively, • unintended consequences of implementation, • actions to address the identified risks, and 	Process	YES	DOC-102-2019-1 “4. RISK ASSESSMENT OF THE POTENTIAL NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF THE STANDARD IMPLEMENTATION 4.1. Factors that could adversely affect awaited results 4.2 Unexpected consequences of implementation 4.3 Actions to respond to the identified risks” <i>The three sections further elaborate on the factors, consequences and actions.</i>
(e) a description of the stages of standard development and their expected timetable. ⁶	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1 “4.1. Preliminary steps ✓ The project document, which describes (...) a description of the steps involved in the development of the standards and a provisional timetable;”
	Process	YES	DOC-102-2019-1 “5. DESCRIPTION OF THE STEPS INVOLVED IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE STANDARD AND THE PLANNED SCHEDULE The below table outlines the major steps of the standards development process, responsibilities and the expected deliverables. Table 1: Steps in the PAFC Congo Basin standards development process” <i>The table further provides an overview of the steps in the process.</i>
6.1.2 For the revision of a standard the proposal	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1 “7. Revision of the standards

⁶ NOTE Guidance for development of a proposal and justification is given in ISO Directives, Part 1, Annex C and Annex SL (Appendix 1).



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
shall cover at least (a) and (e) of clause 6.1.1.			<p>There are several types of standard revisions:</p> <p>✓ A full revision, which consists of repeating all the development steps provided for in section 4;</p> <p>4.1. Preliminary steps</p> <p>In order to prepare the public announcement of the launch of the process, three key documents have been developed:</p> <p>✓ The project document, which describes the scope of the standards, (...) and a description of the steps involved in the development of the standards and a provisional timetable;"</p>
	Process	N.A.	<i>This was an initial standard-setting process.</i>
6.2.1 The standardising body shall identify stakeholders relevant to the objectives and scope of the standard-setting activities by means of a stakeholder identification mapping exercise. It shall define which stakeholder groups are relevant to the subject matter and why. For each stakeholder group the standardising body shall identify the likely key issues, key stakeholders, and which means of	Procedures	YES	<p>PROC-001-2019-1</p> <p>"4.1. Preliminary steps</p> <p>✓ The stakeholder mapping, which identifies - at both the national and sub-regional levels - the stakeholders of the forest-timber sector relevant to the scope and objective of the definition of standards (...) and defines the relevance of each group in relation to forest management in the Congo Basin. For each group, the mapping presents the likely major issues, key stakeholders, disadvantaged stakeholders and the most appropriate means of communication to be used."</p>
	Process	YES	<p><i>A stakeholder identification map was found (DOC-1010-2020-1) and a general document presenting the key issues and key stakeholders, and the means of communication that would be best to reach them (RAP-099-2020-1). The latter document describes per stakeholder group the types of stakeholders typically categorised under this group, whether they are key, affected and/or disadvantaged stakeholders, the typical challenges for these stakeholders and they ideal means of communication to reach these stakeholders.</i></p> <p><i>In total 18 of 27 respondents confirmed that all stakeholders that are relevant to the standard-setting process have been proactively identified and invited, including disadvantaged stakeholders. Two respondents disagreed, and mentioned the indigenous people as being underrepresented. Also a comment was placed that women and Baka indigenous people were poorly represented. With regards to</i></p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
communication would be best to reach them.			<i>indigenous people, it is concluded that in total 8 different stakeholders were identified who were considered representing the stakes of indigenous peoples. With regards to women, it is unclear whether the stakeholder identification included specific women groups, it is however noted that the Forum included 6 women (total was 16).</i>
6.2.2 Identification of stakeholder groups shall be based on nine major stakeholder groups as defined by Agenda 21 of the <i>United Nations Conference on Environment and Development</i> (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. At least the following groups shall be included in the stakeholder mapping: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • forest owners, • business and industry, • indigenous people, • non-government organisations, • scientific and technological community, • workers and trade unions. 	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1 “4.1. Preliminary steps ✓ The stakeholder mapping, which identifies (...) the stakeholders (...) while taking into account the nine main groups defined in Agenda 21 of the UNCED (United Nations Conference on Environment and Development) PEFC International's requirements stipulate that the following stakeholders, at the very least, be covered by the stakeholder mapping: forest owners, companies and industrial players, local populations and indigenous people, NGOs, the scientific and technological community, and workers and trade unions.”
	Process	YES	RAP-099-2020-1 “2. The stakeholder mapping will identify the actors in forest management to whom the call for expressions of interest will be sent for the selection of members of the regional working group in charge of the development of PAFC Congo Basin standards. This mapping will also be used to contact stakeholders during the public consultation of documents that must be submitted for comments and proposals from stakeholders. Categories of forest-timber stakeholders in the Congo Basin 2.1. The economic players (...) 2.2. The various administrations (...) 2.3. Environmental NGOs (...) 2.4. Social stakeholders In the Congo Basin, two types of social stakeholders that are relevant to forest management can be distinguished, depending on their field, namely: • Those that defend the rights of local populations and indigenous peoples, via NGOs; (...) • Those that defend workers' rights, through workers' unions. (...)



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
Other groups shall be added if relevant to the scope of standard-setting activities. ⁷			2.5. The scientific and technical community and higher education (...) 2.6. Donors and the international community"
6.2.3 The standardising body shall identify disadvantaged stakeholders and key stakeholders and address any constraints to their participation in standard-setting activities. ⁸	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1 "4.1. Preliminary steps ✓ The stakeholder mapping (...) For each group, the mapping presents the (...) key stakeholders, disadvantaged stakeholders and the most appropriate means of communication to be used. 4.4 Development of a version of the standards for public consultation In order for the Forum to work in an open and transparent manner, ATIBT shall: • Facilitate the participation of disadvantaged stakeholders as well as the other members of the working group (by covering their travel, accommodation, and food costs)."
	Process	YES	RAP-099-2020-1 "3. Conclusion Key stakeholders are: • Economic players; • Authorities in charge of forestry, the environment and wildlife; • Environmental NGOs; • Social stakeholders that defend the rights of the local communities and indigenous peoples bordering the concessions, and that defend workers' rights; • The scientific and technical community as well as higher education institutions.

⁷ NOTE The full list of nine major stakeholder groups defined by Agenda 21 of the *United Nations Conference on Environment and Development* consists of: (i) business and industry, (ii) children and youth, (iii) forest owners, (iv) indigenous peoples, (v) local authorities, (vi) non-government organisations, (vii) scientific and technological community, (viii) women, and (ix) workers and trade unions.

⁸ NOTE A stakeholder can be both a disadvantaged and a key stakeholder at the same time.



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p>Disadvantaged stakeholders are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small-sized economic players; • National environmental NGOs; • Social stakeholders that defend the rights of the local communities and indigenous peoples bordering forest concessions, and that defend workers' rights; • Research bodies or educational institutions.” <p>Explanation provided by ATIBT</p> <p>“All the stakeholders involved in the standard-setting process were financially supported to do participate (airfares/local transport fees, participation fees, accommodations, nutrition, documents...)”</p> <p><i>Specific challenges (including constraints) to the participation of the key and disadvantaged stakeholders are elaborated throughout chapter 2 of RAP-099-2020-1. Additionally, invitations to Forum members are found which explained the financial support to Forum members.</i></p>
6.3.1 The standardising body shall make a public announcement of the start of the standard-setting process and include an invitation to stakeholders to participate in the process. The announcement shall be made in a timely	Procedures	YES	<p>PROC-001-2019-1</p> <p>“4.2. Public announcement on the start of the process, and invitation to stakeholders to express their interest</p> <p>The public announcement marks the official start of the PAFC Congo Basin standards development process and includes a call for expressions of interest to any forest management stakeholder in the Congo Basin that would like to participate. The public announcement is made at least one month before the Forum work is to begin.</p> <p>In order to provide an opportunity for as many stakeholders as possible to constructively contribute to the process, ATIBT will make a public announcement, through the following means (at minimum):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ A press release on its website and an article in its newsletter; ✓ National press releases in the countries that are affected through the local media (radio and/or written press and/or online press);



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
manner ⁹ through suitable media ¹⁰ , as appropriate, to give stakeholders an opportunity for meaningful contributions.			<p>✓ An email or postal mail campaign (including all relevant documentation) targeting the stakeholders identified in the mapping ;</p> <p>✓ Making all documentation available to those representatives of key disadvantaged stakeholders that don't have internet access."</p>
	Process	YES	<p>Public announcement 1 October 2019 (atibt.org, translated with Google Translate)</p> <p>"As part of the project (...) aimed at the creation of the regional PAFC Congo Basin forest certification scheme, ATIBT informs the stakeholders in management of forest resources in the Congo Basin of the launch, this Tuesday, October 01, 2019, of the call for expression of relative interest in the process of developing certification standards for said certification scheme. (...) It should be noted that expressions of interest and comments on the standards development procedure and stakeholder mapping are received until Tuesday, October 22, 2019."</p> <p>Invitation letter for first Forum Meeting dated 11 November 2019 (translated with Google Translate)</p> <p>"In view of your participation in the Standards Development Forum of the PAFC Congo Basin regional certification system, which will be held in Libreville, from November 25 to 29, 2019, at the Dorian hotel, I am pleased to send you this invitation."</p> <p><i>The public announcement was made on various website, newspapers and social media. The deadline for submitting interest in participating in the process and submitting comments on the standard-setting process was 3 weeks after the announcement. The start of the Forum work was on 25 of November, which is more than four weeks after the public announcement.</i></p>
6.3.1 The announcement and invitation shall include:			
	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1

⁹ NOTE 1 *In a timely manner* means (at the latest) four weeks before the first standard-setting activity is scheduled to occur.

¹⁰ NOTE 2 *Through suitable media* means at least through the standardising body's website and by email and/or letter to identified stakeholders. Other media includes press releases, news articles, features in trade-press, information sent to branch organisations, social media, digital media, etc.



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
(a) overview of the standard-setting process,			<p>“4.2. Public announcement on the start of the process, and invitation to stakeholders to express their interest</p> <p>The announcement and invitation package for participation in the process includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project document and this procedure (or a link for public access to the documents); • A simplified description of the standards development process”
	Process	YES	<p>Public announcement 1 October 2019 (atibt.org, translated with Google Translate)</p> <p>“The public interested in contributing to this PAFC Congo Basin certification standards development process is invited to read the terms and conditions and related information on the PAFC website (by clicking here) and by reading the standards development procedure and related documents by clicking here.”</p> <p><i>The link to the PAFC website directly refers to the invitation page with supporting documents, including the project document, which a.o. contains an overview of the proposed standard-setting process</i></p>
(b) access to the proposal for the standard (refer to 6.1),	Procedures	YES	<p>PROC-001-2019-1</p> <p>“4.2. Public announcement on the start of the process, and invitation to stakeholders to express their interest</p> <p>The announcement and invitation package for participation in the process includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project document”
	Process	YES	<p>Public announcement 1 October 2019 (atibt.org, translated with Google Translate)</p> <p>“The public interested in contributing to this PAFC Congo Basin certification standards development process is invited to read the terms and conditions and related information on the PAFC website (by clicking here) and by reading the standards development procedure and related documents by clicking here.”</p> <p><i>The link to the PAFC website directly refers to the invitation page with supporting documents, including the project document.</i></p>
	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
(c) information about opportunities for stakeholders to participate in the process,			<p>“4.2. Public announcement on the start of the process, and invitation to stakeholders to express their interest</p> <p>The announcement and invitation package for participation in the process includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A simplified description of the standards development process, including in particular: <p>o the various ways in which one may participate in the process (Forum and public consultations);”</p>
	Process	YES	<p>Public announcement 1 October 2019 (atibt.org, translated with Google Translate)</p> <p>“Contributions from interested stakeholders and the public to this process can be made through:</p> <p>Participation in the certification standards development forum for stakeholders who have expressed their interest and selected as members of the Forum at the end of the call for expression of interest procedure;</p> <p>Transmission of comments on the standards development procedure and stakeholder mapping by any interested person by completing the indicated form;</p> <p>Participation in two public consultations on certification standards that will be organized during the development process of said standards.</p> <p>The public interested in contributing to this PAFC Congo Basin certification standards development process is invited to read the terms and conditions and related information on the PAFC website (...) and by reading the standards development procedure. and related documents (...).</p> <p>It should be noted that expressions of interest and comments on the standards development procedure and stakeholder mapping are received until Tuesday, October 22, 2019.</p>
(d) requests to stakeholders to nominate their representative(s) or themselves to the working group (refer to 6.4). The request to	Procedures	YES	<p>PROC-001-2019-1</p> <p>“4.2. Public announcement on the start of the process, and invitation to stakeholders to express their interest</p> <p>The announcement and invitation package for participation in the process includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An invitation to express interest in participating in the Forum by designating a representative(s); <p>Special attention will be paid to key stakeholders and disadvantaged stakeholders, by ensuring that:</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
disadvantaged stakeholders and key stakeholders shall be made in a manner that ensures that the information reaches intended recipients and in a format that is easy to understand,			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • appropriate communication means are used to contact them and inform them of the process in a way that is understandable to them; • effective ways to involve them are found so that they can contribute to the various standards development stages.”
	Process	YES	<p>Public announcement 1 October 2019 (atibt.org, translated with Google Translate)</p> <p>“The public interested in contributing to this PAFC Congo Basin certification standards development process is invited to read the terms and conditions and related information on the PAFC website (by clicking here) and by reading the standards development procedure and related documents by clicking here.”</p> <p>DOC-104-2020-1 (translated with Google Translate)</p> <p>“Expression of interest form to participate in the certification standards development forum”</p> <p><i>The link to the PAFC website directly refers to the invitation page with supporting documents, including a document named ‘Expression of interest form to participate in the certification standards development forum’ (DOC-104-2020-1). The invitation and information (documents) were also sent by E-mail to stakeholders.</i></p>
(e) explicit invitation and clear instruction on how to submit feedback on the scope and standard-setting process, and	Procedures	YES	<p>PROC-001-2019-1</p> <p>“4.2. Public announcement on the start of the process, and invitation to stakeholders to express their interest</p> <p>The announcement and invitation package for participation in the process includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An open invitation to submit comments on the scope and the standard-setting process as a whole (via a form with clear instructions). So, stakeholders can also comment on the proposed process presented in the public announcement (timetable, steps...) in view of the stakeholder comments analysis;”
	Process	YES	<p>Public announcement 1 October 2019 (atibt.org, translated with Google Translate)</p> <p>“The public interested in contributing to this PAFC Congo Basin certification standards development process is invited to read the terms and conditions and related information on the PAFC website (by</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p>clicking here) and by reading the standards development procedure and related documents by clicking here.</p> <p>It should be noted that expressions of interest and comments on the standards development procedure and stakeholder mapping are received until Tuesday, October 22, 2019.”</p> <p>Public announcement 1 October 2019 (pafc-certification.org, translated with Google Translate</p> <p>“2. Transmission of comments</p> <p>Anyone interested in the PAFC Congo Basin standards development procedure and stakeholder mapping are invited to submit their comments via the PAFC website, "Contact PAFC" section, and to follow the process described. (...) It is important to note that (...) comments on the standards development process and stakeholder mapping are received until Friday, October 30, 2019.”</p> <p>DOC-103-2020-1</p> <p>“Stakeholders and the interested public can send their comments in relation to the PAFC Congo Basin certification standards development documents cited above by filling out the form for comments attached to this call for expression of interest and also accessible by following the link”</p> <p><i>The link to the PAFC website directly refers to the invitation page with supporting documents, including a document named ‘Call for expressions of interest’ (DOC-103-2020-1), which is a form specifically meant to submit comments on the Standard-setting Procedures and the stakeholder mapping.</i></p> <p><i>Observation: The invitation to submit feedback on the proposed process is only found in the announcement on the PAFC Congo Basin website. It is not found in the announcement on the ATBIT website, nor found in DOC-103-2020.</i></p>
(f) access to the standard-setting procedures.	Procedures	YES	<p>PROC-001-2019-1</p> <p>“4.2. Public announcement on the start of the process, and invitation to stakeholders to express their interest</p> <p>The announcement and invitation package for participation in the process includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (...) this procedure (or a link for public access to the documents);”
	Process	YES	Public announcement 1 October 2019 (atibt.org, translated with Google Translate)



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p>“The public interested in contributing to this PAFC Congo Basin certification standards development process is invited to read the terms and conditions and related information on the PAFC website (by clicking here) and by reading the standards development procedure. and related documents by clicking here.”</p> <p><i>The link to the PAFC website directly refers to the invitation page with supporting documents, including the Standard-setting Procedures.</i></p>
6.3.2 The standardising body shall review the standard-setting process based on feedback received in response to the public announcement.	Procedures	YES	<p>PROC-001-2019-1</p> <p>“4.3. Creation of the Forum and review of the development process</p> <p>The first tasks of the Forum shall be to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analyze the stakeholder comments on the proposed process (timetable, steps...) received during the public announcement for process adjustments if necessary.
	Process	YES	<p>RAP-102-2019-1 (translated with Google Translate)</p> <p>“This document takes up all the comments made on these two documents and provides a response to them. In the event that a change to said documents has been made following a comment, this is signified by a bold and underlined font.”</p> <p>RAP-101-2020-1 (translated with Google Translate)</p> <p>“2.2. Review and adoption of the procedure for developing PAFC Congo Basin certification standards</p> <p>Participants were reminded of the procedure for developing PAFC Congo Basin standards.</p> <p>Based on the stakeholders during expressions of interest, the various comments on the procedure were considered. After discussions and analysis of said comments, the Forum adopted the procedure.”</p> <p><i>A table is found in RAP-102-2019-1 with comments and their considerations, which also contains questions and comments on the process.</i></p>
6.4.1 The standardising body shall establish a permanent or temporary working group or adjust	Procedures	YES	<p>PROC-001-2019-1</p> <p>“3.2. How the Forum is set up</p> <p>The members of the Forum are divided into four categories of interest:</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
the composition of an already existing working group based on nominations it received. Acceptance and refusal of nominations shall be justified in relation to the requirements for balanced representation of the working group, considerations of an appropriate gender balance, relevance of the organisation, an individual's competence, an individual's relevant experience and resources available for standard-setting.			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interests of owners and the administration; • Interests of loggers and timber processors; • Interests linked to the preservation of nature; • Interests linked to the preservation of people's livelihoods and workers' living and working conditions. <p>The members of the Forum are selected from those stakeholders who have expressed interest and designated a representative. The composition of the Forum shall be done as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in a balanced manner: in order to achieve this balance, the number of members from the various categories of interest presented above will be equivalent (+ or - one person); • integrating stakeholders from each country covered by the PAFC Congo Basin standards and regional stakeholders; • integrating, as much as possible, at least one representative from each identified stakeholder group (see paragraph 4.1). If this is not possible, alternatives will be explored; • including at least 50% of stakeholders identified as key stakeholders. Their participation will be proactively sought. If this is not possible, alternatives will be explored; • including at least 40% of stakeholders identified as directly and materially affected by the implementation of the standards. <p>The participation of stakeholders with relevant expertise in sustainable forest management and standard setting, and stakeholders who can influence its implementation will also be favoured.</p> <p>Any inclusion or rejection of a stakeholder in the Forum will have to be justified on the basis of - for example - criteria such as the balanced representation among the categories of stakeholders (as mentioned above), gender balance, the organisation's relevance, a representative's personal skill or relevant experience and the resources available for the standard-setting process.</p> <p>4.3. Creation of the Forum and review of the development process</p> <p>Based on an analysis of the expressions of interest received and in order to comply with the guidelines and requirements established in section 3.5 of this procedure, ATIBT shall set up the PAFC Congo Basin</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p>Forum and publish (on its website) a list of the members of the Forum as well as the results of its analysis including, if necessary, the justification for the inclusion or rejection of an expression of interest.</p> <p>ATIBT will ensure that it meets the requirements of this procedure, in particular as regards the representation of each stakeholder group in the Forum as well as the proportions of key and affected stakeholders that are involved.”</p>
	Process	YES	<p>RAP-103-2020-1</p> <p>“3. Expressions of interest that were received</p> <p>Of the 293 stakeholders that were contacted, 88 formally expressed their interest in participating in the process as a member of the Forum by submitting their expression of interest form.</p> <p>4. Forum members: selection criteria</p> <p>In keeping with the requirements of the PAFC Congo Basin standards development and revision process, the Forum's composition is established on the basis of the following considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the balance between the interests of the various stakeholders: in order to achieve this balance, the number of members of the various interest categories listed above shall be equivalent (+ or - one person); - the geographical distribution: includes stakeholders from each country covered by the PAFC Congo Basin standards and regional stakeholders; - the presence of key stakeholders: includes at least 50% of stakeholders identified as key stakeholders. Their participation will be proactively sought. - the presence of affected stakeholders: includes at least 40% of stakeholders identified as materially and directly affected by the implementation of the standards. <p>5. Analysis of the expressions of interest that were received</p> <p>The selection of members for the PAFC Congo Basin Forum was therefore based on the above criteria as well as on gender parity, the organisation's relevance, the representative's personal skills or relevant experience and the resources available for the standards development process.</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)															
			<p>In order to constitute the Forum, and in order to work as effectively as possible, it was decided that one representative from each category per country - including regional representatives - should be included in the Forum. Thus the Forum will consist of 16 members (4 geographical areas x interest categories).</p> <p>The two "best" applicants (based on key stakeholder or affected stakeholder status and expertise) were selected according to their geographical area and interest category. Thus, in the event that the first choice is not available for the first round of work, the second choice will be selected.</p> <p>The considerations, the criteria and the process and results of the analysis of the expressions of interest are presented in the analytical table in the appendix.</p> <p><i>Distribution of women/men among the selected Forum members</i></p> <table><tr><th><i>Women</i></th><th><i>Men</i></th></tr><tr><td>6/16</td><td>10/16</td></tr><tr><td>37.5%</td><td>62.5%</td></tr></table> <p><i>Distribution according to stakeholder status</i></p> <table><tr><th><i>Key stakeholders</i></th><th><i>Affected stakeholders</i></th><th><i>Disadvantaged stakeholders</i></th></tr><tr><td>16/16</td><td>8/16</td><td>7/16</td></tr><tr><td>100% (compliant, 50% threshold)</td><td>50% (compliant, 40% threshold)</td><td>44%</td></tr></table> <p>6. Composition of the Forum</p> <p>In terms of members, the chosen chamber and on the basis of the pre-selection made to date, the Forum is as follows:</p>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Men</i>	6/16	10/16	37.5%	62.5%	<i>Key stakeholders</i>	<i>Affected stakeholders</i>	<i>Disadvantaged stakeholders</i>	16/16	8/16	7/16	100% (compliant, 50% threshold)	50% (compliant, 40% threshold)	44%
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6.4.2 The working group shall:																												
(a) have balanced representation and decision-making by stakeholder categories, relevant to the subject matter and geographical scope of the standard, where no single concerned stakeholder group can dominate, nor be dominated in the process, and	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1 “3.2. How the Forum is set up The composition of the Forum shall be done as follows: • in a balanced manner: in order to achieve this balance, the number of members from the various categories of interest presented above will be equivalent (+ or - one person); • integrating stakeholders from each country covered by the PAFC Congo Basin standards and regional stakeholders; • integrating, as much as possible, at least one representative from each identified stakeholder group (see paragraph 4.1). If this is not possible, alternatives will be explored;”																									
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(b) include stakeholders with expertise relevant to the subject matter of the standard, those that affected by the standard, and those that can influence implementation of the standard. The affected stakeholders shall be represented in an appropriate proportion among participants.	Procedures	YES	<p>PROC-001-2019-1</p> <p>“3.2. How the Forum is set up</p> <p>The composition of the Forum shall be done as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• including at least 50% of stakeholders identified as key stakeholders. Their participation will be proactively sought. If this is not possible, alternatives will be explored;• including at least 40% of stakeholders identified as directly and materially affected by the implementation of the standards. <p>The participation of stakeholders with relevant expertise in sustainable forest management and standard setting, and stakeholders who can influence its implementation will also be favoured.”</p>																									
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6.4.3 In order to achieve balanced representation, the standardising body shall strive to have all identified stakeholder groups (refer to 6.2) represented. ¹¹ The standardising body shall set targets for the participation of key stakeholders and proactively seek their participation by using outreach such as (but	Procedures	YES	<p>PROC-001-2019-1</p> <p>“3.2. How the Forum is set up</p> <p>The composition of the Forum shall be done as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• integrating, as much as possible, at least one representative from each identified stakeholder group (see paragraph 4.1). If this is not possible, alternatives will be explored;• including at least 50% of stakeholders identified as key stakeholders. Their participation will be proactively sought. If this is not possible, alternatives will be explored; <p>4.1. Preliminary steps</p> <p>✓ The stakeholder mapping, (...) taking into account the nine main groups defined in Agenda 21 of the UNCED (United Nations Conference on Environment and Development)</p> <p>PEFC International's requirements stipulate that the following stakeholders, at the very least, be covered by the stakeholder mapping: forest owners, companies and industrial players, local populations and indigenous people, NGOs, the scientific and technological community, and workers and trade unions.”</p>																									

¹¹ NOTE When a stakeholder group is not represented and key stakeholders cannot be encouraged to participate, the standardising body may consider alternative options.



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)									
not limited to) personal emails, phone calls, meeting invitations etc.	Process	YES	<p>RAP-103-2020-1</p> <p>“4. Forum members: selection criteria</p> <p>In keeping with the requirements of the PAFC Congo Basin standards development and revision process, the Forum's composition is established on the basis of the following considerations:</p> <p>(...) - the presence of key stakeholders: includes at least 50% of stakeholders identified as key stakeholders. Their participation will be proactively sought.</p> <p>- the presence of affected stakeholders: includes at least 40% of stakeholders identified as materially and directly affected by the implementation of the standards.</p> <p>5. Analysis of the expressions of interest that were received</p> <p>The considerations, the criteria and the process and results of the analysis of the expressions of interest are presented in the analytical table in the appendix.</p> <p><i>Distribution according to stakeholder status</i></p> <table><tr><th><i>Key stakeholders</i></th><th><i>Affected stakeholders</i></th><th><i>Disadvantaged stakeholders</i></th></tr><tr><td>16/16</td><td>8/16</td><td>7/16</td></tr><tr><td>100% (compliant, 50% threshold)</td><td>50% (compliant, 40% threshold)</td><td>44%</td></tr></table> <p>6. Composition of the Forum</p> <p>In terms of members, the chosen chamber and on the basis of the pre-selection made to date, the Forum is as follows:</p>	<i>Key stakeholders</i>	<i>Affected stakeholders</i>	<i>Disadvantaged stakeholders</i>	16/16	8/16	7/16	100% (compliant, 50% threshold)	50% (compliant, 40% threshold)	44%
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6.4.4 Activities of the working group shall be organised in an open and transparent manner where:																												
(a) working drafts shall be available to all members of the working group,	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1 <p>“4.4. Development of a version of the standards for public consultation</p> <p>In order for the Forum to work in an open and transparent manner, ATIBT shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Send to all members of the Forum - two weeks prior to the sub-regional workshop - the workshop's agenda and the standards working documents to be analysed;”																									
	Process	YES	<i>E-mails to Forum members were found, which included working drafts of the standard. This is confirmed by respondents to the stakeholder survey.</i>																									
(b) all members of the working group shall be	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1 <p>“3.5. How the Forum works</p>																									



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
given meaningful opportunities to contribute to the development or revision of the standard and to provide feedback on working drafts, and			The Forum works in a transparent and open manner. In particular, the working documents are made available to all members at least two weeks before meetings. This provides the members of the Forum with a genuine opportunity to contribute to the work.”
	Process	YES	<p>DOC-111-2020 (translated with Google Translate)</p> <p>“CONDUCT OF WORK</p> <p>After the opening ceremony and the verification that the quorum of Forum members had been reached, the first phase of the work was opened. Discussions and debates focused on the sustainable forest management standard for PAFC Congo Basin certification. Discussions and debates during this phase focused on:</p> <p>1. Presentation of the participants and the workshop program</p> <p>Each participant introduced himself, indicating his name and the organization represented. (...)</p> <p>The second phase of work focused on discussions and validation of the sustainable management standard on a consensual basis. (...) At the end of the exchanges and debates between the members of the Forum, supported by the explanations of the experts, the modifications prescribed or recommended by the members of the Forum were, each time, made to the standard on the requirements related to the topic under debate. Thus, Forum members have made changes [reformulations, deletions] to the requirements.”</p> <p><i>This is further confirmed by all respondents to the stakeholder survey who participated in the Forum.</i></p>
(c) feedback and views given by any member of the working group shall be considered in an open and transparent way where the outcome of these considerations is recorded.	Procedures	YES	<p>PROC-001-2019-1</p> <p>“3.5. How the Forum works</p> <p>The Forum works in a transparent and open manner.</p> <p>8. Archiving of the documentation related to the development or revision process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes of the meetings or other steps in the process where the results of the Forum members' considerations were recorded;”
	Process	YES	<i>Minutes are found, containing considerations and changes in the standard requirements. This is further confirmed by all respondents to the stakeholder survey who participated in the Forum.</i>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
6.4.5 The decision of the working group to recommend the final draft for formal approval shall be taken on the basis of consensus. In order to determine whether there is any sustained opposition, the working group can utilise the following methods:			
(a) face-to face meeting(s) where there is a verbal yes/no vote, a show of hands for a yes/no vote; a statement on consensus from the Chair when there are no dissenting voices or hands (votes); a formal ballot, etc.,	Procedures	YES	<p>PROC-001-2019-1</p> <p>“3.5.2. Dialogue – Reaching a consensus</p> <p>There are several opportunities for Forum members to express their views on a working document:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Either during a face-to-face meeting: the absence of opposition will then be established by an oral vote (yes/no), or a vote by show of hands, or by ballot ;” <p>4. The PAFC Congo Basin standards development process</p> <p>Validation of a final version of the standards by consensus by the PAFC Congo Basin Forum members</p> <p>4.7. Development and validation of a final version by the Forum by consensus</p> <p>The unopposed validated version backed by the Forum members during this final workshop is therefore the final version of the PAFC Congo Basin forest management and chain of custody standards that will then be submitted to ATIBT for final approval”</p>
	Process	YES	<p>RAP-101-2020-1 (translated with Google Translate)</p> <p>“2.3. Discussion and validation of the “Sustainable forest management” standard</p> <p>The work methodology consisted of examining two documents: forest management standards and chain of custody standards.</p> <p>Both documents were read, in particular all the requirements (three-digit numbered elements X.X.X). The adoption of a requirement was dependent on a consensus of the members of the Forum (absence of sustained opposition). Indeed, in order to adopt an indicator, the Forum president had to ensure that there was no sustained opposition.”</p> <p><i>RAP-101-2020-1 reports on the first Forum meeting. The last Forum meeting in which final consensus on all requirements was reached, was a videoconference.</i></p>
(b) telephone conference meeting(s)	Procedures	YES	<p>PROC-001-2019-1</p> <p>“3.5.2. Dialogue – Reaching a consensus</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
where there is a verbal yes/no vote,			There are several opportunities for Forum members to express their views on a working document: • Or during a teleconference with a verbal vote (yes/no);”
	Process	YES	<p>Minutes of the last Forum meeting held on 26 and 27 October 2020 (translated with Google Translate)</p> <p>“From October 26 to 27, 2020, the final validation workshop of the PAFC Congo Basin forest management certification standard was held by videoconference (...)</p> <p>CONDUCT OF WORK</p> <p>The exchanges and debates during the first phase of the work focused on: Review and validation of the PAFC Congo Basin certification standard</p> <p>After a reminder from Pauline DEBERES of TERE A on the requirements previously validated after the second public consultation, the first phase of the workshop's work began.</p> <p>This first phase of work focused on the review and validation of the requirements of the forest management certification standard by Forum members on a consensus basis. (...) At the end of the discussions on the requirements and appendices indicated above, the forest certification standard PAFC BC was validated by consensus of the members of the Forum.”</p> <p><i>Respondents to the stakeholder survey who were part of the Forum, confirmed that the decision of the Forum to recommend the final draft for formal approval was taken on the basis of consensus.</i></p>
(c) e-mail request to the working group for agreement or objection where the members provide a formal (written) response (vote),	Procedures	YES	<p>PROC-001-2019-1</p> <p>“3.5.2. Dialogue – Reaching a consensus</p> <p>There are several opportunities for Forum members to express their views on a working document:</p> <p>• Or by email, when a request for agreement is made: members indicate their agreement or opposition in writing;”</p>
	Process	N.A.	<i>This method was not used.</i>
	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
(d) combinations of these methods.			<p>“3.5.2. Dialogue – Reaching a consensus</p> <p>There are several opportunities for Forum members to express their views on a working document:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Or in a combination of the three previous processes.”
	Process	N.A.	<i>This method was not used.</i>
6.4.6 Where a vote is used in decision-making, the standard-setting procedures shall determine and include decision-making thresholds that quantifies consensus. The threshold must be consistent with the consensus definition (refer to 3.1). However, a majority vote cannot override sustained opposition in order to achieve consensus.	Procedures	YES	<p>PROC-001-2019-1</p> <p>“Terms and definitions</p> <p>Consensus</p> <p>In the case of PAFC Congo Basin, a consensus is believed to exist when there is general agreement characterised by:</p> <p>the absence of sustained opposition on fundamental issues by a significant proportion of those with a relevant interest;</p> <p>a process that seeks to take into account the visions of all parties that are affected and to reconcile divergent positions.</p> <p>Note: A consensus doesn't necessarily imply unanimity (ISO/IEC Guide 2). The manner in which a consensus is reached is described in section 3.5.2).</p> <p>3.5.2. Dialogue – Reaching a consensus</p> <p>In the case of face-to-face meetings or teleconferences, a quorum shall be considered as reached when a simple majority (50%) of the members of each Forum category is present or represented. If this is not the case, no consensus can be reached.</p> <p>In the case of face-to-face meetings or teleconferences, the Forum Chairperson shall judge whether a consensus has been reached in the absence of sustained opposition.</p> <p>In the case of email queries, ATIBT will formally report the results to the Chairperson. The latter will then be in a position to decide whether or not a consensus has been reached. Forum members will then be informed.</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p>A document or the substantive elements of a document will be considered to be validated if there is no sustained opposition on a fundamental issue by any Forum members.</p> <p>3.5.3. In the event of sustained opposition</p> <p>There is sustained opposition if a single member or several members of the Forum express their opposition to the requirements contained in the PAFC Congo Basin standards.”</p>
	Process	YES	<p>RAP-101-2020-1 (translated with Google Translate)</p> <p>“2.3. Discussion and validation of the “Sustainable forest management” standard</p> <p>(...) in order to adopt an indicator, the Forum president had to ensure that there was no sustained opposition. (...) At the end of the workshop, only one requirement was not agreed upon. It was decided to postpone the vote on this requirement until later when more time has been devoted to reflection on this new subject in certification.</p> <p>3. CONCLUSION</p> <p>In conclusion, the certification standard for sustainable forest management could not be adopted because there was sustained opposition to indicator 7.3.2 (...) The arguments put forward are relevant and this indicator was left for public consultation. The Forum expressed a reservation on the feasibility or the “achievable” nature of this indicator. It therefore deferred its adoption pending comments from the two public consultations provided for by the PAFC Congo Basin standards development process.”</p> <p><i>The minutes of the first Forum meeting (RAP-101-2020-1) provide an example how sustained opposition did not override any vote. Appendix 10a presents the draft standard ready for public consultation, signed by all (but one) Forum members.</i></p>
6.4.7 When there is sustained opposition to a substantial issue, the issue shall be resolved using the following methods:			
(a) finding a compromise through discussion and negotiation on the	Procedures	YES	<p>PROC-001-2019-1</p> <p>“3.5.3. In the event of sustained opposition</p> <p>In the event of sustained opposition, the facilitator and the President shall attempt to resolve the opposition using various means:</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
disputed issue within the working group,			• Direct discussion with the members who have expressed their opposition in order to reach a compromise;"
	Process	YES	Explanation provided by ATIBT <p>"Precious wood is the member of the Forum which issued a sustained opposition on the indicators 7.3.1 and 7.3.2. We organized an exchange with two representatives of Precious wood which led to a proposal to Precious wood from the project team for reformulating (...) on the basis of which Precious wood sent us its new modification proposals (...). Based on all of this, we reformulated these indicators for Forum discussions at the final workshop. At the end of the discussions between Forum members during the final workshop, a consensus was reached on new formulations adopted by the Forum"</p> <p><i>The communication between ATIBT and Precious Wood is found and displays the proposals and responses.</i></p>
(b) finding a compromise through direct negotiation between the stakeholder(s) making the objection and other stakeholders with different views on the disputed issue,	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1 <p>"3.5.3. In the event of sustained opposition</p> <p>In the event of sustained opposition, the facilitator and the President shall attempt to resolve the opposition using various means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negotiation between members holding different opinions in the forum to exchange points of views and reach a compromise;"
	Process	YES	Explanation provided by ATIBT <p>"During summer 2020 several meetings with a small group of forum participants were organised to avoid sustained opposition at the last workshop. These meetings made it possible to propose a new formulation of the standard for 2 requirements which were accepted by the Forum."</p>
(c) additional round(s) of public consultation (if necessary) where further stakeholder input can help to achieve	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1 <p>"3.5.3. In the event of sustained opposition</p> <p>In the event of sustained opposition, the facilitator and the President shall attempt to resolve the opposition using various means:</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
consensus on unresolved issues. The standardising body determines the scope and duration of any additional public consultation.			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional targeted public consultations, in order to gather additional input on the dividing subject at hand, with a view to reaching a consensus. These additional public consultations will be focused on the problematic issues and will not exceed 30 days.”
	Process	YES	<p>RAP-101-2020-1 (translated with Google Translate)</p> <p>“3. CONCLUSION</p> <p>In conclusion, the certification standard for sustainable forest management could not be adopted because there was sustained opposition to indicator 7.3.2 (...) It therefore deferred its adoption pending comments from the two public consultations provided for by the PAFC Congo Basin standards development process.”</p> <p>Announcement on public consultation on ATIBT website, 12 December 2019 (translated with Google Translate)</p> <p>“It should be noted that indicator 7.3.2 of the sustainable forest management standard has not been validated due to lack of consensus among Forum members. They will re-examine it at the end of the public consultations, taking into account the comments made by the stakeholders.”</p> <p><i>As this was still after the first Forum meeting, the general process could continue and the already planned stakeholder consultation could be used to receive input for the issues.</i></p>
6.4.8 When a substantial issue cannot be resolved and sustained opposition persists, the standardising body shall initiate dispute resolution in accordance with its procedures for impartial and objective action.	Procedures	YES	<p>PROC-001-2019-1</p> <p>“3.5.3. In the event of sustained opposition</p> <p>If a sustained opposition cannot be resolved through the various above-mentioned negotiating mechanisms, ATIBT shall take the initiative to settle the dispute in an impartial and objective manner, in accordance with its procedures.”</p>
	Process	N.A.	<p><i>According to ATIBT, all the sustained oppositions have been resolved through discussion.</i></p>
6.5.1 The standardising body shall organise public consultation on the enquiry draft and shall ensure that:			



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
(a) the start and the end dates of public consultation are announced in a timely manner ¹² through suitable media,	Procedures	YES	<p>PROC-001-2019-1</p> <p>“4.5. Public consultation</p> <p>The day before the start of the public consultation (at the latest), ATIBT invites all Congo Basin forest management stakeholders to comment on the version released for public consultation while clearly indicating the consultation's start and end dates. (...) ATIBT posts the version of the standards (available on its website as well as on the PAFC website) and sends a direct invitation to all stakeholders identified in the mapping and to the Forum members. Other means can also be used (through local media: television and/or radio and/or print and/or online press).”</p>
	Process	YES	<p>Announcement on public consultation on ATIBT website, 12 December 2019 (translated with Google Translate)</p> <p>“This first public consultation will be open for a period of 63 days from tomorrow Friday December 13, 2019 and will be closed on Friday February 14, 2020.”</p> <p><i>The announcement was placed on websites, in newspapers and sent to stakeholders by E-mail.</i></p>
(b) a direct invitation to comment on the enquiry draft is sent to each stakeholder identified by stakeholder identification mapping (refer to 6.2) aiming for a balanced participation of stakeholder groups,	Procedures	YES	<p>PROC-001-2019-1</p> <p>“4.5. Public consultation</p> <p>The version of the PAFC Congo Basin standards developed by consensus by the PAFC Congo Basin Forum is submitted for public consultation one month (at the latest) after validation by the Forum.</p> <p>The day before the start of the public consultation (at the latest), ATIBT invites all Congo Basin forest management stakeholders to comment on the version released for public consultation (...). ATIBT (...) sends a direct invitation to all stakeholders identified in the mapping and to the Forum members.”</p>
	Process	YES	<p>Announcement on public consultation on ATIBT website, 12 December 2019 (translated with Google Translate)</p> <p>“Stakeholders in forest management in the Congo Basin are therefore invited to comment on the sustainable forest management standard available here and the chain of custody standard available</p>

¹² NOTE *In a timely manner* means (at the latest) the day before the start of public consultation.



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p>here. Paper versions of both standards can also be obtained on request from the national PAFCs of Cameroon, Congo Brazzaville and Gabon.</p> <p>It should be noted that indicator 7.3.2 of the sustainable forest management standard has not been validated due to lack of consensus among Forum members. They will re-examine it at the end of the public consultations, taking into account the comments made by the stakeholders.</p> <p>Comments should be made on the comments form accessible here.”</p> <p><i>The announcement was also sent by E-mail to stakeholders.</i></p>
(c) invitations are sent to disadvantaged and key stakeholders by methods that ensure they reach recipients and are easy to understand,	Procedures	YES	<p>PROC-001-2019-1</p> <p>“4.5. Public consultation</p> <p>ATIBT (...) sends a direct invitation to all stakeholders identified in the mapping (...) ATIBT shall make sure that access to these documents is granted to key stakeholders as well as disadvantage stakeholders. ATIBT shall also ensure that the different documents for the public consultation are easy to understand by all stakeholders.”</p>
	Process	YES	<p>Announcement on public consultation on ATIBT website, 12 December 2019 (translated with Google Translate)</p> <p>“Comments should be made on the comments form accessible here.</p> <p>For each commented requirement (indicator), enter the number and text of the indicator that is the subject of the comment, write the comment (s) and the improvement proposal (s) in the corresponding columns of the Excel sheet "indicators" of the comments form.</p> <p>Regarding the comments on the appendices of the two standards submitted for public consultation, it will be necessary to indicate the page number of the text / passage subject of the comment, write the corresponding comment as well as the proposal (s) for improvement. in the corresponding columns of the "appendices" Excel sheet of the comments form.”</p> <p><i>The announcement was placed on websites, in newspapers and sent to stakeholders by E-mail.</i></p>
(d) the enquiry draft is made publicly available,	Procedures	YES	<p>PROC-001-2019-1</p> <p>“4.5. Public consultation</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			ATIBT posts the version of the standards (available on its website as well as on the PAFC website)"
	Process	YES	Announcement on public consultation on ATIBT website, 12 December 2019 (translated with Google Translate) <p>"Stakeholders in forest management in the Congo Basin are therefore invited to comment on the sustainable forest management standard available here and the chain of custody standard available here."</p> <p><i>The links refer to the enquiry drafts.</i></p>
(e) public consultation is for at least 60 days,	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1 <p>"4.5. Public consultation This first public consultation lasts at least 60 days."</p>
	Process	YES	Announcement on public consultation on ATIBT website, 12 December 2019 (translated with Google Translate) <p>"This first public consultation will be open for a period of 63 days from tomorrow Friday December 13, 2019 and will be closed on Friday February 14, 2020."</p> <p><i>The public consultation took 64 days (13 December and 14 February included). This is confirmed by the respondents to the stakeholder survey.</i></p>
(f) all feedback is considered by the working group in an objective manner, and	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1 <p>"4.5. Public consultation ATIBT compiles, condenses and analyses all of the comments that it receives. A summary of these comments is sent to the Forum members. It also proposes objective and justified responses to the comments received (e.g. modifications of the standards). Two situations can then arise: • In the context of the development of new standards, all of the comments received and the proposed responses are sent to the Forum members, especially any modifications that are made. A final response to the comments will be validated by the Forum (...);</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As part of the revision of existing standards, the changes proposed following the public consultation are directly discussed during a sub-regional validation workshop (see section 4.7). Once a consensus has been reached, the amended version will constitute the final version of the standards.”
	Process	YES	<p>E-mail 3 from ATIBT to Forum members, March 2020</p> <p>“Following our telephone exchanges in relation to the validation or not (sustained objection / non-objection) of the proposals for modifications to the forest management standard induced by the comments received from PC1, I ask you to find in attachments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - an Excel file with the responses to the comments of the PPs and the proposed modifications with the name "SGFD with response prop" (...)We strongly suggest that you read these documents before the skype meeting because this meeting will be an opportunity, as we have agreed, to focus on the proposed modifications inspired by CP1 so that each member of the Forum decides for the validation or the opposition to each modification.” <p><i>Respondents to the stakeholder survey that were members of the Forum, confirmed that comments received from other stakeholders were considered in an objective manner by the Forum.</i></p>
(g) a synopsis of feedback is compiled for each material issue, including the outcome of considering the issue. ¹³ The synopsis is made publicly available (e.g. on a website) and is sent to each stakeholder/party that gave feedback.	Procedures	YES	<p>PROC-001-2019-1</p> <p>“4.5. Public consultation</p> <p>ATIBT compiles, condenses and analyses all of the comments that it receives. A summary of these comments is sent to the Forum members. It also proposes objective and justified responses to the comments received (e.g. modifications of the standards).</p> <p>Once the summary of the comments and responses made is validated by the Forum, it is sent to each stakeholder that made a contribution and published on the ATIBT and PAFC Congo Basin websites.”</p>
	Process	YES	<p>E-mail from ATIBT to stakeholders who submitted feedback, 21 March 2020</p>

¹³ NOTE For clarity the standardising body's synopsis may aggregate responses on material issues where there was similar feedback from different stakeholders. However, best practice would be to publish each piece of original feedback and the response, to allow each stakeholder to identify its own feedback.



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p>“After reading and analyzing each of your comments, responses and formulations of proposals for changes to certain requirements or parts of the standard have been formulated. We send you in PJ in an Excel table, the answers and proposals for modifications relating thereto.”</p> <p><i>The synopsis of feedback including the outcome of considerations, is available via the ATIBT website (atibt.org).</i></p>
6.5.2 For new standards the standardising body shall organise a second round of public consultation lasting at least 30 days.	Procedures	YES	<p>PROC-001-2019-1</p> <p>“4.5. Public consultation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the context of the development of new standards, all of the comments received and the proposed responses are sent to the Forum members, especially any modifications that are made. A final response to the comments will be validated by the Forum according to the procedures described in 3.5. A version featuring the proposed changes is then subject to a pilot test (...) and a second public consultation (30 days);”
	Process	YES	<p>Announcement on public consultation on ATIBT website, 22 May 2020 (translated with Google Translate)</p> <p>“This second public consultation will be open for a period of 30 days from tomorrow Saturday the 23rd of May 2020 and will be closed on Monday the 22nd of June 2020. The public consultation is open to all stakeholders of forest management in the Congo Basin interested in participating to the PAFC Congo Basin certification standards development process.”</p> <p><i>The second public consultation lasted for 31 days (including 23 May and 22 June).</i></p>
6.6 The standardising body shall organise pilot testing of new standard(s) ¹⁴ to assess the clarity, auditability and feasibility of the requirements. The	Procedures	YES	<p>PROC-001-2019-1</p> <p>“4.6. Pilot test</p> <p>Note: in the case of a revision of standards, the pilot test is optional.</p> <p>The version of the forest management standards that was amended after public consultation must be pilot tested, in the case of the development of new standards. The purpose of this pilot test is to assess the feasibility of their implementation and to evaluate the relevance of these standards.</p>

¹⁴ NOTE Pilot testing is not required for revision of an existing standard when experience from its usage can substitute for pilot testing.



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
working group shall consider the outcome of pilot testing.			The results of this pilot test may lead to proposals for amendments to the standards which will be sent to the members of the Forum (by email and via a remote meeting). Any proposed changes will be validated by the Forum according to the terms described in section 3.5.”
	Process	YES	<p>RAP-106-2020-1</p> <p>“As part of the process of developing the PAFC Congo Basin forest management certification standard, it was planned to organize intermediary exchanges by email and / or through virtual meetings on the internet (teleconferences) between the Forum and the project team. The purpose of these exchanges is to carry out intermediate validations of the proposed modifications made at the end of certain activities, in particular public consultations and the pilot test of the standard.</p> <p>It is in this context that a teleconference was organized and held via the Zoom application on September 2, 2020 for examination and validation, rejection and / or reformulation of the proposed modifications resulting from the public consultation 2.”</p> <p><i>RAP-106-2020-1 further provides a table with all the proposed changes, including the pilot testing results. Pilot testing reports are also found.</i></p>
Approval and Publication			
7.1 The standardising body shall approve the standard(s)/normative document(s) formally when there is evidence of consensus among the working group.	Procedures	YES	<p>PROC-001-2019-1</p> <p>“5.1. Formal approval of the standards by ATIBT</p> <p>The final version of the PAFC Congo Basin standards is submitted to ATIBT's Board of Directors for formal approval.</p> <p>For this, ATIBT's Board of Directors will need to have the final version of the PAFC Congo Basin Standards and proof that a consensus was reached regarding the final version of the standards two weeks before.”</p>
	Process	YES	<p>E-mail from ATIBT Board of Directors to Coordinator of standard-setting process, 21 December2020</p> <p>“The standard development process is completed in the field with the validation of the forest management standard on 27 October 2020 by the regional working group in charge of its development during the Forum. (...) the procedure for drawing up the forest management standard provides that the</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p>standardisation body, ATIBT in this case, through its Board of Directors (BoD), approves this standard validated by the regional working group (...) Thus, the Board was called to a meeting on December 18, 2020, and one of the items on the agenda was to decide on the PAFC BC forest management certification standard.</p> <p>The following documents were sent to all directors on 30 November 2020:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The main document : PAFC-BC_NORM-001-2019-SFM_Standard_VF_ENG (...) <input type="checkbox"/> The minutes of the final workshop, which constitute the proof of consensus: Atelierfinal_CR Forum PAFC-BC_26-27-oct-2020_VF <p>(...) The Board reviewed the above documents, and voted favourably on the approval of this standard.”</p>
7.2.1 The formally approved standard(s)/normative document(s) shall be published and made publicly available at no cost within 14 days of approval, or as otherwise defined by the standardising body.	Procedures	YES	<p>PROC-001-2019-1</p> <p>“5.4.1. Publication of the standards</p> <p>Within 14 calendar days following ATIBT's approval, the PAFC Congo Basin standards and other standards documents are published and made publicly available on the ATIBT website at no cost. (...) Paper copies of the standards and the PAFC Congo Basin standards development report are available at real cost from ATIBT or from the national PAFCs (if they exist).”</p>
	Process	YES	<p><i>The approved standard was published on the ATIBT website (atibt.org) on 21 December 2020 (which is three days after the approval of the standard) and is freely accessible.</i></p>
7.2.2 Standard(s) shall include:			
(a) identification and contact information for the standardising body,	Procedures	YES	<p>PROC-001-2019-1</p> <p>“5.4.1. Publication of the standards</p> <p>The standards include the contact details of a contact person”</p>
	Process	YES	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>“Copyright notice</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p>(...) This document is the property of PAFC Cameroon, PAFC Congo and PAFC Gabon. The document is freely available from the PAFC Congo Basin website (https://pafc-certification.org/pafc-bassin-du-congo/documents-pafc-bassin-du-congo) or upon request.</p> <p>ATIBT detail contacts: www.atibt.org</p> <p><i>Observation: The standard itself does not contain contact details (such as postal address, telephone address or E-mail address), these can only be found by following the webpage (which is found on the standard) and searching for the contact details.</i></p>
(b) official language of the standard,	Procedures	YES	<p>PROC-001-2019-1</p> <p>“5.4.1. Publication of the standards</p> <p>Moreover, the standards specify that if there are contradictions between the English and French versions of the standards, it is the English version recognised by PEFC that is used as a reference.”</p> <p><i>Although the official language is not specifically mentioned, the clause sufficiently ensures a single official language (English).</i></p>
	Process	YES	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>“Copyright notice</p> <p>(...) The only official version of the document is English.”</p>
(c) a note that when there is inconsistency between versions, the English version of the standard as endorsed by the PEFC Council is the reference.	Procedures	YES	<p>PROC-001-2019-1</p> <p>“5.4.1. Publication of the standards</p> <p>Moreover, the standards specify that if there are contradictions between the English and French versions of the standards, it is the English version recognised by PEFC that is used as a reference.”</p>
	Process	YES	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>“Copyright notice</p> <p>(...) The only official version of the document is English. Translations of the document can be provided by PAFC Cameroon, PAFC Congo and PAFC Gabon. In case of any doubt the English version is decisive.”</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
(d) The approval date and the date of next periodic review ¹⁵	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1 “5.4.1. Publication of the standards The standards include (...) the date of approval and the date of the next periodic review.”
	Process	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 (Title page) “Approved by : ATIBT Board of Directors Date : 18 December 2020 (...) Next periodic review : 18 December 2025”
7.2.3 Printed copies shall be made available upon request at a price that covers no more than administrative costs (if any)	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1 “5.4.1. Publication of the standards Paper copies of the standards and the PAFC Congo Basin standards development report are available at real cost from ATIBT or from the national PAFCs (if they exist).”
	Process	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “Copyright notice (...) This document is the property of PAFC Cameroon, PAFC Congo and PAFC Gabon. The document is freely available from the PAFC Congo Basin website (https://pafc-certification.org/pafc-bassin-du-congo/documents-pafc-bassin-du-congo) or upon request.” Explanation provided by ATIBT “In the ongoing process, copies can be requested and obtained from national PAFCs. But in the future after validation of the scheme, the standard can be printed from the PAFC website. However, during the standard revision processes, copies may be obtained free of charge from national PAFCs following the procedure in place for these activities. (...) The printed copies will be available on request after the payment of the real printed costs.”
	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1

¹⁵ NOTE The date of next periodic review may be within a shorter period than five years based on (for example) stakeholder expectations or other foreseen developments.



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
7.2.4 The standardising body shall make the development report (refer to PEFC GD 1007) publicly available			“5.4.1. Publication of the standards The report on the development of the PAFC Congo Basin standards will also be made public.”
	Process	YES	<i>The standard development report could be found on the ATIBT website (atibt.org)</i>
Periodic review of standards			
8.1 The standard(s)/normative document(s) shall be reviewed at intervals that do not exceed a five-year period. The review shall be based on consideration of feedback received during the standard's implementation and a gap analysis. If necessary, a stakeholder consultation shall be organised to obtain further feedback and input.	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1 “6. Periodic review of the standards At minimum, the standards are reviewed every 5 years. These reviews are based on feedback received during the standards implementation period and following a gap analysis. Where appropriate, a public consultation may be conducted in order to obtain further information and input.”
	Process	N.A.	<i>This is the initial version of the standard.</i>
8.2.1 The standardising body shall establish and maintain a permanent mechanism for collecting and recording feedback on a standard.	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1 “6. Periodic review of the standards A feedback mechanism for the gathering and archiving of information sent regarding the standards shall be established and maintained. It will be accessible from the PAFC website. Feedback may be provided either through comments, requests for clarification or interpretation, complaints, etc.”



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
This mechanism shall be accessible on the website of the standardising body and/or PEFC National Governing Body with clear directions for providing feedback. ¹⁶	Process	YES	<p>Explanation provided by ATIBT</p> <p>“The mechanism put in place indicates an email address on the PAFC website to receive feedbacks. The mechanism will be adjusted or maintained depending on the situation in the future.”</p> <p>Website PAFC Congo Basin</p> <p>“Write us!</p> <p>To contact us, make a comment or express a complaint, ask for clarification or interpretation, please send an email to coordination@pafc-certification.org mentioning the following:</p> <p>Your Name and Surname</p> <p>Your postal address</p> <p>Your email</p> <p>Your phone number</p> <p>The subject of your message</p> <p>The recipient of your message (PAFC Congo Basin, PAFC Gabon, PAFC Cameroon or PAFC Congo)</p> <p>The text of your message”</p>
8.2.2 All feedback received through all channels, including meetings, training courses, etc. shall be recorded and considered.	Procedures	YES	<p>PROC-001-2019-1</p> <p>“6. Periodic review of the standards</p> <p>A feedback mechanism for the gathering and archiving of information sent regarding the standards shall be established and maintained. It will be accessible from the PAFC website. Feedback may be provided either through comments, requests for clarification or interpretation, complaints, etc. Feedback received during meetings, training, etc. is archived and considered.”</p>
	Process	N.A.	<i>As the standard is just developed and not yet implemented, no feedback is received yet.</i>
	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1

¹⁶ NOTE Feedback can be sent in various formats: comments, requests for clarification and/or interpretation, complaints, etc.



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
8.3.1 At the start of a review, the standardising body shall evaluate the standard against appropriate PEFC International standards, national laws and regulations, and other relevant standards to identify potential gaps in the standard.			<p>“6. Periodic review of the standards</p> <p>The standards review begins with (...) a gap analysis between the PAFC Congo Basin standards and PEFC International's standards, as well as national laws and regulations, and all other existing standards.”</p>
	Process	N.A.	<i>This is the initial version of the standard. No review has taken place yet.</i>
8.3.2 The standardising body shall consider the latest scientific knowledge, research and relevant emerging issues.	Procedures	YES	<p>PROC-001-2019-1</p> <p>“6. Periodic review of the standards</p> <p>The standards review begins with (...) a gap analysis (...). Recent scientific knowledge and research as well as emerging issues will also be taken into account.”</p>
	Process	N.A.	<i>This is the initial version of the standard. No review has taken place yet.</i>
8.4.1 Where the feedback and the gap analysis do not identify a need to revise the standard, the standardising body shall organise stakeholder consultation to determine whether stakeholders see a need for revising the standard. The standardising body shall	Procedures	YES	<p>PROC-001-2019-1</p> <p>“6. Periodic review of the standards</p> <p>If the results of the feedback and gap analysis do not identify a need to revise the PAFC Congo Basin standards, stakeholders' views on the merits of revising the standards will be sought:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Either through a 30-day public consultation as described in section 4.5. The gap analysis is published during this public consultation. • Or through meetings organised with stakeholders. The gap analysis is transmitted to stakeholders prior the meetings.”
	Process	N.A.	<i>This is the initial version of the standard. No review has taken place yet.</i>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
include the gap analysis in the stakeholder consultation.			
8.4.2 At the start of a review, the standardising body shall update the stakeholder identification mapping (refer to clause 6.2).	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1 “6. Periodic review of the standards The standards review begins with an update of stakeholder mapping”
	Process	N.A.	<i>This is the initial version of the standard. No review has taken place yet.</i>
8.4.3 The standardising body shall organise:			
(a) a public consultation period of at least 30 days (following the requirements of clause 6.5.1) and/or,	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1 “6. Periodic review of the standards If the results of the feedback and gap analysis do not identify a need to revise the PAFC Congo Basin standards, stakeholders' views on the merits of revising the standards will be sought: • Either through a 30-day public consultation as described in section 4.5. The gap analysis is published during this public consultation.”
	Process	N.A.	<i>This is the initial version of the standard. No review has taken place yet.</i>
(b) stakeholder meetings.	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1 “6. Periodic review of the standards If the results of the feedback and gap analysis do not identify a need to revise the PAFC Congo Basin standards, stakeholders' views on the merits of revising the standards will be sought: • Or through meetings organised with stakeholders.”
	Process	N.A.	<i>This is the initial version of the standard. No review has taken place yet.</i>
8.4.4 The standardising body shall announce the	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1 “6. Periodic review of the standards



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
review in a timely manner (refer to 6.3).			The start of the PAFC Congo Basin standards review process shall be announced at least four weeks prior to any stakeholder consultation.”
	Process	N.A.	<i>This is the initial version of the standard. No review has taken place yet.</i>
8.5.1 Based on the feedback received during the period of a standard’s implementation, the outcome of the gap analysis and the consultations, the standardising body shall decide whether to reaffirm the standard or whether a revision of the standard is necessary.	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1 “6. Periodic review of the standards On the basis of the feedback received during the standards implementation period, the results of the gap analysis and the results of the stakeholder consultation, ATIBT's Board of Directors will decide whether to reaffirm the standards or revise them, as appropriate.”
	Process	N.A.	<i>This is the initial version of the standard. No review has taken place yet.</i>
8.5.2 The decision shall be made at the highest decision-making level of the standardising body	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1 “6. Periodic review of the standards ATIBT's Board of Directors will decide whether to reaffirm the standards or revise them”
	Process	N.A.	<i>This is the initial version of the standard. No review has taken place yet.</i>
8.5.3 Where the decision is to reaffirm a standard, the standardising body shall provide a justification for the decision and make the justification publicly available.	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1 “6. Periodic review of the standards In the event of a reaffirmation of the standards, ATIBT shall justify its choice and make it public on its website.”
	Process	N.A.	<i>This is the initial version of the standard. No review has taken place yet.</i>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
8.5.4 Where the decision is to revise the standard, the standardising body shall specify the type of revision (normal or editorial revision).	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1 “6. Periodic review of the standards In the opposite case (a revision of the standards), ATIBT will specify whether it is a normal revision or an editorial revision.”
	Process	N.A.	<i>This is the initial version of the standard. No review has taken place yet.</i>
Revision of standards			
9.1 Procedures for revision of standard(s)/normative document(s) shall conform to those stated in section 6. A normal revision can occur at the periodic review, or between periodic reviews, but does not include editorial revisions and time-critical revisions.	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1 “7. Revision of the standards There are several types of standard revisions: ✓ A full revision, which consists of repeating all the development steps provided for in section 4;”
	Process	N.A.	<i>This is the initial version of the standard. No review has taken place yet.</i>
9.2 Editorial revisions can be made without triggering the normal revision process. The standardising body shall approve the editorial changes formally and publish an amendment	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1 “7. Revision of the standards There are several types of standard revisions: ✓ An editorial revision which consists of making editorial changes that are formally approved by ATIBT's Board of Directors. An amendment or a new edition of the standards is then published;”
	Process	N.A.	<i>This is the initial version of the standard. No review has taken place yet.</i>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
or a new edition of the standard.			
9.3.1 A time-critical revision is a revision between two periodic reviews using a fast-track process.	Procedures	YES	<p>PROC-001-2019-1</p> <p>“7. Revision of the standards</p> <p>There are several types of standard revisions:</p> <p>✓ A critical revision.</p> <p>A critical revision may be conducted either following a change in national laws and regulations that prevent compliance with PEFC International's requirements, or following instructions from PEFC International to comply with its new or specific requirements within a timeframe that is too short for a full revision.”</p>
	Process	N.A.	<i>This is the initial version of the standard. No review has taken place yet.</i>
9.3.2 A time-critical revision can be conducted only in the following situations:			
(a) Change in national laws and regulations affecting compliance with PEFC International requirements	Procedures	YES	<p>PROC-001-2019-1</p> <p>“7. Revision of the standards</p> <p>There are several types of standard revisions:</p> <p>✓ A critical revision.</p> <p>A critical revision may be conducted either following a change in national laws and regulations that prevent compliance with PEFC International's requirements”</p>
	Process	N.A.	<i>This is the initial version of the standard. No review has taken place yet.</i>
(b) Instruction by PEFC International to comply with specific or new PEFC requirements within a timescale that is	Procedures	YES	<p>PROC-001-2019-1</p> <p>“7. Revision of the standards</p> <p>There are several types of standard revisions:</p> <p>✓ A critical revision.</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
too short for a normal revision.			A critical revision may be conducted either (...), or following instructions from PEFC International to comply with its new or specific requirements within a timeframe that is too short for a full revision.”
	Process	N.A.	<i>This is the initial version of the standard. No review has taken place yet.</i>
9.3.3 The time-critical revision shall follow these steps:			
(a) The standardising body shall draft the revised standard,	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1 “7. Revision of the standards The steps involved in a critical revision are as follows: ✓ Development of a revised version of the standards;”
	Process	N.A.	<i>This is the initial version of the standard. No review has taken place yet.</i>
(b) The standardising body may consult stakeholders, but it is not mandatory,	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1 “7. Revision of the standards The steps involved in a critical revision are as follows: ✓ A consultation with stakeholders, as appropriate;”
	Process	N.A.	<i>This is the initial version of the standard. No review has taken place yet.</i>
(c) The revised standard shall be approved formally at the highest appropriate decision-making level of the standardising body,	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1 “7. Revision of the standards The steps involved in a critical revision are as follows: ✓ Formal approval by ATIBT's Board of Directors;”
	Process	N.A.	<i>This is the initial version of the standard. No review has taken place yet.</i>
(d) The standardising body shall explain the justification for the urgent change(s) and	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1 “7. Revision of the standards The steps involved in a critical revision are as follows:



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
make the justification publicly available.			✓ Preparation of justification for urgent changes (made publicly available)."
	Process	N.A.	<i>This is the initial version of the standard. No review has taken place yet.</i>
9.4.1 A revision shall define the application date and transition period of the revised standard(s)/normative document(s).	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1 "7. Revision of the standards In all cases of a revision of the PAFC Congo Basin standards, the following are defined: • an implementation date: date from which the revised standards are to be implemented. • a transition period: date from which (re)certification audits may be conducted on the basis of the revised standards."
	Process	N.A.	<i>This is the initial version of the standard. No review has taken place yet.</i>
9.4.2 An application date shall not be more than one year after the publication of the standard. This allows time for endorsement of the revised standard(s)/normative document(s), introduction of change(s), information dissemination and training.	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1 "7. Revision of the standards • an implementation date: (...) This date shall not exceed a period of one year from the publication of the revised standards."
	Process	N.A.	<i>This is the initial version of the standard. No review has taken place yet.</i>
9.4.3 The transition period shall not exceed	Procedures	YES	PROC-001-2019-1 "7. Revision of the standards



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assess. basis*	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
one year. The standardising body may determine a longer period when justified by exceptional circumstances.			• a transition period: (...) The transition shall not exceed a period of one year after the date of implementation, except in exceptional circumstances where the implementation of the revised standards/normative documents requires a longer period. These circumstances must be justified.”
	Process	N.A.	<i>This is the initial version of the standard. No review has taken place yet.</i>



Part III: PEFC Checklist for Sustainable Forest Management

1 Scope

Part III covers requirements for sustainable forest management as defined in PEFC ST 1003:2018, Sustainable Forest Management – Requirements.

2 Checklist

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
Context of the national standard and the organisations applying a PEFC endorsed standard		
4.1 General		
The requirements for sustainable forest management defined by regional, national or sub-national forest management standards 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.	YES	<i>The requirements and indicators of NORM-001-2019-1 include management and performance requirements that are applicable at the forest management unit level.</i>
b) be clear, performance based and auditable;	YES	<i>Clear definitions are provided in the standard. The standard is structured in requirements and indicators which are clear, performance based and auditable.</i>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
c) apply to activities of all forest operators in the defined forest area who have an impact on achieving compliance with the requirements;	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “1. Scope This document contains the PAFC Congo Basin sustainable forest management system (SFMS) requirements for forest management activities in long-term sustainable forest titles. They cover all of their products and services. They apply to managers, as well as contractors and other operators operating in Congo Basin countries with a national PAFC organisation. The requirements of this document cover all the necessary processes of a management system aimed at sustainable forest management.”
d) require record-keeping that provides evidence of compliance with the requirements of the forest management standards;	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “Annexe 1: SFMS (Sustainable forest management system) guidelines The monitoring, measurement, analysis and evaluation system (requirement 4.3.1) The SFMS monitoring, measurement, analysis and evaluation system must include, at a minimum: • quantitative and qualitative monitoring of forest resources to ensure compliance with these standards; • an evaluation of the management practised based on the results of operational monitoring, the objective of which is to control the quality of the practices referred to in this standard; • monitoring of the activities' impact according to the magnitude and intensity of the previously identified environmental and social impacts, adapted to the scale, intensity and risk of the operations;”
e) specify “100% PEFC certified”, or another system specific claim, as claim to be used to communicate the origin of products in an area covered by the standard to customers with a PEFC chain of custody; Note: System specific claims of PEFC endorsed standards and PEFC Council approved abbreviations of such claims and the claim “100% PEFC certified”, and their translations into	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “6.2.4 The Organisation that holds a certificate must indicate the claim “100% PEFC certified” or “100% PAFC certified” (designation specific to the PAFC system used) to communicate the origin of the products to clients having a PEFC or PAFC chain of custody on the sales invoice or other document pertaining to the products' transfer/transport. Only products from FMUs included in the scope of the organisation's PAFC-certified SFMS can be sold with the claim “100% PEFC certified” or “100% PAFC certified”. ”



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
languages other than English, are published online on the PEFC website www.pefc.org .		
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% PEFC-certified" or a system specific claim;	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 "6.2.4 Only products from FMUs included in the scope of the organisation's PAFC-certified SFMS can be sold with the claim "100% PEFC certified" or "100% PAFC 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 PEFC recognised certificate issued against the standard;	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 "6.2.4 The Organisation that holds a Sustainable Forest Management certificate must indicate the claim "100% PEFC certified" or "100% PAFC certified" (designation specific to the PAFC system used) to communicate the origin of the products to clients having a PEFC or PAFC chain of custody"
h) specify requirements concerning the information which need to be provided to a PEFC chain of custody certified customer;	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 "6.2.5 The Organisation must provide to its clients whose chain of custody is PEFC or PAFC certified with the following information (at minimum) on the sales invoice or other product transfer/transport document: a) the name of the organisation, b) the identification of the product(s), c) the quantity delivered for each product covered by the documentation, d) the date of invoicing (in the case of sale to a third party) or the date of transfer to a processing site (in the case of a transfer within the same organisation) e) the official declaration on the category of material (100% PEFC certified or 100% PAFC certified) specifically for each product bearing the PEFC or PAFC claim covered by the document, f) the number of the forest management certificate, or other document attesting to the certified status of the organisation."
i) include an overview of applicable legislation, if requirements of this benchmark are not reflected in the regional, national or sub-national standard,	NO	<i>No such overview is found, whereas part of the evidence for conformity is based on references to legislation.</i>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
because they are already addressed through the legislation.		
4.2 Understanding the needs and expectations of affected stakeholders		
The standard requires that the organisation shall determine:		
a) the affected stakeholders that are relevant to the sustainable forest management;	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “4.1.6 The organisation must establish and adhere to a Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) that is adapted to the size and activities of the company, according to the relevant guidelines listed in annex 1. 8.1.1 The organisation must identify the indigenous peoples and local communities affected within their FMU and their needs and expectations in relation to the FMU's management. Annexe 1 Field of application (requirement 4.1.6) The first steps in setting up the PEPP are to establish the list of affected stakeholders within the FMU”
b) the relevant needs and expectations of these stakeholders.	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “4.1.6 The organisation must establish and adhere to a Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) that is adapted to the size and activities of the company, according to the relevant guidelines listed in annex 1. 8.1.1 The organisation must identify the indigenous peoples and local communities affected within their FMU and their needs and expectations in relation to the FMU's management. Annexe 1 Field of application (requirement 4.1.6) The first steps in setting up the PEPP are to establish the list of affected stakeholders within the FMU and to determine, through dialogue, their needs and expectations.”
4.3 Determining the scope of the management system		
4.3.1 The standard requires that the organisation shall determine the boundaries and applicability of the management system to establish its scope.	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “4.1.1 The organisation must identify and justify the boundaries and applicability of its management system for establishing the scope of its SFMS”



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
4.3.2 The standard requires that 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.	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “3. Terms and definitions Forest management documents Forest management documents (...) determine the objectives and the limits of forest management taking into account the sustainability and impacts of activities. 4.3.1 The organisation must establish and implement a mechanism for the internal monitoring, measurement, analysis and evaluation of the sustainable forest management system that is adapted to the scale, intensity and risks of the activities, according to the relevant guidelines listed in annex 1. Annexe 1 Field of application (requirement 4.1.1) With a view towards ongoing improvement, the management system should cover all of the following forest management aspects: planning, including inventories, implementation, monitoring and evaluations.”
5. Leadership		
5.1 The standard requires that the organisation shall provide a commitment:		
a) to comply with the sustainable forest management standard and other applicable requirements of the certification system;	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “4.1.2 The organisation must make public its commitment to comply with the PAFC sustainable forest management standard and other applicable requirements of the certification system”
b) to continuously improve the sustainable forest management system.	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “4.1.2 The organisation must make public its commitment to comply with the PAFC sustainable forest management standard (...) in particular the ongoing improvement of its sustainable forest management system”
5.2 The standard requires that this commitment shall be publicly available.	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “4.1.2 The organisation must make public its commitment to comply with the PAFC sustainable forest management standard and other applicable requirements of the certification system, in particular the ongoing improvement of its sustainable forest management system”



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
5.3 The standard requires that responsibilities for sustainable forest management shall be clearly defined and assigned.	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “4.1.4 Responsibilities for implementing the requirements of the sustainable management standard must be clearly defined and assigned within the organisation.”
6. Planning		
6.1 Actions to address risks and opportunities		
6.1.1 The standard requires that the organisation shall consider risks and opportunities concerning compliance with the requirements for sustainable forest management. Size and scale of the operations of the organisation shall be considered.	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “4.1.3 The organisation must assess the risks and opportunities of complying with the requirements of this standard and propose measures to mitigate the identified risks. 4.3.1 The organisation must establish and implement a mechanism for the internal monitoring, measurement, analysis and evaluation of the sustainable forest management system that is adapted to the scale, intensity and risks of the activities, according to the relevant guidelines listed in annex 1.”
6.1.2 The standard requires that inventory and mapping of forest resources shall be established and maintained, adequate to local and national conditions and in correspondence with the requirements described in this international benchmark standard.	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “Annexe 1 Field of application (requirement 4.1.1) With a view towards ongoing improvement, the management system should cover all of the following forest management aspects: planning - including inventories and mapping of forest resources - implementation, monitoring and evaluations. The field of application will be the scope of forest management certification.”
6.2 Management plan		
6.2.1 The standard requires that management plans shall be:		
a) elaborated and periodically updated or continually adjusted;	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “6.1. Logging operations are planned in a sustainable manner in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. 6.1.1 Management documents must be prepared in accordance with legal and regulatory provisions and validated by the competent authorities. 6.1.5 In the event of a revision of the long-term management document, it must be made in accordance with the legal and regulatory provisions and validated by the competent authorities.



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p>Changes must be clearly identified, justified and documented, in particular changes in the series boundaries, changes in the cutting sequence and changes in the minimum diameter cutting limits. Where appropriate, the revision shall take into account the results of research and/or the results of experimental systems implemented within the FMU.</p> <p>Annexe 1:</p> <p>The monitoring, measurement, analysis and evaluation system (requirement 4.3.1)</p> <p>The SFMS monitoring, measurement, analysis and evaluation system must include, at a minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • quantitative and qualitative monitoring of forest resources to ensure compliance with these standards;” <p>Explanation provided by ATIBT</p> <p>“Management plans have a time limit and have to be renewed periodically.</p> <p>Gabon: Art 22 forest code: the PA includes the review of management; Art 26: the PA is revisable every 5 years; Art 98: duration of a CFAD = duration of rotation</p> <p>Congo: Art 66 law 16-2000 a CTI lasts 15 years max; a CAT lasts 25 years max; Art 177 new code indicates that maximum duration is 30 years.</p> <p>Cameroon: art 29 periodic review of PAs for state forests;</p> <p>If something happens that modifies production prevision (limits changes, law changes), a revision also has to be done. ”</p> <p><i>The references to legislation and explanation on the content of these references sufficiently ensure that management documents shall be periodically updated.</i></p>
b) appropriate to the size and use of the forest area;	NO	<p>Explanation provided by ATIBT</p> <p>“Cameroun : art 29 law 1994</p> <p>Congo : Art 75 law of 2020</p> <p>Gabon : Art 20 and 21 law 16-2001”</p> <p><i>It is insufficiently ensured that the management document shall be appropriate to size and use of the forest area, as no reference is found in the standard, and the references to national legislation could not be assessed as they were not provided.</i></p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
c) based on applicable local, national and international legislation as well as existing land-use or other official plans; and	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “6.1.1 Management documents must be prepared in accordance with legal and regulatory provisions and validated by the competent authorities.”
d) adequately covering forest resources.	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “Terms and definitions Forest management documents Forest management documents are the official planning documents for forestry operations with respect to the forest administration. They determine the objectives and the limits of forest management (...) The terminology used in management documents varies according to the national legal and regulatory framework. They include planning documents that are: • long-term (one rotation): the management plan for the entire forest title (based on management inventories)”
6.2.2 The standard requires that management plans shall take into account the different uses or functions of the managed forest area.	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “5.1.2 The organisation must identify and document the land ownership situation within the FMU, taking into account possible titles of ownership as well as the customary rights of indigenous peoples and local communities within the FMU recognised by applicable national laws and regulations. 7.1.1 In order to preserve the biodiversity present in the FMU, ecologically important forest areas must be identified, described and mapped, at least at the scale of the FMU and according to the intensity of harvesting. Appropriate measures to maintain the criteria for which they have been identified must be prescribed, adhered to and evaluated, in particular measures to maintain the natural connectivity of ecologically important forest areas with other important areas within and surrounding the FMU. 7.1.2 Forest areas with significant soil and water protection functions must be identified, described and mapped, at least at the scale of the five-year management unit and according to the intensity of harvesting. Specific and appropriate measures to maintain the ecosystem services associated with these areas must be prescribed, adhered to and evaluated. 8.1.1 The organisation must identify the indigenous peoples and local communities affected within their FMU and their needs and expectations in relation to the FMU's management.



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p>8.1.2 Areas of interest for meeting the basic needs of affected local communities and indigenous peoples should be identified and mapped in a participatory manner.</p> <p>8.1.3 The provisions of the forest management documents relating to the exercise of usage rights and/or the series dedicated to the activities of indigenous peoples and local communities must be complied with.”</p>
6.2.3 The standard requires that management plans shall include at least a description of the current forest management unit, long-term objectives, and the average annual allowable cut, including its justification.	YES	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>“3. Terms and definitions</p> <p>Forest management documents</p> <p>Forest management documents are the official planning documents for forestry operations with respect to the forest administration.</p> <p>The terminology used in management documents varies according to the national legal and regulatory framework. They include planning documents that are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • long-term (one rotation): the management plan for the entire forest title (based on management inventories); • medium-term (5 years, more or less): the management plan for the 5-year operating unit; and where appropriate, based on management inventories; • short term (1 year): annual operating plan or operations plan for the annual allowable cut - AAC (based on operating inventories). These plans cover the entire forest resource of the appropriate geographical unit and describe the relevant management unit, taking into account other possible land uses. <p>In accordance with national requirements, the management plan describes the long-term sustainable management objectives, as well as the various management allocations (management series), and it determines and justifies the annual harvesting potential of the managed species or groups of species according to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the selected minimum diameter under management and rotation in order to comply with the legal and regulatory minimum replenishment rates; • scientific, empirical or legal and regulatory data on management parameters (growth, mortality, etc.).



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		The management plan must also define the sequential cutting order and any species that are prohibited from harvesting."
6.2.4 The standard requires that the annually allowable use of non-wood forest products shall be included in the 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.	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 "6.1.2 If the applicable national legislation and regulations allow it and if the organisation makes or contributes to a commercial use of NTFPs (including fishing and hunting products), the organisation shall establish and adhere to provisions regarding their harvest, ensuring the long-term maintenance of production, established in consultation with affected indigenous peoples and local communities."
6.2.5 The standard requires that management plans specify ways and means to minimise the risk of degradation and damage to forest ecosystems.	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 "4.2.1 The organisation must establish and implement a concrete environmental action programme, consisting of a five-year programme and an annual programme, adapted to its issues, objectives and means, according to the relevant guidelines listed in annex 1. 6.3.1 The provisions of the management documents relating to the production series enabling the long-term preservation of exploitable forest resources must be complied with, in particular the list of managed species, minimum diameter cutting limits and the cutting sequence. 7.2.1 EIAs (Environmental Impact Assessments) produced in accordance with legal and regulatory requirements and submitted to the administration for validation, and Environmental Management Plans, present a set of implemented measures to mitigate, prevent and compensate for impacts."
6.2.6 The standard requires that management plans shall take into account the results of scientific research.	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 "3. Terms and definitions Forest management documents the management plan describes the long-term sustainable management objectives (...) and it determines and justifies the annual harvesting potential of the managed species or groups of species according to: • scientific, empirical or legal and regulatory data on management parameters (growth, mortality, etc.). 6.1.5 In the event of a revision of the long-term management document, it must be made in accordance with the legal and regulatory provisions and validated by the competent authorities."



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		Changes must be clearly identified, justified and documented, in particular changes in the series boundaries, changes in the cutting sequence and changes in the minimum diameter cutting limits. Where appropriate, the revision shall take into account the results of research and/or the results of experimental systems implemented within the FMU."
6.2.7 The standard requires that a summary of the management plan, appropriate to the scope and scale of forest management, shall be publicly available and shall include information on the general objectives and forest management principles.	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 "6.1.4 A public summary of the long term management document including objectives, forest management principles and outlining the major management measures planned must be developed."
6.2.8 The standard requires that 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.	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 "6.1.4 A public summary of the long term management document (...) must be developed. Confidential information (which is commercial, personal or legally confidential in nature, or aimed at the protection of sensitive cultural sites or natural sites) may be excluded from this summary."
6.3 Compliance requirements		
6.3.1 Legal compliance		
6.3.1.1 The standard requires that the organisation shall identify and have access to the legislation applicable to its forest management and determine how these compliance obligations apply to the organisation. Note: For a country which has signed a FLEGT Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) between the European Union and the producing country, the "legislation applicable to forest management" is defined by the VPA agreement.	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 "5.1.1 The main texts of the applicable national regulations as well as the international conventions ratified by the country and those required by the PEFC Council, relating to the organisation's activities must be available on the organisation's main sites, and maintained up to date via a regulatory watch procedure. 5.1.x The organisation must determine how compliance obligations with legislation applicable to forest management applies to its activities and their content must be known by the main company managers, according to their field of specialisation. 5.2. The Organisation carries out its activities in compliance with applicable national laws and regulations."



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
6.3.1.2 The standard requires that the organisation shall comply with applicable local, national and 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.	YES	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>“5.1.1 The main texts of the applicable national regulations as well as the international conventions ratified by the country and those required by the PEFC Council, relating to the organisation's activities must be available on the organisation's main sites, and maintained up to date via a regulatory watch procedure.</p> <p>5.1.4 Anti-corruption measures must be defined and implemented by the organisation. These measures must be appropriate to the risk of corruption and comply with applicable national laws and regulations where they exist.</p> <p>5.2.1 The organisation must have (...) all necessary documented proof of its legal existence, its right to operate, as well as its authorisations, approvals and registrations with the competent administrations, including for its transport and trade activities.</p> <p>5.2.2 The organisation must have (...) all necessary documented proof of compliance with its environmental obligations in accordance with applicable national laws and regulations.</p> <p>5.2.3 The organisation must have (...) all necessary documented proof of compliance with its employer obligations to all its workers and subcontracted workers in accordance with applicable national laws and regulations.</p> <p>5.2.4 The organisation must have (...) all necessary documented proof of compliance with its obligations to indigenous peoples and local communities in accordance with applicable national laws and regulations.</p> <p>5.2.5 Taxes, fees and charges, including fines, must be paid in accordance with applicable laws and regulations and in a timely manner.</p> <p>6.1.1 Management documents must be prepared in accordance with legal and regulatory provisions and validated by the competent authorities.</p> <p>7.1.6 Species protected by national laws and regulations, species prohibited by forest management documents and species considered critically endangered of extinction on the "red list" of the IUCN (...) must be excluded from harvesting. Species listed in the CITES annexes must be harvested in compliance with the specific associated rules.</p> <p>9.1.1 The organisation must comply with legal and regulatory recruitment requirements.</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p>9.1.2 The organisation must - at the very least - comply with legal and regulatory requirements, including those of collective agreements where applicable and the ILO's fundamental conventions on working conditions.</p> <p>9.1.7 A system must exist within the organisation to ensure that the employment conditions of subcontracted workers comply with applicable laws and regulations and the requirements of the ILO's fundamental conventions. Consequences must be provided in the event of non-compliance."</p>
6.3.1.3 The standard requires that where no anti-corruption legislation exists, the organisation must take alternative anti-corruption measures appropriate to the risk of corruption.	YES	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>"5.1.4 Anti-corruption measures must be defined and implemented by the organisation. These measures must be appropriate to the risk of corruption and comply with applicable national laws and regulations where they exist."</p>
6.3.1.4 The standard requires that measures shall be implemented to address protection of the forest from unauthorised activities such as illegal logging, illegal land use, illegally initiated fires, and other illegal activities.	YES	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>"7.2.10 The organisation must monitor its FMU, and both document and map illegal activities observed within the FMU and inform the relevant authorities.</p> <p>7.2.11 The organisation must participate in the protection of its FMU against illegal activities."</p>
6.3.2 Legal, customary and traditional rights related to the forest land		
<p>6.3.2.1 The standard requires that 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, recognised and respected.</p> <p>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.</p>	YES	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>"5.1.2 The organisation must identify and document the land ownership situation within the FMU, taking into account possible titles of ownership as well as the customary rights of indigenous peoples and local communities within the FMU recognised by applicable national laws and regulations.</p> <p>8.1.7 Trees whose harvest would compete with the use made by indigenous peoples and local communities for a product other than lumber must be identified, mapped and materialised at the appropriate scale in cooperation with them, and prior to any harvesting activity. They may only be harvested with the consent of the affected indigenous peoples and local communities prior to harvesting."</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
6.3.2.2 The standard requires 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. 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.	YES	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>“5.1.2 The organisation must identify and document the land ownership situation within the FMU, taking into account possible titles of ownership as well as the customary rights of indigenous peoples and local communities within the FMU recognised by applicable national laws and regulations.</p> <p>8.1.3 The provisions of the forest management documents relating to the exercise of usage rights and/or the series dedicated to the activities of indigenous peoples and local communities must be complied with.</p> <p>8.1.4 The organisation must develop a procedure and implement an ongoing FPIC process to ensure that it conducts the full activities for which it is responsible (related operations and works, road openings, installations of living bases and industrial sites, etc.) in accordance with the customary rights of the affected indigenous peoples and local communities, including those defined in legal and regulatory texts, in ILO convention 169 and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. This procedure can include a collective compensatory system.</p> <p>Annexe 1</p> <p>Grievance, complaint and conflict management process (requirement 4.1.8)</p> <p>These processes must cover grievances, complaints and conflicts relating to (...) legal usage rights (...) and take into account any applicable national legal and regulatory requirements. (...) In the case of damage to the legal rights, property, resources and livelihoods of local people, a just and fair resolution must be found - according to the applicable regulations - and in the meantime, interim solutions must be worked out with the affected stakeholders.”</p>
6.3.2.3 The standard requires that forest practices and operations shall respect human rights as defined by the Universal Declaration on Human Rights.	YES	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>“4.1.2 The organisation must make public its commitment to comply with the PAFC sustainable forest management standard and other applicable requirements of the certification system, in particular the ongoing improvement of its sustainable forest management system and respect for human rights as set out in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights.”</p>
6.3.3 Fundamental ILO conventions		



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
<p>6.3.3.1 The standard requires that forest practices and operations shall comply with fundamental ILO conventions.</p> <p>Note: In countries where the fundamental ILO conventions have been ratified, the requirements of 6.3.3.1 apply. In countries where a fundamental convention has not been ratified and its content is not covered by applicable legislation, specific requirements shall be included in the forest management standard.</p>	YES	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>“9.1. The working conditions of workers and subcontracted workers comply with the applicable laws and regulations and the requirements of the ILO's basic conventions.”</p> <p><i>It shall be noted that Cameroon, Congo and Gabon ratified all fundamental ILO conventions.</i></p>
6.3.4 Health, safety and working conditions		
<p>6.3.4.1 The standard requires that forest operations shall be planned, organised 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.</p>	YES	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>“9.2.1 The organisation must identify its workers' health and safety needs and expectations.</p> <p>9.2.2 The risks of occupational illnesses and accidents, as well as the best occupational health and safety practices and equipment that minimise these risks, must be identified for all workstations.</p> <p>9.2.3 The organisation's workers and subcontracted workers must be informed and regularly kept up to date on the sustainable management measures referred to in this standard that are directly relevant to them in their activity(ies), in particular the risks related to the performance of their task(s) and on the appropriate preventive measures in terms of Occupational Health and Safety.”</p>
<p>6.3.4.2 The standard requires that 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.</p> <p>Note: Guidance for specifying national standards can be obtained from the ILO Code of Good Practice: Safety and Health in Forestry Work.</p>	YES	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>“9.1.2 The organisation must - at the very least - comply with legal and regulatory requirements, including those of collective agreements where applicable and the ILO's fundamental conventions on working conditions.</p> <p>9.1.8 The organisation must establish and implement a training plan for its staff and ensure that its contractors receive regular training in their areas of expertise, with a view to the proper performance of their duties and compliance with the requirements of this standard.</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p>9.2.5 Personnel must be trained to provide first aid in the various locations where the organisation operates.</p> <p>9.2.6 Sufficient first aid equipment adapted to the workstations must be accessible.</p> <p>9.2.7 In accordance with the occupational risk analysis in 9.2.2, personal protective equipment appropriate to the task being performed must be available and actually worn by both workers and subcontracted workers. The organisation must have a minimum and permanent stock of PPE that allows for the regular renewal, whenever necessary.”</p>
<p>6.3.4.3 The standard requires that wages of local and migrant forest workers as well as of contractors and other operators operating in PEFC-certified areas shall meet or exceed at least legal, industry minimum standards or, where applicable, collective bargaining agreements.</p> <p>Note: Where wages are below the living wage of a country, steps should be taken to attain increased wages towards a living wage level over time in addition to increases for inflation.</p>	NO	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>“9.1.2 The organisation must - at the very least - comply with legal and regulatory requirements, including those of collective agreements where applicable and the ILO's fundamental conventions on working conditions.”</p> <p>Explanation provided by ATIBT (partly translated with Google translate)</p> <p>“No official agreed references exist regarding living wages internationally. in the global living wage website, there is no references concerning Gabon and Congo. For Cameroun that website mentioned an amount around 105 000Fcfa (three times above the minimum wage defined in the country). (...) As no reference exists it is difficult to set a value for living wages.</p> <p>Gabon: Decree n ° 855 / PR / MTE of November 9, 2006, fixing the guaranteed minimum inter-professional wage: 80,000 CFA francs / month</p> <p>Decree n ° 127 / PR / MTEPS of 23 April 2010 fixing the minimum monthly income in the Republic of Gabon - 150,000 CFA francs / month</p> <p>Congo: Decree n ° 2008-942 of 12/31/2008 fixing the amount of the guaranteed minimum interprofessional wage: 50,400 CFA francs / month</p> <p>Cameroon: Decree n ° 2014/2217 of 07/24/2014 revalorizing the guaranteed minimum interprofessional wage: 36,270 CFA francs / month”</p> <p><i>No provisions are found that where wages are below the living wage of a country (such as in Cameroon), steps are taken to increase wages towards a living wage level over time.</i></p>
<p>6.3.4.4 The standard requires that the organisation is committed to equal opportunities, non-</p>	YES	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>“9.1.3 The organisation must develop and implement systems favouring equal opportunity, non-discrimination and anti-harassment in the workplace.</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
discrimination and freedom from workplace harassment. Gender equality shall be promoted.		9.1.4 Gender equality in recruitment and working conditions (all skills being held equal) must be promoted.”
7. Support		
7.1 Resources		
7.1.1 The standard requires that the organisation shall determine and provide the resources needed for the establishment, implementation, maintenance and continual improvement of the sustainable forest management system.	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “4.1.5 The organisation must identify and provide the material, human and budgetary resources required to establish, implement, maintain and continually improve the sustainable forest management system.”
7.2 Competence		
7.2.1 The standard requires that 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 all management planning and practices described in this benchmark.	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “9.1.8 The organisation must establish and implement a training plan for its staff and ensure that its contractors receive regular training in their areas of expertise, with a view to the proper performance of their duties and compliance with the requirements of this standard.” <i>It shall be noted that forests in these countries are state property.</i>
7.3 Communication		
7.3.1 The standard requires that effective communication and consultation with local communities, indigenous peoples and other stakeholders relating to sustainable forest management shall be provided.	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “4.1.6 The organisation must establish and adhere to a Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) that is adapted to the size and activities of the company, according to the relevant guidelines listed in annex 1. 4.1.7 The organisation must establish and adhere to a communication plan that is adapted to the size and activities of the company, according to the relevant guidelines listed in annex 1. 4.1.8 The organisation must implement grievance, complaint and conflict management processes developed with the stakeholders, according to the relevant guidelines listed in annex 1. Annexe 1



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p>The Stakeholder Engagement Plan (requirement 4.1.6)</p> <p>The objective of the stakeholder engagement plan is to determine the terms of dialogue with the various stakeholders according to the requirements of the applicable national regulations as well as those of this standard.</p> <p>The first steps in setting up the PEPP are to establish the list of affected stakeholders within the FMU and to determine, through dialogue, their needs and expectations. The SEP must determine and formalise the practical terms of the dialogue with the stakeholders, including its scope, its frequency and its level of participation (...), depending on the category of stakeholders that are involved (affected, involved, or otherwise)."</p>
7.4 Complaints		
7.4.1 The standard requires that appropriate mechanisms are in place for resolving complaints and disputes relating to forest management operations, land use rights and work conditions.	YES	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>"4.1.8 The organisation must implement grievance, complaint and conflict management processes developed with the stakeholders, according to the relevant guidelines listed in annex 1.</p> <p>Annexe 1</p> <p>Grievance, complaint and conflict management process (requirement 4.1.8)</p> <p>These processes must cover grievances, complaints and conflicts relating to forest management, legal usage rights and working conditions"</p>
7.5 Documented Information		
7.5.1 The standard requires that the organisation's management system shall include documented information required by the standard and determined by the organisation as being necessary for the effectiveness of the sustainable forest management system.	YES	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>"4.1.9 The organisation must implement a documentation management system appropriate to its SFMS and in line with the scale, intensity and risk of its activities, according to the relevant guidelines listed in annex 1.</p> <p>Annexe 1</p> <p>Document management system (requirement 4.1.9)</p> <p>The documentation management system must enable the organisation to provide relevant and up-to-date documented information based on the organisation's activities, including, but not limited to:</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p>✓ the documentation required by this standard, including the procedures manual;</p> <p>✓ documented proof of compliance with the requirements of this standard that the organisation deems necessary to ensure the effectiveness of the sustainable forest management system;”</p>
7.5.2 The standard requires that the documented information is relevant, and updated as appropriate, to the activities of the organisation.	YES	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>“4.1.9 The organisation must implement a documentation management system appropriate to its SFMS and in line with the scale, intensity and risk of its activities, according to the relevant guidelines listed in annex 1.</p> <p>Annexe 1:</p> <p>Document management system (requirement 4.1.9)</p> <p>The documentation management system must enable the organisation to provide relevant and up-to-date documented information based on the organisation's activities”</p>
8. Operation		
8.1 Criterion 1: Maintenance or appropriate enhancement of forest resources and their contribution to the global carbon cycle		
8.1.1 The standard requires that 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.	YES	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>“6.1.3 The organisation must ensure that its forest management maintains a harvestable volume of lumber and a species distribution that will sustain economic activity beyond the rotation.</p> <p>7.1.1 In order to preserve the biodiversity present in the FMU, ecologically important forest areas must be identified, described and mapped, at least at the scale of the FMU and according to the intensity of harvesting. Appropriate measures to maintain the criteria for which they have been identified must be prescribed, adhered to and evaluated, in particular measures to maintain the natural connectivity of ecologically important forest areas with other important areas within and surrounding the FMU.</p> <p>7.1.2 Forest areas with significant soil and water protection functions must be identified, described and mapped, at least at the scale of the five-year management unit and according to the intensity of harvesting. Specific and appropriate measures to maintain the ecosystem services associated with these areas must be prescribed, adhered to and evaluated.”</p> <p><i>Observation: the standard wording is aiming at maintaining and not at enhancing or increasing forests and their ecosystem services and values, such as in the situation of degraded forests.</i></p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
8.1.2 The standard requires that 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 minimise adverse impacts on forest resources.	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “7.3.3 The forest's ability to store and isolate carbon in the medium to long term must be safeguarded by balancing harvest rates with growth, using appropriate management measures and reduced impact logging measures.”
8.1.3 The standard requires that climate positive practices in management operations, such as greenhouse gas emission reductions and efficient use of resources shall be encouraged.	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “7.3.4 The organisation must make optimal use of its resources within the scope of its SFMS to reduce GHG emissions.”
8.1.4 The standard requires that forest conversion shall not occur unless in justified circumstances where the conversion:		
a) is in compliance with national and regional policy and legislation applicable for land use and forest management and is a result of national or regional land-use planning governed by a governmental or other official authority including consultation with affected stakeholders; and	NO	NORM-001-2019-1 “7.3.6 In the event of a forest conversion within the FMU, (...) The conversion must also: - Comply with national land use and forest management policies and regulations and comply with the management plan; Note: plantations established as a result of a forest conversion after 31 December 2010 are not eligible for certification.” Explanation provided by ATIBT “The destination of the land in the countries covered by the standard (logging, conversion, plantation, etc.) is a government choice. If the choice of conversion is made, stakeholders have no opportunity to give their opinions.” <i>It is insufficiently ensured that the land use policies include consultation with affected stakeholders. It shall be noted that when national / regional policy and legislation does not include requirements for consultation with affected stakeholders, the organisation shall include consultation with affected stakeholders. This could for instance apply in the case of road constructions, labour camps, log landings.</i>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
b) entails a small proportion (no greater than 5 %) of forest type within the certified area; and	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “7.3.6 In the event of a forest conversion within the FMU, it must not destroy forests with a significantly high carbon stock and it must not exceed 5% of each forest type identified in the management plan.”
c) does not have negative impacts on ecologically important forest areas, culturally and socially significant areas, or other protected areas; and	NO	NORM-001-2019-1 “7.3.6 In the event of a forest conversion within the FMU, (...) The conversion must also: - Contribute to enhance ecologically, socially or culturally important forest areas and/or other protected areas on the long term” <i>It is insufficiently ensured that conversion shall not have negative impacts on the specific areas, the more as the wording “or” in the clause leaves the option open to have a contribution to the one function, while having negative impact on the other.</i>
d) does not destroy areas of significantly high carbon stock; and	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “7.3.2 The organisation must produce mapping of the FMU's estimated carbon stocks that includes - at a minimum - the aerial carbon stocks, and it must identify the significantly high carbon stocks. The guidelines for this mapping are provided in annex 2.” “7.3.6 In the event of a forest conversion within the FMU, it must not destroy forests with a significantly high carbon stock”
e) makes a contribution to long-term conservation, economic, and social benefits.	NO	NORM-001-2019-1 “7.3.6 In the event of a forest conversion within the FMU, (...) The conversion must also: - Contribute to enhance ecologically, socially or culturally important forest areas and/or other protected areas on the long term; - Contribute to the long term preservation of socio-economic benefits.” <i>It is insufficiently ensured that the conversion will contribute to conservation, as:</i> - <i>The wording “or” and “and/or” in the first clause does insufficiently ensure a contribution to conservation. For instance, it allows for contribution to socially important forest areas only.</i> - <i>The second clause only refers to the preservation of socio-economic benefits.</i>
8.1.5 The standard requires that afforestation of ecologically important non-forest ecosystems shall not occur unless in justified circumstances where the conversion:		



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
a) is in compliance with national and regional policy and legislation applicable for land use and forest management and is a result of national or regional land-use planning governed by a governmental or other official authority; and	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “7.3.7 In the case of forest plantations established on non-forest ecosystems, they must not result in the destruction of areas with significantly high carbon stocks, in particular peatlands, and must not be established on more than 5% of the non-forest ecosystems considered ecologically important within the FMU. Plantations must: - Comply with national land use and forest management policies and legislation and regulations and comply with the management plan; Note: plantations on significant non-forest ecosystems carried out after 31 December 2010 are not eligible for certification.”
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	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “7.3.7 In the case of forest plantations established on non-forest ecosystems, (...) Plantations must: - Have been subject to a participatory and transparent decision-making process with stakeholders affected by the conversion;”
c) does not have negative impacts on threatened (including vulnerable, rare or endangered) nonforest ecosystems, culturally and socially significant areas, important habitats of threatened species or other protected areas; and	NO	NORM-001-2019-1 “7.3.7 In the case of forest plantations established on non-forest ecosystems, (...) Plantations must: - Make a positive contribution to threatened (vulnerable, rare, endangered) non-forest ecosystems, areas of important social and cultural interest, significant habitats of threatened species and/or other protected areas;” <i>It is insufficiently ensured that conversion shall not have negative impacts on the specific areas, the more as the wording “or” in the clause leaves the option open to have a positive contribution to one forest type, while having negative impact on the other.</i>
d) entails a small proportion of the ecologically important non-forest ecosystem managed by an organisation; and	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “7.3.7 In the case of forest plantations established on non-forest ecosystems, (...) must not be established on more than 5% of the non-forest ecosystems considered ecologically important within the FMU.”
e) does not destroy areas of significantly high carbon stock; and	YES	NORM-001-2019-1



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p>“7.3.2 The organisation must produce mapping of the FMU's estimated carbon stocks that includes - at a minimum - the aerial carbon stocks, and it must identify the significantly high carbon stocks. The guidelines for this mapping are provided in annex 2.</p> <p>7.3.7 In the case of forest plantations established on non-forest ecosystems, they must not result in the destruction of areas with significantly high carbon stocks, in particular peatlands”</p>
f) makes a contribution to long-term conservation, economic, and social benefits.	NO	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>“7.3.7 In the case of forest plantations established on non-forest ecosystems, (...) Plantations must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Make a positive contribution to threatened (vulnerable, rare, endangered) non-forest ecosystems, areas of important social and cultural interest, significant habitats of threatened species and/or other protected areas; - Contribute to the preservation of socio-economic benefits over the long term.” <p><i>It is insufficiently ensured that the conversion will contribute to conservation, as:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>The wording “and/or” in the first clause does insufficiently ensure a contribution to conservation. For instance, it allows for contribution to socially important forest areas only.</i> - <i>The second clause only refers to the preservation of socio-economic benefits.</i>
8.1.6 The standard requires that if conversion of severely degraded forests to forest plantations is being considered, it must add economic, ecological, social and/or cultural value. Precondition of adding such value are circumstances where the conversion:		
a) is in compliance with national and regional policy and legislation applicable for land use and forest management and is a result of national or regional land-use planning governed by a governmental or other official authority; and	YES	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>“7.3.8 The conversion of damaged, non-regenerable proven forests into forest plantations by the organisation can only take place if the conversion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complies with national land use and forest management policies, laws and regulations and adheres to the forest management plan;”
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	YES	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>“7.3.8 The conversion of damaged, non-regenerable proven forests into forest plantations by the organisation can only take place if the conversion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Has been subject to a participatory and transparent decision-making process with stakeholders affected by the conversion;”



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
c) has a positive impact on long-term carbon sequestration capacity of forest vegetation; and	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “7.3.8 The conversion of damaged, non-regenerable proven forests into forest plantations by the organisation can only take place if the conversion: - Has a positive impact on the forest's ability to store carbon over the long term;”
d) does not have negative impacts on ecologically important forest areas, culturally and socially significant areas, or other protected areas; and	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “7.3.8 The conversion of damaged, non-regenerable proven forests into forest plantations by the organisation can only take place if the conversion: - Has no negative impacts on ecologically, culturally or socially important forest areas and/or other protected areas;”
e) safeguards protective functions of forests for society and other regulating or supporting ecosystem services; and	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “7.3.8 The conversion of damaged, non-regenerable proven forests into forest plantations by the organisation can only take place if the conversion: - Preserves these forests' protective functions, including ecosystem services;”
f) safeguards socio-economic functions of forests, including the recreational function and aesthetic values of forests and other cultural services; and	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “7.3.8 The conversion of damaged, non-regenerable proven forests into forest plantations by the organisation can only take place if the conversion: - Preserves these forests' socio-economic functions, including recreational functions, aesthetic values and other cultural services;”
g) has a land history providing evidence that the degradation is not the consequence of deliberate poor forest management practices; and	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “7.3.8 (...) Plantations resulting from the conversion of damaged forests, whose state of damage is the result of deliberately poor management, for the purpose of conversion, are not eligible for certification.
h) is based on credible evidence demonstrating that the area is neither recovered nor in the process of recovery.	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “7.3.8 The conversion of damaged, non-regenerable proven forests into forest plantations by the organisation can only take place if the conversion” <i>Observation: the wording “damaged, non-regenerable proven forests” is a bit vague, as it is expected it should read as “proven damaged and proven non-regenerable forests”.</i>
8.2 Criterion 2: Maintenance of forest ecosystem health and vitality		



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
8.2.1 The standard requires that 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.	YES	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>“6.3.3 In the event of a proven lack of natural regeneration or a very low rate of the harvested species' reconstitution, as a precautionary and preventive principle, additional measures must be prescribed and implemented for the relevant species, such as rehabilitation.</p> <p>6.3.4 Specific measures must be prescribed and implemented to minimise damage to the tree population so as not to negatively affect the FMU's production capacity.</p> <p>7 1 0 : Management planning shall aim to maintain, conserve or enhance biodiversity on landscape, ecosystem, species</p> <p>7.2.2 Activities with a particularly significant impact must be identified and subjected to an in situ operational assessment of their impacts. The organisation is to apply mitigating, preventive or compensation measures appropriate to the scale, the intensity and the risk.</p> <p>7.2.13 In the case of a degraded forest, the organisation must take measures to maintain or improve the stability of the forest by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - encouraging afforestation, reforestation and other planting activities. - promoting pest control operations, silvicultural alternatives and biological measures to minimise the use of pesticides <p>7.3.3 The forest's ability to store and isolate carbon in the medium to long term must be safeguarded by balancing harvest rates with growth, using appropriate management measures and reduced impact logging measures”</p>
8.2.2 The standard requires that 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.	YES	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>“6.3.3 In the event of a proven lack of natural regeneration or a very low rate of the harvested species' reconstitution, as a precautionary and preventive principle, additional measures must be prescribed and implemented for the relevant species, such as rehabilitation.</p> <p>6.3.4 Specific measures must be prescribed and implemented to minimise damage to the tree population so as not to negatively affect the FMU's production capacity.</p> <p>7 1 0 : Management planning shall aim to maintain, conserve or enhance biodiversity on landscape, ecosystem, species</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p>7.2.2 Activities with a particularly significant impact must be identified and subjected to an in situ operational assessment of their impacts. The organisation is to apply mitigating, preventive or compensation measures appropriate to the scale, the intensity and the risk.</p> <p>7.2.13 In the case of a degraded forest, the organisation must take measures to maintain or improve the stability of the forest by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - encouraging afforestation, reforestation and other planting activities. - promoting pest control operations, silvicultural alternatives and biological measures to minimise the use of pesticides <p>7.3.3 The forest's ability to store and isolate carbon in the medium to long term must be safeguarded by balancing harvest rates with growth, using appropriate management measures and reduced impact logging measures”</p> <p><i>It shall be noted that the natural state of forests in the Congo Basin already provides for adequate genetic, species and structural diversity, and provided references sufficiently ensure that these diversities are maintained.</i></p>
8.2.3 The standard requires that 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.	YES	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>“7.2.12 Where permitted by national laws and regulations, the use of fire shall be restricted to areas where it is an essential forest management tool for regeneration, wildfire protection, habitat management or a recognised practice of local communities and indigenous peoples. In these cases, and when organised by the organisation, management and control measures must be implemented, in accordance with legal and regulatory requirements, in particular to preserve ecologically important forest areas.”</p>
8.2.4 The standard requires that appropriate forest management practices such as reforestation and afforestation with tree species and provenances that are suited to the site conditions or the use of tending, harvesting and transport techniques that minimise tree and/or soil damages shall be applied.	YES	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>“6.3.4 Specific measures must be prescribed and implemented to minimise damage to the tree population so as not to negatively affect the FMU's production capacity.</p> <p>7.1.3 The planning and implementation of infrastructure must be carried out in such a way as to minimise damage to ecologically important forest areas and ecosystem services related to soil and water protection.</p> <p>7.1.5 Specific measures must be established and implemented in order to minimise damage to soil and watercourses within the FMU, in accordance with applicable laws and regulations and according to the relevant guidelines listed in annex 2.</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		7.1.7 When planting trees, the organisation must comply with the national laws that are in effect and favour local species that are adapted to the conditions of the site. If introduced species, provenances or varieties are used, only those whose impacts on the ecosystem have been scientifically assessed may be used, if these negative impacts can be avoided or minimised."
8.2.5 The standard requires that 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 minimisation of risk of environmental harm arising from the accidental spillage shall be in place.	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 "7.2.4 The organisation shall establish a system for the gathering, treatment and disposal of waste generated within the scope of its SFMS, in accordance with applicable laws and regulations, according to the relevant guidelines listed in annex 2. 7.2.6 Preventive and corrective measures to limit accidental spills and the risk of pollution from oils, hydrocarbons and other chemicals must be established and implemented. An emergency procedure for accidental spills is available and implemented. Annex 2 Waste management (requirement 7.2.4) The organisation must not leave any non-organic waste in the forest. (...) Disposal of all waste must be sought in accordance with economically viable possibilities at both the national and international levels. The organisation must demonstrate that it has researched and implemented all possible solutions to recycle and minimise on-site waste storage or remove it in an environmentally-responsible manner."
8.2.6 The standard requires that integrated pest management, appropriate silviculture alternatives and other biological measures shall be preferred to minimise the use of pesticides.	NO	NORM-001-2019-1 "7.2.13 In the case of a degraded forest, the organisation must take measures to maintain or improve the stability of the forest by - encouraging afforestation, reforestation and other planting activities. - promoting pest control operations, silvicultural alternatives and biological measures to minimise the use of pesticides" <i>For relatively intact natural forests in the Congo Basin, the pest management could be considered an integral part of the functioning ecosystem. However, this is not ensured for planted forests on non-forest land, as clause 7.2.13 specifically relates to afforestation / reforestation of degraded forest. It is not ensured that integrated pest management, appropriate silviculture alternatives and other biological measures shall be preferred in planted forests.</i>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
8.2.7 The standard requires that any use of pesticides is documented.	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “7.2.3 The organisation must establish and adhere to a policy on the use of chemicals, according to the relevant guidelines listed in annex 2. Annex 2: Use of chemical products (requirement 7.2.3) Monitoring of the quantities used and the sites where the products have been used must be implemented.”
8.2.8 The standard requires that the WHO Class 1A and 1B pesticides and other highly toxic pesticides shall be prohibited, except where no other viable alternative is available. Any exception to the usage of WHO Class 1A and 1B pesticides shall be defined in the national/regional standard.	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “Annex 2 Use of chemical products (requirement 7.2.3) The organisation must prohibit the use of Type 1A and 1B (WHO classification) pesticides and other highly toxic pesticides identified in legal and regulatory texts, unless no viable alternatives are available. In the event of force majeure, and in the absence of any other technical alternative and on the basis of a detailed justification, these products may be used after the Certification Body has been informed.”
8.2.9 The standard requires that 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.	YES	NORM-001-2019-1, Annex 2: “Use of chemical products (requirement 7.2.3) The organisation must prohibit the use of pesticides containing Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) listed by the Stockholm Convention.”
8.2.10 The standard requires that the use of pesticides shall follow the instructions given by the pesticide producer and be implemented with proper equipment by trained personnel.	YES	NORM-001-2019-1, Annex 2: “7.2.5 Chemicals and other products hazardous to the environment and health must be handled by trained personnel wearing appropriate safety gear. The instructions of the manufacturers and/or those of national or international bodies recognised in the prevention of environmental, health and occupational hazards must be followed.”



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
8.2.11 The standard requires that where fertilisers 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.	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “Annex 2: Use of chemical products (requirement 7.2.3) When fertilizers are used by the organisation, they must be applied in a controlled manner so as to minimise environmental impacts.”
8.3 Criterion 3: Maintenance and encouragement of productive functions of forests (wood and non-wood)		
8.3.1 The standard requires that the capability of forests to produce a range of wood and non-wood forest products and services on a sustainable basis shall be maintained.	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “6.3. The logging activities ensure of the sustainable production of the forest products that are harvested. 6.3.1 The provisions of the management documents relating to the production series enabling the long-term preservation of exploitable forest resources must be complied with, in particular the list of managed species, minimum diameter cutting limits and the cutting sequence. 6.3.4 Specific measures must be prescribed and implemented to minimise damage to the tree population so as not to negatively affect the FMU's production capacity.”
8.3.2 The standard requires that sound economic performance shall be pursued, taking into account possibilities for new markets and economic activities in connection with all relevant goods and services of forests.	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “6.3.7 The organisation must demonstrate that it seeks to improve its economic performance by taking into account the potential for new markets and new economic activities in relation to all relevant forest goods and services.”
8.3.3 The standard requires that 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.	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “6.3. The logging activities ensure of the sustainable production of the forest products that are harvested. 6.3.1 The provisions of the management documents relating to the production series enabling the long-term preservation of exploitable forest resources must be complied with, in particular the list of managed species, minimum diameter cutting limits and the cutting sequence. 6.3.4 Specific measures must be prescribed and implemented to minimise damage to the tree population so as not to negatively affect the FMU's production capacity.”



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		7.1.5 Specific measures must be established and implemented in order to minimise damage to soil and watercourses within the FMU, in accordance with applicable laws and regulations and according to the relevant guidelines listed in annex 2.”
8.3.4 The standard requires that 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.	YES	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>“6. The organisation conducts its forestry activities in a sustainable manner within the FMU.</p> <p>6.1. Logging operations are planned in a sustainable manner in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.</p> <p>6.1.2 If the applicable national legislation and regulations allow it and if the organisation makes or contributes to a commercial use of NTFPs (including fishing and hunting products), the organisation shall establish and adhere to provisions regarding their harvest, ensuring the long-term maintenance of production, established in consultation with affected indigenous peoples and local communities.</p> <p>6.1.3 The organisation must ensure that its forest management maintains a harvestable volume of lumber and a species distribution that will sustain economic activity beyond the rotation.</p> <p>6.3. The logging activities ensure of the sustainable production of the forest products that are harvested.</p> <p>6.3.1 The provisions of the management documents relating to the production series enabling the long-term preservation of exploitable forest resources must be complied with, in particular the list of managed species, minimum diameter cutting limits and the cutting sequence.</p> <p>6.3.2 The organisation must optimise the use of the products it harvests.”</p>
8.3.5 The standard requires that adequate infrastructure such as roads, skid tracks or bridges shall be planned, established and maintained to ensure efficient delivery of goods and services while minimising negative impacts on the environment.	YES	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>“6.3.5 The construction of roads, parks and engineering structures (bridges) must adhere to the planned route, while taking into account any applicable legal and regulatory provisions. Any major modification must be justified.</p> <p>6.3.6 The organisation must demonstrate adequate road construction progress to ensure the proper evacuation of harvested products under acceptable technical and economic conditions.</p> <p>7.1.5 Specific measures must be established and implemented in order to minimise damage to soil and watercourses within the FMU, in accordance with applicable laws and regulations and according to the relevant guidelines listed in annex 2.</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p>Annex 2</p> <p>Measures to minimise damage to soil and watercourses within the FMU (requirement 7.1.5)</p> <p>The measures referred to here are reduced impact logging measures that minimise negative impacts on erosion-prone areas, sensitive soils, and the quality and quantity of water resources so as to not significantly affect the water balance and downstream water quality.</p> <p>The measures referred to in indicator 7.1.5 include, at a minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ the construction and maintenance of infrastructures (e.g. installation and regular maintenance of drainage systems), ✓ operating rules on the banks of watercourses and on steep slopes, ✓ the use of adapted logging techniques and equipment (use of appropriate heavy equipment, "high shovel" skidding, etc.). <p>Balance must be sought between the implementation of these techniques and the efficient conduct of logging operations."</p> <p><i>Observation: it is assumed that the word "parks" in clause 6.3.5 are locations to stack logs (log ponds).</i></p>
8.4 Criterion 4: Maintenance, conservation and appropriate enhancement of biological diversity in forest ecosystems		
8.4.1 The standard requires that management planning shall aim to maintain, conserve or enhance biodiversity on landscape, ecosystem, species and genetic levels.	NO	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>"6.1.x Management planning shall aim to maintain, conserve or enhance diversity and biodiversity on landscape, ecosystem, species.</p> <p>Annex 3: PEFC requirements not included in the PAFC Congo Basin sustainable forest management standard</p> <p>An analysis of PEFC requirements demonstrated that some requirements were not adapted to the context, risks and level of knowledge available in the Congo Basin. The justifications are detailed below.</p> <p>Requirements partially excluded from the standard</p> <p>8.4.1 (...) All of the requirements related to the taking into account of species/population genetics are impossible to monitor in the Congo Basin given the current state of knowledge on the subject."</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<i>It is insufficiently ensured that forest management planning shall aim to maintain, conserve or enhance biodiversity on genetic levels.</i>
8.4.2 The standard requires that 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.	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “7.1.1 In order to preserve the biodiversity present in the FMU, ecologically important forest areas must be identified, described and mapped, at least at the scale of the FMU and according to the intensity of harvesting. Appropriate measures to maintain the criteria for which they have been identified must be prescribed, adhered to and evaluated, in particular measures to maintain the natural connectivity of ecologically important forest areas with other important areas within and surrounding the FMU.”
8.4.3 The standard requires that 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.	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “7.1.6 Species protected by national laws and regulations, species prohibited by forest management documents and species considered critically endangered of extinction on the "red list" of the IUCN1 (International Union for the Conservation of Nature) must be excluded from harvesting. Species listed in the CITES annexes must be harvested in compliance with the specific associated rules. In the event that the organisation harvests a species that is not protected but is considered rare, threatened or endangered, it must justify and implement measures to avoid aggravating the situation.”
8.4.4 The standard requires that successful regeneration shall be ensured through natural regeneration or planting that is adequate to ensure the quantity and quality of the forest resources.	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “6.3.3 In the event of a proven lack of natural regeneration or a very low rate of the harvested species' reconstitution, as a precautionary and preventive principle, additional measures must be prescribed and implemented for the relevant species.”
8.4.5 The standard requires that 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 minimised.	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “7.1.7 When planting trees, the organisation must comply with the national laws that are in effect and favour local species that are adapted to the conditions of the site. If introduced species, provenances or varieties are used, only those whose impacts on the ecosystem have been scientifically assessed may be used, if these negative impacts can be avoided or minimised.”



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
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 recognised as guidance for avoidance of invasive species.		
8.4.6 The standard requires that afforestation, reforestation and other tree planting activities that contribute to the improvement and restoration of ecological connectivity shall be promoted.	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “7.2.13 In the case of a degraded forest, the organisation must take measures to maintain or improve the stability of the forest by - encouraging afforestation, reforestation and other planting activities.” <i>Observation: the reference to afforestation is strange, as the clause already refers to forest land (though in a degraded state), where afforestation is not applicable.</i>
8.4.7 The standard requires that 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.	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “7.1.8 When planting trees, the organisation must not use GMOs.”
8.4.8 The standard requires that 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.	N.A.	NORM-001-2019-1 “Annex 3: PEFC requirements not included in the PAFC Congo Basin sustainable forest management standard An analysis of PEFC requirements demonstrated that some requirements were not adapted to the context, risks and level of knowledge available in the Congo Basin. The justifications are detailed below.



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p>Requirements partially excluded from the standard</p> <p>8.4.8 (...) The vast majority of the forests that could be PAFC-certified and those where sustainable harvesting practices are used are natural tropical forests in which issues of genetics, horizontal/vertical structures, dead wood, etc. are not relevant yet.”</p> <p><i>It is concluded that the natural forests of the Congo Basin already contain high diversity in structures and species, which also applies to set aside areas in forest plantations, which makes the requirement redundant for the Congo Basin forests.</i></p>
8.4.9 The standard requires that traditional management practices that create valuable ecosystems on appropriate sites shall be supported, where appropriate.	N.A.	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>“Annex 3: PEFC requirements not included in the PAFC Congo Basin sustainable forest management standard</p> <p>An analysis of PEFC requirements demonstrated that some requirements were not adapted to the context, risks and level of knowledge available in the Congo Basin. The justifications are detailed below.</p> <p>Requirements entirely excluded from this standard</p> <p>8.4.8 (...) These types of valuable ecosystems do not appear to be present in the Forest Management Units covered by the PAFC Congo Basin standard”</p> <p><i>It is concluded that the absence of such management practices makes the requirement redundant for the Congo Basin forests.</i></p>
8.4.10 The standard requires that 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.	YES	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>“6. The organisation conducts its forestry activities in a sustainable manner within the FMU.</p> <p>6.1. Logging operations are planned in a sustainable manner in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.</p> <p>6.1.3 The organisation must ensure that its forest management maintains a harvestable volume of lumber and a species distribution that will sustain economic activity beyond the rotation.</p> <p>6.3. The logging activities ensure of the sustainable production of the forest products that are harvested.</p> <p>6.3.1 The provisions of the management documents relating to the production series enabling the long-term preservation of exploitable forest resources must be complied with, in particular the list of managed species, minimum diameter cutting limits and the cutting sequence.</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p>6.3.4 Specific measures must be prescribed and implemented to minimise damage to the tree population so as not to negatively affect the FMU's production capacity.</p> <p>7.1.5 Specific measures must be established and implemented in order to minimise damage to soil and watercourses within the FMU, in accordance with applicable laws and regulations and according to the relevant guidelines listed in annex 2.</p> <p>7.3.3 The forest's ability to store and isolate carbon in the medium to long term must be safeguarded by balancing harvest rates with growth, using appropriate management measures and reduced impact logging measures.</p> <p>Annex 2</p> <p>Measures to minimise damage to soil and watercourses within the FMU (requirement 7.1.5)</p> <p>The measures referred to here are reduced impact logging measures that minimise negative impacts on erosion-prone areas, sensitive soils, and the quality and quantity of water resources”</p>
8.4.11 The standard requires that 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.	YES	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>“7.1.3 The planning and implementation of infrastructure must be carried out in such a way as to minimise damage to ecosystems, especially to rare, sensitive or representative ecosystems and genetic reserves, and to take threatened or other key species – in particular their migration patterns – into consideration.”</p>
8.4.12 The standard requires that, 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.	N.A.	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>“Annex 3: PEFC requirements not included in the PAFC Congo Basin sustainable forest management standard</p> <p>An analysis of PEFC requirements demonstrated that some requirements were not adapted to the context, risks and level of knowledge available in the Congo Basin. The justifications are detailed below.</p> <p>Requirements entirely excluded from this standard</p> <p>8.4.12 (...) The vast majority of the forests that could be PAFC-certified and those where sustainable harvesting practices are used are natural tropical forests in which issues of</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		genetics, horizontal/vertical structures, dead wood, etc. have not yet been addressed. The same is true of (...) the pressure of animal populations on the forest's growth and regeneration." <i>It is concluded that in natural forests in the Congo Basin, pressure of animal populations on forest regeneration and biodiversity is not an issue, due to the high complexity and diversity of the forest ecosystems present.</i>
8.4.13 The standard requires that 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.	N.A.	NORM-001-2019-1 "Annex 3: PEFC requirements not included in the PAFC Congo Basin sustainable forest management standard An analysis of PEFC requirements demonstrated that some requirements were not adapted to the context, risks and level of knowledge available in the Congo Basin. The justifications are detailed below. Requirements partially excluded from the standard 8.4.13 (...) The vast majority of the forests that could be PAFC-certified and those where sustainable harvesting practices are used are natural tropical forests in which issues of genetics, horizontal/vertical structures, dead wood, etc. have not yet been addressed." <i>It is concluded that the natural state of forests in the Congo Basin already sufficiently provide for standing and fallen dead wood, hollow trees, old groves and rare tree species.</i>
8.5 Criterion 5: Maintenance or appropriate enhancement of protective functions in forest management (notably soil and water)		
8.5.1 The standard requires that 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.	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 "7.1.2 Forest areas with significant soil and water protection functions must be identified, described and mapped, at least at the scale of the five-year management unit and according to the intensity of harvesting. Specific and appropriate measures to maintain the ecosystem services associated with these areas must be prescribed, adhered to and evaluated. 7.3.3 The forest's ability to store and isolate carbon in the medium to long term must be safeguarded by balancing harvest rates with growth, using appropriate management measures and reduced impact logging measures."
8.5.2 The standard requires that areas that fulfil specific and recognised protective functions for society shall be mapped, and forest management	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 "7.1.2 Forest areas with significant soil and water protection functions must be identified, described and mapped, at least at the scale of the five-year management unit and according to



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
plans and operations shall ensure the maintenance or enhancement of these functions.		the intensity of harvesting. Specific and appropriate measures to maintain the ecosystem services associated with these areas must be prescribed, adhered to and evaluated. 8.1.2 Areas of interest for meeting the basic needs of affected local communities and indigenous peoples should be identified and mapped in a participatory manner. 8.1.6 Places of historical, cultural or religious significance to be protected from the organisation's activities must be identified, mapped and materialised, with the consent of the impacted indigenous peoples and local communities, prior to any activities.”
8.5.3 The standard requires that special care shall be given to forestry operations on sensitive soils and erosion-prone areas as well as in areas where operations might lead to excessive erosion of soil into watercourses. Techniques applied and the machinery used shall be suitable for such areas. Special measures shall be taken to minimise the pressure of animal populations on these areas.	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “7.1.5 Specific measures must be established and implemented in order to minimise damage to soil and watercourses within the FMU, in accordance with applicable laws and regulations and according to the relevant guidelines listed in annex 2. Annex 2: Measures to minimise damage to soil and watercourses within the FMU (requirement 7.1.5) The measures referred to here are reduced impact logging measures that minimise negative impacts on erosion-prone areas, sensitive soils, and the quality and quantity of water resources so as to not significantly affect the water balance and downstream water quality. The measures referred to in indicator 7.1.5 include, at a minimum: ✓ the construction and maintenance of infrastructures (e.g. installation and regular maintenance of drainage systems), ✓ operating rules on the banks of watercourses and on steep slopes, ✓ the use of adapted logging techniques and equipment (use of appropriate heavy equipment, "high shovel" skidding, etc.). Balance must be sought between the implementation of these techniques and the efficient conduct of logging operations.”
8.5.4 The standard requires that 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	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “7.1.2 Forest areas with significant soil and water protection functions must be identified, described and mapped, at least at the scale of the five-year management unit and according to the intensity of harvesting. Specific and appropriate measures to maintain the ecosystem services associated with these areas must be prescribed, adhered to and evaluated.



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
<p>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.</p>		<p>7.1.5 Specific measures must be established and implemented in order to minimise damage to soil and watercourses within the FMU, in accordance with applicable laws and regulations and according to the relevant guidelines listed in annex 2.</p> <p>Annex 2: Measures to minimise damage to soil and watercourses within the FMU (requirement 7.1.5) The measures referred to here are reduced impact logging measures that minimise negative impacts on erosion-prone areas, sensitive soils, and the quality and quantity of water resources so as to not significantly affect the water balance and downstream water quality. The measures referred to in indicator 7.1.5 include, at a minimum: ✓ the construction and maintenance of infrastructures (e.g. installation and regular maintenance of drainage systems), ✓ operating rules on the banks of watercourses and on steep slopes, ✓ the use of adapted logging techniques and equipment (use of appropriate heavy equipment, "high shovel" skidding, etc.). Balance must be sought between the implementation of these techniques and the efficient conduct of logging operations."</p>
<p>8.5.5 The standard requires that construction of roads, bridges and other infrastructure shall be carried out in a manner that minimises 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.</p>	YES	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>"7.1.5 Specific measures must be established and implemented in order to minimise damage to soil and watercourses within the FMU, in accordance with applicable laws and regulations and according to the relevant guidelines listed in annex 2.</p> <p>Annex 2: Measures to minimise damage to soil and watercourses within the FMU (requirement 7.1.5) The measures referred to here are reduced impact logging measures that minimise bare soil exposure, negative impacts on erosion-prone areas, sensitive soils, and preserve the quality and quantity of water resources so as to not significantly affect the water balance and downstream water quality. The measures referred to in indicator 7.1.5 include, at a minimum: ✓ the construction and maintenance of infrastructures (e.g. installation and regular maintenance of drainage systems),</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p>✓ operating rules on the banks of watercourses and on steep slopes,</p> <p>✓ the use of adapted logging techniques and equipment (use of appropriate heavy equipment, "high shovel" skidding, etc.).</p> <p>Balance must be sought between the implementation of these techniques and the efficient conduct of logging operations."</p>
8.6 Criterion 6: Maintenance or appropriate enhancement of socio-economic functions and conditions		
8.6.1 The standard requires that forest management planning shall aim to respect all socio-economic functions of forests.	YES	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>"8.1.2 Areas of interest for meeting the basic needs of affected local communities and indigenous peoples should be identified and mapped in a participatory manner."</p>
8.6.2 The standard requires that 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.	N.A.	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>"Annex 3: PEFC requirements not included in the PAFC Congo Basin sustainable forest management standard</p> <p>An analysis of PEFC requirements demonstrated that some requirements were not adapted to the context, risks and level of knowledge available in the Congo Basin. The justifications are detailed below.</p> <p>Requirements entirely excluded from this standard</p> <p>8.6.2 (...) The vast majority of the forests that could be PAFC-certified and those where sustainable harvesting practices are used are natural tropical forests in which issues of genetics, horizontal/vertical structures, dead wood, etc. are not relevant yet. The same is true of public access, the recreational functions of the forests"</p> <p><i>In the Congo Basin, forest do not have a recreational function for society. The requirement is therefore considered not applicable.</i></p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
8.6.3 The standard requires that sites with recognised 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.	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “8.1.2 Areas of interest for meeting the basic needs of affected local communities and indigenous peoples should be identified and mapped in a participatory manner. 8.1.6 Places of historical, cultural or religious significance to be protected from the organisation's activities must be identified, mapped and materialised, with the consent of the impacted indigenous peoples and local communities, prior to any activities.”
8.6.4 The standard requires that 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.	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “8.2. The organisation shall establish and comply with specific measures for the improvement of the economic and social well-being of the affected indigenous peoples and local communities. 8.2.2 At a minimum, the organisation must contribute to local development in accordance with the applicable legal and regulatory provisions and according to its formal internal support policy in this area. Within this framework, it must inform indigenous peoples and local populations and, where appropriate, support local development initiatives and/or income-generating micro-projects in cooperation with them.”
8.6.5 The standard requires that the best use shall be made of forest-related experience and traditional knowledge, innovations and practices such as those of forest owners, NGOs, local communities, and indigenous peoples. Equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of such knowledge shall be encouraged.	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “7.1.9 The organisation must establish a system to monitor scientific knowledge on tropical forests in terms of best practices in forest management and their impacts on biodiversity, on ecosystem services, and on the capacity of tropical forests to store and isolate carbon. 8.2.4 If the organisation uses traditional knowledge and techniques or innovations, it must be subject to the free, prior and informed consent of the affected indigenous peoples and local communities. An equitable sharing of the profits arising from such use shall be established in consultation with the involved parties, in accordance with best international practices.”
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.	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “8.1.3 The provisions of the forest management documents relating to the exercise of usage rights and/or the series dedicated to the activities of indigenous peoples and local communities must be complied with. 8.2.2 At a minimum, the organisation must contribute to local development in accordance with the applicable legal and regulatory provisions and according to its formal internal support policy



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p>in this area. Within this framework, it must inform indigenous peoples and local populations and, where appropriate, support local development initiatives and/or income-generating micro-projects in cooperation with them.</p> <p>8.2.3 Depending on the needs of the organisation, a system that provides priority hiring (all skill being considered equal) or training for affected indigenous peoples and local communities must be established by the organisation.”</p>
8.6.7 The standard requires that forest management shall contribute to research activities and data collection needed for sustainable forest management or support relevant research activities carried out by other organisations, as appropriate.	YES	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>“6.3.8 The organisation must contribute to the research and data gathering activities that are necessary for sustainable forest management or to support relevant research activities carried out by other organisations, where appropriate.”</p>
9. Performance evaluation		
9.1 Monitoring, measurement, analysis and evaluation		
9.1.1 The standard requires that 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 planning process.	YES	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>“4.3.1 The organisation must establish and implement a mechanism for the internal monitoring, measurement, analysis and evaluation of the sustainable forest management system that is adapted to the scale, intensity and risks of the activities, according to the relevant guidelines listed in annex 1.</p> <p>4.3.2 The organisation must plan, establish, implement and maintain an internal audit programme that is adapted to its SFMS, according to the relevant guidelines listed in annex 1.</p> <p>4.3.3 The organisation must conduct at least one management review annually, leading to decisions on opportunities for ongoing improvement and the need to modify the management system, as appropriate, according to the relevant guidelines listed in annex 1.</p> <p>Annexe 1</p> <p>The monitoring, measurement, analysis and evaluation system (requirement 4.3.1)</p> <p>The SFMS monitoring, measurement, analysis and evaluation system must include, at a minimum:</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • quantitative and qualitative monitoring of forest resources to ensure compliance with these standards; • monitoring of the volumes harvested in accordance with the management documents; • monitoring of the activities' impact according to the magnitude and intensity of the previously identified environmental and social impacts, adapted to the scale, intensity and risk of the operations; • monitoring of the living conditions of local communities and indigenous peoples, based in particular on a register of grievances, complaints and conflicts (and their resolution), and monitoring of social achievements and the effectiveness of contributions to local development; • monitoring of the quality of life and work of workers and their beneficiaries, in particular based on a register of work accidents and evacuations carried out, making it possible to adapt working conditions if necessary; • monitoring of the wildlife and hunting management plan.”
9.1.2 The standard requires that 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, overgrazing and overstocking, fire, and damage caused by climatic factors, air pollutants or by forest management operations.	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “Annexe 1 The monitoring, measurement, analysis and evaluation system (requirement 4.3.1) The SFMS monitoring, measurement, analysis and evaluation system must include, at a minimum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • quantitative and qualitative monitoring of forest resources to ensure compliance with these standards; • monitoring of the activities' impact according to the magnitude and intensity of the previously identified environmental and social impacts, adapted to the scale, intensity and risk of the operations; • monitoring of factors that potentially affect health and vitality of forest, such as damage caused by fire and climatic factors;”
9.1.3 The standard requires that 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	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “6.1.2 If the applicable national legislation and regulations allow it and if the organisation makes or contributes to a commercial use of NTFPs (including fishing and hunting products), the organisation shall establish and adhere to provisions regarding their harvest, ensuring the long-



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
fishing, shall be regulated, monitored and controlled.		<p>term maintenance of production, established in consultation with affected indigenous peoples and local communities.</p> <p>7.2.7 The organisation must develop and implement a wildlife and hunting management plan aimed at reducing the direct and indirect impacts of the organisation's activities on the animal populations present in the FMU, in accordance with the applicable laws and regulations, and according to the relevant guidelines listed in annex 2.</p> <p>Annexe 1</p> <p>The monitoring, measurement, analysis and evaluation system (requirement 4.3.1)</p> <p>The SFMS monitoring, measurement, analysis and evaluation system must include, at a minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • monitoring of NTFP collections if the activity is carried out under the conditions of 6.1.2. <p>Annex 2</p> <p>The wildlife and hunting management plan (requirement 7.2.7)</p> <p>The purpose of the wildlife and hunting management plan is to oversee, monitor and control hunting activities within the organization's FMU.</p> <p>The wildlife and hunting management plan must identify and map the usage and customary rights of local communities and indigenous peoples as well as areas where hunting activity is subject to regulatory restrictions (hunting reserves, national park buffer zones, etc.). Where legislation and/or regulations permit, areas where hunting is permitted to workers and/or their beneficiaries must be defined.”</p>
9.1.4 The standard requires that working conditions shall be regularly monitored and adapted as necessary.	YES	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>“4.3.1 The organisation must establish and implement a mechanism for the internal monitoring, measurement, analysis and evaluation of the sustainable forest management system that is adapted to the scale, intensity and risks of the activities, according to the relevant guidelines listed in annex 1.</p> <p>Annexe 1</p> <p>The monitoring, measurement, analysis and evaluation system (requirement 4.3.1)</p> <p>The SFMS monitoring, measurement, analysis and evaluation system must include, at a minimum:</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		• monitoring of the quality of life and work of workers and their beneficiaries, in particular based on a register of work accidents and evacuations carried out, making it possible to adapt working conditions if necessary;”
9.2 Internal audit		
9.2.1 Objectives		
The standard requires that an internal audit programme at planned intervals shall provide information on whether the management system		
a) conforms to • the organisation’s requirements for its management system; • the requirements of the national sustainable forest management standard	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “4.3.2 The organisation must plan, establish, implement and maintain an internal audit programme that is adapted to its SFMS, according to the relevant guidelines listed in annex 1. Annexe 1 The internal audit programme (requirement 4.3.2) The purpose of the internal audit mechanism is twofold: • to verify that the forest management system complies with the requirements of this standard as well as the organisation’s procedures;”
b) is effectively implemented and maintained.	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “4.3.2 The organisation must plan, establish, implement and maintain an internal audit programme that is adapted to its SFMS, according to the relevant guidelines listed in annex 1. Annexe 1 The internal audit programme (requirement 4.3.2) The purpose of the internal audit mechanism is twofold: • to verify the implementation and continuation of the sustainable forest management system.”
9.2.2 Organisation		
The standard requires that the organisation 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	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “4.3.2 The organisation must plan, establish, implement and maintain an internal audit programme that is adapted to its SFMS, according to the relevant guidelines listed in annex 1.



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
importance of the processes concerned and the results of previous audits;		<p>4.3.3 The organisation must conduct at least one management review annually, leading to decisions on opportunities for ongoing improvement and the need to modify the management system, as appropriate, according to the relevant guidelines listed in annex 1.</p> <p>4.3.4 In the case of nonconformities resulting from an internal audit or a certification audit, the organisation must implement appropriate corrective actions, review the effectiveness of any corrective actions taken and make changes to the management system, if necessary, according to the relevant guidelines listed in annex 1.</p> <p>Annexe 1</p> <p>The internal audit programme (requirement 4.3.2)</p> <p>The frequency of internal audits, audit methods, responsibilities, and requirements in terms of audit planning and reporting must be defined.</p> <p>The audit system must take into account the magnitude of the involved processes and the results of previous audits.”</p>
b) define the audit criteria and scope for each audit;	YES	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>“4.3.2 The organisation must plan, establish, implement and maintain an internal audit programme that is adapted to its SFMS, according to the relevant guidelines listed in annex 1.</p> <p>Annex 2</p> <p>The internal audit programme (requirement 4.3.2)</p> <p>The scope and criteria of audits must be defined for each audit.”</p>
c) select the auditors and conduct audits to ensure objectivity and the impartiality of the audit process;	YES	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>“Annexe 1</p> <p>The internal audit programme (requirement 4.3.2)</p> <p>The organisation selects auditors while ensuring of the objectivity and impartiality of the audit process.”</p>
d) ensure that the results of the audits are reported to relevant management;	YES	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>“Annexe 1</p> <p>The internal audit programme (requirement 4.3.2)</p> <p>Audit results are communicated to management prior to the management review.”</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
e) retain documented information as evidence of the implementation of the audit programme and the audit results.	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “Annexe 1 Document management system (requirement 4.1.9) The documentation management system must enable the organisation to provide relevant and up-to-date documented information based on the organisation's activities, including, but not limited to: ✓ internal audit reports to identify nonconformities, corrective actions taken and their effects;”
9.3 Management review		
9.3.1 The standard requires that an annual management review shall at least include		
a) the status of actions from previous management reviews;	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “4.3.3 The organisation must conduct at least one management review annually, leading to decisions on opportunities for ongoing improvement and the need to modify the management system, as appropriate, according to the relevant guidelines listed in annex 1. Annexe 1 Management reviews (requirement 4.3.3) Management reviews must address, at a minimum: a) the progress status of actions provided for in previous management reviews;”
b) changes in external and internal issues that are relevant to the management system;	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “Annexe 1 Management reviews (requirement 4.3.3) Management reviews must address, at a minimum: b) the potential changes to internal or external issues linked to the management system;”
c) information on the organisation's performance, including trends in: • nonconformities and corrective actions; • monitoring and measurement results; • audit results;	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “Annexe 1 Management reviews (requirement 4.3.3) Management reviews must address, at a minimum:



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		c) information on the organisation's performance, including trends: - in terms of nonconformities and corrective actions; - in terms of monitoring and measurement results; - in terms of audit results;"
d) opportunities for continual improvement	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 "Annexe 1 Management reviews (requirement 4.3.3) Management reviews must address, at a minimum: d) opportunities for ongoing improvement. "
9.3.2 The standard requires that the outputs of the management review shall include decisions related to continual improvement opportunities and any need for changes to the management system.	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 "4.3.3 The organisation must conduct at least one management review annually, leading to decisions on opportunities for ongoing improvement and the need to modify the management system, as appropriate, according to the relevant guidelines listed in annex 1."
9.3.3 The standard requires that documented information as evidence of the results of management reviews shall be retained.	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 "4.1.9 The organisation must implement a documentation management system appropriate to its SFMS and in line with the scale, intensity and risk of its activities, according to the relevant guidelines listed in annex 1. Annex 1: Document management system (requirement 4.1.9) The documentation management system must enable the organisation to provide relevant and up-to-date documented information based on the organisation's activities, including, but not limited to: ✓ internal audit reports to identify nonconformities, corrective actions taken and their effects; ✓ annual management review reports."
10. Improvement		
10.1 Nonconformity and corrective action		
10.1.1 The standard requires that when a nonconformity occurs, the organisation shall:		
a) react to the nonconformity and, as applicable:	YES	NORM-001-2019-1



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
i. take action to control and correct it; ii. deal with the consequences;		<p>“4.3.4 In the case of nonconformities resulting from an internal audit or a certification audit, the organisation must implement appropriate corrective actions, review the effectiveness of any corrective actions taken and make changes to the management system, if necessary, according to the relevant guidelines listed in annex 1.</p> <p>Annexe 1</p> <p>Corrective actions (requirement 4.3.4)</p> <p>Corrective actions are implemented following a nonconformity identified in an internal audit or a certification audit. It is "the organisation's reaction to the nonconformity".</p> <p>Where appropriate, the organisation must take action to control and correct the nonconformity and deal with its consequences.”</p>
<p>b) evaluate the need for action to eliminate the causes of the nonconformity, in order that it does not recur or occur elsewhere, by:</p> <p>i. reviewing the nonconformity;</p> <p>ii. determining the causes of the nonconformity;</p> <p>iii. determining if similar nonconformities exist, or could potentially occur;</p>	YES	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>“Annexe 1</p> <p>Corrective actions (requirement 4.3.4)</p> <p>The organisation must also assess its need to act to eliminate the causes of the nonconformity, so that it does not reoccur - there or elsewhere - by:</p> <p>i. examining the nonconformity;</p> <p>ii. determining the causes of the nonconformity;</p> <p>iii. determining whether similar nonconformities exist or are likely to occur.”</p>
c) implement any action needed;	YES	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>“4.3.4 In the case of nonconformities resulting from an internal audit or a certification audit, the organisation must implement appropriate corrective actions”</p>
d) review the effectiveness of any corrective action taken;	YES	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>“4.3.4 In the case of nonconformities resulting from an internal audit or a certification audit, the organisation must (...) review the effectiveness of any corrective actions taken”</p>
e) make changes to the management system, if necessary.	YES	<p>NORM-001-2019-1</p> <p>“4.3.4 In the case of nonconformities resulting from an internal audit or a certification audit, the organisation must (...) make changes to the management system, if necessary”</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
10.1.2 The standard requires that corrective actions shall be appropriate to the effects of the nonconformities encountered.	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “4.3.4 In the case of nonconformities resulting from an internal audit or a certification audit, the organisation must implement appropriate corrective actions”
10.1.3 The standard requires that the organisation shall retain documented information as evidence of:		
a) the nature of the nonconformities and any subsequent actions taken;	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “Annexe 1 Document management system (requirement 4.1.9) The documentation management system must enable the organisation to provide relevant and up-to-date documented information based on the organisation's activities, including (...): ✓ internal audit reports to identify nonconformities, corrective actions taken and their effects;”
b) the results of any corrective action.	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “Annexe 1 Document management system (requirement 4.1.9) The documentation management system must enable the organisation to provide relevant and up-to-date documented information based on the organisation's activities, including (...): ✓ internal audit reports to identify nonconformities, corrective actions taken and their effects;”
10.2 Continual improvement The standard requires that the suitability, adequacy and effectiveness of the sustainable forest management system and the sustainable management of the forest shall be continuously improved.	YES	NORM-001-2019-1 “4.1.5 The organisation must identify and provide the material, human and budgetary resources required to establish, implement, maintain and continually improve the sustainable forest management system. 4.3.3 The organisation must conduct at least one management review annually, leading to decisions on opportunities for ongoing improvement and the need to modify the management system, as appropriate, (...). 4.3.4 In the case of nonconformities resulting from an internal audit or a certification audit, the organisation must implement appropriate corrective actions, review the effectiveness of any corrective actions taken and make changes to the management system, if necessary, (...).”



Part IV: PEFC Checklist for Certification and Accreditation Procedures

1 Scope

This document covers requirements for certification and accreditation procedures for PEFC forest management certification outlined in Annex 6 of the PEFC Council Technical Document (Certification and accreditation procedures).

The requirements of Annex 6 stipulated for chain of custody certification are not reflected in this checklist, as these requirements have been replaced by PEFC ST 2003, Requirements for Certification Bodies operating Certification against the PEFC International Chain of Custody Standard.

References to ISO Guide 65 in Annex 6 have been removed from this checklist, as PEFC forest management certification is expected to be carried out as management certification under ISO 17021 since 2018.

2 Checklist

No.	PEFC benchmark requirement		YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
Certification Bodies				
1.	Does the scheme documentation require that certification shall be carried out by impartial, independent third parties that cannot be involved in the standard setting process as governing or decision making body, or in the forest management and are independent of the certified entity?	Annex 6, 3.1	YES	NORM-002-2020-1 “4.3.1 The certification body must be independent of the client organisation and be impartial in terms of its assessments. It may not be involved in the standardisation process as a management or decision-making body, or in forest management.”
2.	Does the scheme documentation require that certification body for forest management certification shall fulfil requirements defined in ISO 17021?	Annex 6, 3.1	YES	NORM-002-2020-1 “4.1.1. The certification body must comply with ISO / IEC 17021-1 : 2015 standard and the documents of the IAF (International Accreditation Forum) relating to the application of the ISO 17021-1 : 2015 standard.



No.	PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p>The following paragraphs supplement or illustrate the general requirements of the ISO 17021 standard.”</p> <p><i>It shall be noted that clause 4.1.1 only refers to part I of ISO 17021, which contains all the requirements. Part II of ISO 17021 contains competence requirement for auditing and certification of environmental management systems, but such competence requirements are also covered under NORM-002-2020-1. The remaining parts of ISO 17021 (3-9) are not applicable for forest management certification.</i></p>
3.	Does the scheme documentation require that certification bodies carrying out forest certification shall have the technical competence in forest management on its economic, social and environmental impacts, and on the forest certification criteria?	Annex 6, 3.1	<p>YES</p> <p>NORM-002-2020-1</p> <p>“4.1.2. The certification body must be familiar with and understand the PAFC Congo Basin regional sustainable forest certification scheme.</p> <p>6.1.1 The certification body must ensure that all personnel in charge of conducting primary activities, such as contract reviews, audits, technical reviews of reports, certification decisions or auditor surveillance, among other things, have the relevant and appropriate knowledge and skills related to these activities. At a minimum, this knowledge and these skills relate to sustainable forest management systems and the Congo Basin's geographical area.</p> <p>6.2.6. For the initial qualification of an auditor, the certification body must ensure that the auditor has carried out, within the last three years and as part of his auditor training, three legality or SFMS audits for the standards used in the sub-region under the supervision of a qualified auditor, including at least one initial or renewal audit.</p> <p>6.3.3. The certification body must define the requirements regarding the skills of the auditors covering the specific aspects of the PAFC Congo Basin forest certification scheme. The audit team must have knowledge and skills in the following areas in particular:</p> <p>a) forest management;</p> <p>b) reduced-impact logging;</p>



No.	PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p>c) water and soil protection, in particular the impact of forestry operations on water resources and soils;</p> <p>d) ecosystem services provided by forests and forest ecosystem biodiversity, in particular the protection of outstanding species and ecosystems;</p> <p>e) hunting management;</p> <p>f) forestry operations and technical knowledge, in particular on occupational safety and health, accident prevention and labour laws;</p> <p>g) the socio-economic functions of forests, in particular for local communities and indigenous peoples;”</p>
4.	Does the scheme documentation require that certification bodies shall have a good understanding of the national PEFC system against which they carry out forest management certification?	Annex 6, 3.1	<p>YES</p> <p>NORM-002-2020-1</p> <p>“4.1.2. The certification body must be familiar with and understand the PAFC Congo Basin regional sustainable forest certification scheme.”</p>
5.	Does the scheme documentation require that certification bodies have the responsibility to use competent auditors and who have adequate technical know-how on the certification process and issues related to forest management certification?	Annex 6, 3.2	<p>YES</p> <p>NORM-002-2020-1</p> <p>“6.2.1 The certification body must ensure that the auditors have, at a minimum, a degree equivalent to a Master's degree with a specialisation in natural resource management and/or a field related to sustainable forest management.</p> <p>6.2.2. In its auditor recruitment process, the certification body must verify knowledge on the issues at stake in the Congo Basin's forest-based and timber-based sectors, in particular with regard to forest governance and regulations, the different types of forest concessions and forest management, issues related to the presence of local communities and indigenous peoples in the FMUs, environmental issues and applicable conventions and regulations on workers' rights.</p> <p>6.2.3. The certification body must ensure that the auditors can attest that they have undergone qualifying training in auditing techniques based on the ISO 19011 standard.</p>



No.	PEFC benchmark requirement		YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
				<p>6.2.4. The certification body must ensure that the auditors have received initial training on the current PAFC sustainable forest management standard (PAFC/NORM-001-2019) recognised by the relevant national PAFC organisations, including :</p> <p>a) The terminology, terms and definitions relating to sustainable forest management in the Congo Basin and the PAFC Congo Basin forest certification scheme;</p> <p>b) The PAFC Congo Basin forest certification scheme, and in particular the requirements for sustainable forest management (PAFC/NORM-001-2019);</p> <p>6.2.7 The certification body must ensure that its auditors are kept up to date annually on developments in the PAFC Congo Basin scheme's standard and procedures and on issues in terms of the interpretation of the standard during audits.</p> <p>6.3.3. The certification body must define the requirements regarding the skills of the auditors covering the specific aspects of the PAFC Congo Basin forest certification scheme. The audit team must have knowledge and skills in the following areas in particular: a) forest management; b) reduced-impact logging; c) water and soil protection, in particular the impact of forestry operations on water resources and soils;"</p>
6.	Does the scheme documentation require that the auditors must fulfil the general criteria of ISO 19011 for Quality Management Systems auditors or for Environmental Management Systems auditors?	Annex 6, 3.2	YES	<p>NORM-002-2020-1</p> <p>"6.2.3. The certification body must ensure that the auditors can attest that they have undergone qualifying training in auditing techniques based on the ISO 19011 standard."</p>
7.	Does the scheme documentation include additional qualification requirements for auditors carrying out forest management audits? [*1]	Annex 6, 3.2	YES	<p>NORM-002-2020-1</p> <p>"6.2.5. For the initial qualification of an auditor, the certification body must ensure that the auditor can attest to a minimum period of two years of full-time professional experience in the forestry and/or timber sector and related sectors.</p>



No.	PEFC benchmark requirement		YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
				<p>6.2.6. For the initial qualification of an auditor, the certification body must ensure that the auditor has carried out, within the last three years and as part of his auditor training, three legality or SFMS audits for the standards used in the sub-region under the supervision of a qualified auditor, including at least one initial or renewal audit.</p> <p>6.2.8. In order to maintain an auditor's qualification, the certification body must ensure that the auditor has carried out at least two audits relating to legality or sustainable forest management systems per year, the sum of which must total at least eight working days of audits. At least one of these audits must be a sustainable forest management system audit recognised by the PEFC Council.</p> <p>6.2.9. In exceptional circumstances, such as a statutory leave or a long term illness, auditors who cannot comply with clause 6.2.8 must carry out at least one sustainable forest management system audit under the supervision of a qualified auditor.</p> <p>6.5.3. The certification body must ensure that the technical reviewer, the members of the certification committee and the qualified auditors participate, once every five years, in a continuing education course in the field of sustainable forest management that is recognised by the relevant national PAFC organisations.</p> <p>6.5.4. When a new version of the Congo Basin PAFC sustainable forest management standard is published, the certification body must ensure that the technical reviewer, the certification committee members and the qualified auditors have participated in refresher training recognised by the relevant national PAFC organisations. This training must incorporate this new version before certifications relative to this standard may begin.”</p> <p><i>The additional qualification requirements are further detailing the requirements, and providing directions in specific situations, which are in line with Annex 6.</i></p>
Certification procedures				
8.	Does the scheme documentation require that certification bodies shall	Annex 6, 4	YES	NORM-002-2020-1



No.	PEFC benchmark requirement		YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
	have established internal procedures for forest management certification?			<p>“8.1.1. The certification body must have internal procedures that are specific to forest management certification and compatible with the requirements of the ISO 17021-1 standard. These procedures must cover, at a minimum, the following steps:</p> <p>a) Establishment of an audit plan</p> <p>b) Setting up of an audit team</p> <p>c) Determination of audit time requirements</p> <p>d) Sampling</p> <p>e) Audit processes”</p>
9.	Does the scheme documentation require that applied certification procedures for forest management certification shall fulfil or be compatible with the requirements defined in ISO 17021?	Annex 6, 4	YES	<p>NORM-002-2020-1</p> <p>“8.1.1. The certification body must have internal procedures that are specific to forest management certification and compatible with the requirements of the ISO 17021-1 standard.”</p>
10.	Does the scheme documentation require that applied auditing procedures shall fulfil or be compatible with the requirements of ISO 19011?	Annex 6, 4	YES	<p>NORM-002-2020-1</p> <p>“8.3.1. The certification body's auditing procedures must be in accordance with the ISO 19011 standard.”</p>
11.	Does the scheme documentation require that certification body shall inform the relevant PEFC National Governing Body about all issued forest management certificates and changes concerning the validity and scope of these certificates?	Annex 6, 4	YES	<p>NORM-002-2020-1</p> <p>“8.5.9. The certification body must immediately inform the appropriate national PAFC organisation when certification is granted, suspended, withdrawn or when it has expired, or when its scope has changed or when any other changes are made to the certification or to the information which the certification body must provide to the national PAFC organisation.”</p>



No.	PEFC benchmark requirement		YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
12.	Does the scheme documentation require that certification body shall carry out controls of PEFC logo usage if the certified entity is a PEFC logo user?	Annex 6, 4	YES	NORM-002-2020-1 “8.2.2. For each audit, the audit plan must identify the activities necessary to determine the client organisation's compliance with respect to: b) its use of PEFC trademarks in accordance with PEFC ST 2001:2020 requirements and the use of a valid trademark licence agreement. The latter must be signed between the client organisation and a national PAFC organisation in order for the client organisation to be authorised to use the PEFC trademark. 8.3.4. In the audit plan, the certification body must evaluate the audit time requirements according to its documented procedures, taking into account the following aspects: c) the extent of activities using the PEFC trademark;”
13.	Does a maximum period for surveillance audits defined by the scheme documentation not exceed more than one year?	Annex 6, 4	YES	NORM-002-2020-1 “8.1.2. The audit programme for a full certification cycle is established over five years and must include surveillance audits at least once every twelve month.. After five years, a new cycle starts with a renewal audit. Note : the first surveillance audit must take place within twelve months of the issue of the first certificate. 8.6.1. Monitoring audits must be carried out every 12.”
14.	Does a maximum period for assessment audit not exceed five years for forest management certifications?	Annex 6, 4	YES	NORM-002-2020-1 “8.1.2. The audit programme for a full certification cycle is established over five years and must include surveillance audits at least once every twelve month.. After five years, a new cycle starts with a renewal audit. 8.5.8. The certificate is granted for a maximum period of five years before the end of which a renewal audit must be carried out, in time to address any major non-conformities.”
15.	Does the scheme documentation include requirements for public	Annex 6, 4	YES	NORM-002-2020-1 “7.1.1 The certification body must make a summary of the certification report available, forward it to the client organisation and make it publicly available.



No.	PEFC benchmark requirement		YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
	availability of certification report summaries?			7.1.2. The public summary of the certification report must include the following: a) the identification of the client and the scope of certification; b) the identification of the certification body and the audit team; c) a brief description of the compliance with the PAFC Congo Basin certification requirements; d) a brief description of the non-conformities that were identified; e) recommendations for the certification decision.”
16.	Does the scheme documentation include requirements for usage of information from external parties as the audit evidence?	Annex 6, 4	YES	NORM-002-2020-1 “8.4.2. During the audit, the certification body must review all relevant information received from third parties, such as government bodies, NGOs, etc., and use it as evidence to assess compliance with the certification requirements”
17.	Does the scheme documentation include additional requirements for certification procedures? [*1]	Annex 6, 4	YES	NORM-002-2020-1 “ 8.3.2. The certification body must communicate its audit plan to the client organisation and the audit dates shall be determined in advance with it. 8.3.3. In addition to the preparation phase and the presentation report, the audit includes (...) 8.3.4. In the audit plan, the certification body must evaluate the audit time requirements according to its documented procedures, (...) 8.4.4. During the initial and renewal audits, all the requirements of the PAFC Congo Basin forest management standard must be assessed by the certification body. 8.4.5. During the surveillance audits, the certification body must assess a minimum number of requirements to ensure that the main principles of the PAFC Congo Basin sustainable forest management standard (PAFC/NORM-001-2019) are respected by the client organisation. (...)



No.	PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p>8.4.6. The certification body must assess at least 25% of the requirements in each of the 4 years of monitoring, so that they are all reassessed between the initial audit and the renewal audit or between two renewal audits.</p> <p>8.5.1. Audit findings must be classified into the following three categories: major non-conformities, minor non-conformities and observations. Handling of non-conformities</p> <p>8.5.2. The major and minor non-conformities identified during audits must result in corrective actions implemented by the client organisation in order to resolve the non-conformities. (...)</p> <p>8.5.3. Major non-conformities must be closed via an additional audit within a maximum period of 3 months;</p> <p>8.5.4. Minor non-conformities must be closed via a surveillance audit within a maximum period of 12 months. Minor non-conformities that are not closed within 12 months must be re-qualified by the certification body as major non-conformities.</p> <p>8.5.5. As a rule, the certification body will conduct supplementary audits on-site. (...)</p> <p>8.5.6. Prior to the issuance of initial certification or the issuance of a renewal, the certification body must ensure that major non-conformities have been corrected.</p> <p>8.5.7. The certification body must immediately suspend the certificate if it observes the following: a) 5 or more major non-conformities during a surveillance audit, b) 1 or more major non-conformities identified during an audit have not been closed during a further audit.</p> <p>8.7.1. If certification has expired, been suspended or withdrawn, the certification body must inform the client organisation that any further use of the PEFC and PAFC Congo Basin trademark and claims is prohibited. In the event of a suspension, the certification body must verify that the client organisation complies with this measure.</p>



No.	PEFC benchmark requirement		YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
				<p>8.7.2. If modifications to the PAFC Congo Basin certification scheme affect the forest management standard, the certification body shall ensure that the client organisation has taken these modifications into account in its management system within 18 months, by implementing the same procedures as it would for a certification renewal.</p> <p>8.7.3. The observation of a major non-conformity due to deliberate action by the client organisation may, depending on the seriousness of the situation, be sanctioned by a temporary suspension or definitive withdrawal of the certificate by the certification body.</p> <p>8.7.4. After the suspension of certification, the certification body must decide whether or not to maintain the client organisation's certification on the basis of a new supplementary audit within a maximum period of 1 year. (..)"</p>
Accreditation procedures				
18.	Does the scheme documentation require that certification bodies carrying out forest management certification shall be accredited by a national accreditation body?	Annex 6, 5	YES	<p>NORM-002-2020-1 Annex I</p> <p>"A1.1. Certification bodies carrying out audits and certification of sustainable forest management on the basis of the PAFC Congo Basin forest certification scheme must have valid accreditation issued by a body that is a member of the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) or that is a member of an IAF-recognised regional network, and comply with the latest version of the ISO 17011 standard."</p> <p><i>It shall be noted there is no national accreditation body in Congo Basin, which requires the accreditation body to be at least a member of IAF.</i></p>



No.	PEFC benchmark requirement		YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
19.	Does the scheme documentation require that an accredited certificate shall bear an accreditation symbol of the relevant accreditation body?	Annex 6, 5	YES	<p>NORM-002-2020-1</p> <p>“4.2.1 The certification body issuing sustainable forest management certification according to the PAFC Congo Basin forest certification scheme, or accredited certification, must have valid accreditation as described in Annex 1 of this document.</p> <p>7.2.2. The certification document must include, at a minimum, the following information:</p> <p>g) the accreditation body's accreditation mark (including the accreditation number, where applicable), which must be used in accordance with the accreditation body's currently observed rules;”</p>
20.	Does the scheme documentation require that the accreditation shall be issued by an accreditation body which is a part of the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) umbrella or a member of IAF's special recognition regional groups and which implement procedures described in ISO 17011 and other documents recognised by the above mentioned organisations?	Annex 6, 5	YES	<p>NORM-002-2020-1 Annex I</p> <p>“A1.1. Certification bodies carrying out audits and certification of sustainable forest management on the basis of the PAFC Congo Basin forest certification scheme must have valid accreditation issued by a body that is a member of the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) or that is a member of an IAF-recognised regional network, and comply with the latest version of the ISO 17011 standard and other documents recognised by the above-mentioned organisations.”</p>
21.	Does the scheme documentation require that certification body undertake forest management certification as “accredited certification” based on ISO 17021 and the relevant forest management standard(s) shall be covered by the accreditation scope?	Annex 6, 5	YES	<p>NORM-002-2020-1 Annex I</p> <p>“A1.3. The scope of the accreditation's implementation must also explicitly refer to the ISO/IEC17021-1:2015 standard, to this document, and to other requirements for which the certification body has been assessed.</p> <p>A1.2. The scope of the accreditation's implementation must explicitly cover the documents of the following PAFC Congo Basin forest certification scheme: Sustainable Forest Management - Requirements (PAFC/NORM-001-2019) and PEFC ST 2001:2020 PEFC Trademarks Rules - Requirements.”</p>



No.	PEFC benchmark requirement		YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
22.	Does the scheme documentation include a mechanism for PEFC notification of certification bodies?	Annex 6, 6	YES	<i>Notification of certification bodies for sustainable forest management systems is regulated in PROC-003-2020-1. Notification of chain of custody certification bodies is regulated in PROC-004-2020-1.</i>
23.	Are the procedures for PEFC notification of certification bodies non-discriminatory?	Annex 6, 6	YES	<p>PROC-003-2020-1</p> <p>4. Terms of the notification by PAFC COUNTRY</p> <p>The certification body requesting the notification issued by PAFC COUNTRY must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be a legal entity; • agree to be listed in the PEFC Council's publicly accessible internet database which contains the certification body's identifying information and/or other information specified by PEFC Council; • hold valid accreditation for the PAFC certification of the sustainable forest management system (PAFC/NORM-001-2019 standard), issued by an accreditation body that has signed the Multilateral Recognition Arrangement for the certification of management systems of the International Forum Accreditation (IAF). <p>Note: Accreditation must be issued in accordance with ISO/IEC 17021-1 requirements (current version) for bodies providing audits and the certification of management systems and be in accordance with the Requirements for bodies carrying out PAFC sustainable forest management audits and certification (PAFC/NORM-002-2020)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sign a notification contract with PAFC COUNTRY (Annex 1). <p>PROC-004-2020-1</p> <p>4. Terms of the notification by PAFC COUNTRY</p> <p>The certification body requesting the notification issued by PAFC COUNTRY must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be a legal entity;



No.	PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • agree to be listed in the PEFC Council's publicly accessible internet database containing the certification body's identifying information and/or other information specified by PEFC Council; • hold a valid accreditation for PEFC – ST 2002:2020 chain of custody certification, issued by an accreditation body that has signed the Multilateral Recognition Arrangement for the certification of products of the International Accreditation Forum (IAF). <p>Note: Accreditation must be issued in accordance with ISO/IEC 17065 requirements (current version) for bodies certifying products, processes and services, and also be in accordance with the Requirements for Certification Bodies operating Certification against the PEFC International Chain of Custody Standard (PEFC ST 2003:2020).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sign a notification contract with PAFC COUNTRY (Annex 1)” <p><i>No discriminatory clauses are found in the procedures for notification.</i></p>

[*1] This is not an obligatory requirement

Annex 2 Results of Stakeholder Survey

The paragraphs below present the summarized results of the stakeholder survey conducted by the Assessor. The national stakeholder survey was held from 25 May 2021 to 14 June 2021. Form International sent out questionnaires to all stakeholders that were members of the Forum and additional stakeholders that were invited and/or participated in public consultation meetings during the revision process.

Outcomes of the survey

General

In total 27 stakeholders responded to the request to fill-out the questionnaire:

- 2 respondents from an indigenous people's group
- 2 respondents from worker's and trade unions
- 5 respondents from an environmental group
- 4 respondents from business and industry relating to forest-based products (including an FMU)
- 2 respondents from the academic and research community
- 3 respondents from a non-governmental organization
- 1 respondent from the indigenous, environmental and academic stakeholder category
- 8 respondents from another stakeholder group, including respondents from the parliament, a PAFC's executive office, cooperatives, funders, and the agricultural sector

The response rate was 27 out of 299 (9%). There was no response from forest authority stakeholders. Participants in the process represented all three countries in the Congo Basin: Cameroon (10); Congo (10); Gabon (5). 2 respondents came from the greater Congo Basin Region.

Participation in the process

In total 15 respondents participated as a member of the Forum, 13 respondents participated in the first regional workshop in November 2019, and 11 respondents joined the second regional workshop in October 2020. Of the respondents, 14 participated in the first public consultations (December 2019 - February 2020), and 10 participated in the second public consultations (May - September 2020). 4 respondents participated in the process otherwise, (1) as a member of the Forum secretariat, (1) as a member of the standard development group, and (2) during the Extraordinary General Assembly for the validation of the PAFC-Congo Basin certification standard, on December 3, 2020, and (1) during earlier meetings in 2014 and 2017. 2 respondents did not join because 1 respondent was not invited to the process, and 1 respondent's local manager had joined the process instead. Most participants (16) learned about the revision through a personal letter/email, 8 respondents through the website and 3 through other means, including their network



and organization. 16 respondents were invited to the process in 2019, 1 in 2021, 2 in 2020, 1 in 2018, 1 in 2014, another 8 did not provide an exact date or did not remember the date.

Participants had various interests and concerns which caused them to participate in the process:

- 10 respondents noted an environmental interest or concern
- 6 were concerned with the rights of local communities and indigenous peoples
- 4 joined for work-related interest
- 13 were interested in developing and improving the standard
- 1 respondent was interested in alternative certification schemes to FSC to increase the supply of certification
- 1 other respondent was concerned with technological capacity building
- 1 respondent replied that they were not selected to be part of the Forum for the development of the PAFC Congo Basin standard
- 1 other respondent found that there is a need for various certification schemes.

Nearly all (25) respondents stated that the organizers of the PAFC standard-setting process provided them with relevant information and documents to participate in the scheme development. 1 respondent replied no because no documents were received and 1 other replied 'don't know', because he or she had not been part of the standard development Forum.

Balanced representation of the Forum

According to 18 respondents, all stakeholders were actively invited to the process. However, 2 respondents disagreed and considered that not all stakeholders were actively invited, 1 of which cited that the following actors needed to have a more prominent place in the process: organisations representing indigenous peoples, municipalities and traditional authorities. 1 respondent did not answer the question, but noted that there was a relatively poor representation of women and Baka indigenous peoples. Another 6 respondents were not sure if all stakeholders were actively involved, one of which mentioned that the online consultation does not allow people to have a clear view on who was consulted.

Most (19) representatives found that the range of interests in forest management in the Congo Basin was well-represented in the Forum. 1 respondent replied: 'more or less' and 7 respondents replied: 'don't know'. This last group noted that (1) financial aspect could be a constraint, (1) plantations were not represented, but this was irrelevant to the Congo Basin, and (1) that they were not invited to the Forum and could not evaluate this question. 18 respondents found that there was a balanced representation of all stakeholder categories in the Forum, although 3 of these respondents noted that there was underrepresentation from (1) members of the social chamber and (2) indigenous peoples and rural forest managers, one of whom noted this was the result of financial constraints. 2 people disagreed to this question and



stated that (1) there may be an unawareness of the reality on the ground, (1) indigenous peoples were underrepresented. 6 respondents replied: 'don't know' and 1 did not reply. Respondents (17) mostly found that the Forum had good representation from all regions of the Congo Basin or were unaware of this (9).

Complaints

Out of all respondents 21 said there had not been complaints, 4 were not sure, 1 did not reply and 1 of the respondents noted that there had been a complaint but did not provide any details on this. 2 respondents added a relevant remark to this question, noting that: (1) there was no communication on complaints from the organisation; (1) that there had been complicated technical discussion with the opposition on certain technical issues. Most respondents (15) did not know if complaints had been validated and objectively evaluated, 4 said this had been the case and 8 did not reply.

The Forum

The respondents that had been part of the Forum (15) mostly answered positively to the questions whether:

- Forum stakeholders had relevant expertise for the subject matter of the standard;
- Records (or minutes) have been kept from meetings of the Forum;
- They received invitations for meetings and documents in a timely manner;
- All working draft documents have been available to all stakeholders involved in the Forum activities;
- They were given meaningful opportunities to contribute to the development of the standard and submit comments to the working drafts;
- Comments and views submitted have been considered in an open and transparent way;
- The public consultation of the scheme documentation lasted for at least 60 days;
- All comments received during the public consultation have been considered in an objective manner by the Forum;
- The decision of the Forum to recommend the final draft for formal approval was taken on the basis of consensus.

Despite the general agreement on the points above, 2 respondents found that not all members had relevant expertise for the subject matter of the standards; 1 found that records had not been kept; 2 respondents noted they did not receive their documents in a timely matter, and 1 respondent answered that they were not given meaningful opportunities to contribute to the standards. However, none of these respondents provided any further details. Out of the 15 respondents, 1 respondent stated that some of the comments from the public consultation had been insufficiently considered. 1 other respondent made a comment stating that 'those in charge have promised to work on some issues that have not been unanimously agreed upon by the members, but so far we are not aware of the evolution'.

Aspects for further consideration

10 respondents brought up aspects of the PAFC that deserve further consideration, 9 of which elaborated on which aspects needed further consideration:

- 1 respondent would like to more focus on labour laws and noted that there are now more experts in environmental law, but not in social law
- 1 respondent stated ‘communication’
- 1 respondent noted a need to develop guidance on principle 7.3 (carbon storage - GHG emissions)
- 1 respondent was interested in a review of the standard for forest carbon valuation
- 1 respondent brought up the actual management at distance from the basin’s affairs
- 1 respondent commented on administrative governance and would like a clarification of the relationship between national offices and the sub-regional coordination
- 1 respondent had two comments:
 - (1) there should be particular attention on minimising negative impacts on forest carbon stocks and GHG emissions to preserve the capacity of forests to store and sequester carbon over the medium and long term due to the innovative nature of this requirement and the difficulties the Forum has had in addressing it.
 - (2) the requirement to provide decent living conditions for workers and their beneficiaries, where applicable, in the living bases, should also be subject to special attention and rapid revision if it does not fit with the human rights requirements ratified by the various countries where the standard is applied.
- 1 respondent commented on a complaint management mechanism, and desired a dissemination framework and consultation with indigenous peoples
- 1 respondent highlighted that aspects related to forest carbon stock assessment and genetic traceability of forest products should be further considered.

Specific comments are included in the table below.

Consequences to the overall assessment decision

All the above findings are further considered in the assessment of the respective topics / requirements.

Responses to specific comments and remarks

Respondents provided various remarks, of which some related to the actual implementation (and audits) of the standard, and others related to the standard review process. Most notable comments are listed in the table below, including the response of the Assessor. The left column states the original comment in French and the central



column show a quick translation to English. When comments from respondents were very similar only one of the comments is included.

Comment / Remark from Respondent (French)	Comment / Remark from Respondent (English)	Response from the Assessor
Renforcements de capacités technologique ; les bureaux d'audits doivent maitriser les normes car les complaisances des auditeurs sont de nature à douter de la crédibilité de la certification ; le coût de la certification est fonction de l'UFA 65 000 000 F CFA par an. Coût très élevé pour un producteur individuel ou une forêt communautaire en plus on prélève une taxe pour PEFC International en fonction du chiffre d'affaire hors taxe de l'exploitant forestier pour avoir le logo ; dans les grilles de légalité des forêts Communautaires au Cameroun, il y a des clauses qui ne peuvent pas être mise en œuvre , l'Etat Camerounais en tient à sa souveraineté et nous ne respectons que les coûts définit par les APV-FLET signé par le gouvernement Camerounais	Technological capacity building; audit offices must master the standards because the complacency of auditors is likely to cast doubt on the credibility of certification; the cost of certification depends on the FMU 65,000,000 CFA francs per year. Very high cost for an individual producer or a community forest, in addition, a tax is levied for PEFC International according to the pre-tax turnover of the forest exploiter to have the logo; in the legality grids of the Community Forests in Cameroon, there are clauses that cannot be implemented, the Cameroonian State holds on to its sovereignty and we only respect the costs defined by the APV-FLET signed by the Cameroonian government	The requirements for auditors are further regulated in NORM-002-2020-1. Clause 6.2.4. requires that auditors have received training on the sustainable forest management standard (NORM-001-2019-1). The cost for certification is beyond the scope of this assessment. It is unclear what aspects in legislation of Cameroon related to community forests cannot be implemented and how this could impact the implementation of the standard.
La consultation en ligne ne nous permet pas d'avoir une idée précise sur ceux qui avaient été consultés	The online consultation does not allow us to have a clear idea of who was consulted	This is an imminent consequence of consultations, especially online consultations. However, invitations for public consultations were also placed on websites and in newspaper, which at least gave all stakeholders the opportunity to respond.
Non, d'autres acteurs qui auraient dû être impliqués : les organisations représentant les peuples autochtones , les communes et les autorités	Other actors who should have been involved: organisations representing indigenous peoples, municipalities and traditional authorities should have a prominent place	According to the information on the Forum, 2 out of 16 Forum members were representing the indigenous people, which is in line with the Standard-setting Procedures (requiring 4 people in the social



<p>traditionnels doivent avoir une place de choix</p> <p>Plus ou moins, les femmes et les peuples autochtones Baka étaient faiblement représentés.</p> <p>Peuple autochtone</p>	<p>Women and Baka indigenous peoples were more or less poorly represented.</p> <p>Indigenous people (<i>were underrepresented in the Forum</i>)</p>	<p>chamber, also including labour and worker unions).</p> <p>According to information on the Forum, 6 out of 16 Forum members were women, which is a considerable part of the Forum, though not equal distribution. It shall be noted that PEFC does not require specific thresholds for gender balance.</p>
<p>L'aspect financier pouvait être une contrainte.</p> <p>Les limites financières et les limites d'accès à l'internet ont défavorisés les populations autochtones et rurales gestionnaires des forêts</p>	<p>The financial aspect could be a constraint (<i>answer to the question on whether the Forum represented a range of interests</i>).</p> <p>Financial and internet access limitations have disadvantaged indigenous and rural forest managers</p>	<p>According to ATIBT and information provided, members of the Forum were provided with financial compensation for travel, lodges, meals and DSA's. Financial means should therefore not have been a constraint to participate in the Forum.</p> <p>It is indeed very well possible that internet access limitations have limited rural forest managers and indigenous people to participate in the process, e.g. during public consultations. However, besides internet communication, also press releases in newspapers were published.</p>
<p>Aucune communication là-dessus de la part des organisateurs</p>	<p>No communication on this (<i>complaints</i>) from the organisers</p>	<p>Communication regarding complaints are not required. Requirements related to complaints are covered in PROC-001-2019-1, chapter 9 (related to the standard-setting process) and in PROC-002-2020-1 (related to general complaints and appeals).</p>
<p>Les relations entre les bureaux nationaux et la coordination sous régionale doivent être bien clarifiées.</p>	<p>The relationship between the national offices and the sub-regional coordination needs to be well clarified.</p>	<p>This will have further attention during the field visit.</p>
<p>La question relative à la minimisation par l'organisation, de l'impacts négatif sur les stocks de carbone forestier et les émissions de GES afin de préserver la capacité des forêts à stocker et séquestrer le carbone sur le moyen et</p>	<p>The issue of the organisation minimising negative impacts on forest carbon stocks and GHG emissions in order to preserve the capacity of forests to store and sequester carbon over the medium and long term should be given particular attention due to the</p>	<p>The clauses in NORM-001-2019-1 comply with the PEFC benchmark standard. The implementation of these clauses and how this shall be audited, is beyond the scope of this assessment.</p>



long terme, devrait faire l'objet d'attention particulière du fait du caractère innovant de cette exigence et des difficultés que le forum a eu à trancher sur la question.	innovative nature of this requirement and the difficulties the Forum has had in addressing it.	
L'exigence relatif à la fourniture des condition de vie décentes au travailleurs et à leur ayant droit, le cas échéant, dans les bases vie, devra aussi faite l'objet d'attention particulière et de révision rapide au cas elle ne s'accorde pas avec les exigences de respect des droits humains ratifiées par les différents pays d'application de la norme.	The requirement to provide decent living conditions for workers and their beneficiaries, where applicable, in the living bases, should also be subject to special attention and rapid revision if it does not fit with the human rights requirements ratified by the various countries where the standard is applied.	NORM-001-2019-1 clause 5.2.3 regulates the compliance of employers with all (subcontracted) workers obligations in accordance with applicable national legislation. The clauses under 9.3 require decent living conditions for workers and their beneficiaries in the living bases. The implementation and auditing of the actual situations is beyond the scope of this assessment.
Oui, un mécanisme de gestion des plaintes, un cadre de dissémination et de consultation des peuples autochtones	Yes, a complaints management mechanism, a dissemination framework and consultation with indigenous peoples	The complaints mechanism is regulated in PROC-002-2020-1. The dissemination framework and consultation with indigenous people is regulated as follows: For standard-setting: PROC- 001-2019-1 clause 4.2 requires that the information and invitation is sent to all identified stakeholders (including indigenous people) and that documentation is available to those representatives of key disadvantaged stakeholders that don't have internet access. And furthermore, special attention will have to be paid to key stakeholders and disadvantaged stakeholders, by ensuring that: • appropriate communication means are used to contact them and inform them of the process in a way that is understandable to them; • effective ways to involve them are found so that they can contribute to the various standards development stages. For sustainable forest management: this is mostly regulated in the requirements under NORM-001-2019-1 clause 8.1.



(Comment was in English)	I think some comments (although not from our side) have not been sufficiently considered.	It is unclear to which comments this refers. However, all considerations of comments and their potential adjustments were sent back to the stakeholders who provided the feedback, and as such provided opportunity to respond.
Les responsables ont promis de travailler sur certains problèmes qui n'ont pas fait l'unanimité des membres, mais jusqu'ici nous ne sommes pas au courant de l'évolution	Those in charge have promised to work on some issues that have not been unanimously agreed upon by the members, but so far we are not aware of the evolution	It is unclear to which issues this relates, but the decision of the Forum to submit the final version of the standard was taken on the basis of consensus.

Stakeholders that were invited for the survey

This survey was received by 299 E-mail addresses.

Country	Stakeholder group	Name	Organization
Congo	Scientific and technological community	David Morgan	Goualougo Triangle Ape project (GTAP)
Congo	Scientific and technological community	Eric FORNI	Centre de coopération internationale en recherche agronomique pour le développement (CIRAD)
Congo	Scientific and technological community	Joel LOUMETO	Faculté des sciences Université Marien Ngouabi (FS)
Congo	Scientific and technological community	Aubin SAYA	Centre de recherche pour la durabilité et la productivité des plantations industrielles (CRDPI)
Congo	Scientific and technological community	Victor KIMPOUNI	Institut de Recherche forestière (IRF)
Congo	Scientific and technological community	Jocquer MOUANDA	Institut des métiers de l'environnement et des technologies appliquées (IMETA)
Congo	Companies and industries	MASSALA NGOUKA Fernand	ADL
Congo	Companies and industries	Martial Fouty/DIAMVINZA Armand	AFRIWOOD Industries
Congo	Companies and industries	Cyprien Lembele	Asia-Congo Industries
Congo	Companies and industries	Georges Bitar	Bois et Placages de Lopola (BPL)
Congo	Companies and industries	BENGOU Jean Pierre	Bois-Kassa
Congo	Companies and industries	DG	Sadef-Congo
Congo	Companies and industries	Pierre Ngoma	BTC sarl (BTC)
Congo	Companies and industries	KIMBAKALA BOUNGOU Dieudonné	Kimbakala Compagnie
Congo	Companies and industries	Pierre Ngoma	BTC sarl (BTC)



Country	Stakeholder group	Name	Organization
Congo	Companies and industries		CFF Bois International
Congo	Companies and industries	Vincent Istace	Congolaise Industrielle des Bois (CIB)
Congo	Companies and industries	Georges Moukilou	CIBN
Congo	Companies and industries	LEKOBBA Philippe	CITB-QUATOR
Congo	Companies and industries	MASSALA NGOMA Prince	COFIBOIS
Congo	Companies and industries	Philippe Zhang	Congo Deji Wood Industry
Congo	Companies and industries	DAMBENDZE /DOUMINGUIDZA Rufin	COTRANS
Congo	Companies and industries	BIKAKOUDI Jean Claude	Entreprise Christelle
Congo	Companies and industries	BARRETO Fernando Eurico	Foralac
Congo	Companies and industries	Antoine Couturier	Industrie Forestière de Ouessou (IFO)
Congo	Companies and industries	FUSER Alessio / Betito Raphael	Likouala Timber
Congo	Companies and industries	Pascal Bérenger	Mokabi
Congo	Companies and industries	Mme CHENG Jean-Paul Eyebe	SEFYD
Congo	Companies and industries	FOUTY Martial	SFIB
Congo	Companies and industries	ZHANG Philippe / IKIOLO Prosper	SICOFOR
Congo	Companies and industries	Saad Bou Lattouf	SIFCO
Congo	Companies and industries	MANIENZE Frédéric	SIPAM
Congo	Companies and industries	OTTO MBONGO Hugue	Sofia
Congo	Companies and industries	TSONO Guy Noel	Sofia
Congo	Companies and industries	Ngombe Michel	SOFIL
Congo	Companies and industries		SPIEX
Congo	Companies and industries	KHONG ING Tee	Taman
Congo	Companies and industries	Georges Moukilou	Taman Industrie
Congo	Companies and industries	Georges Moukilou	Taman Industrie
Congo	Companies and industries	BIKOUMOU Jules Séraphin	Thanry-Congo
Congo	Companies and industries	Ferdinand Saha	Thanry-Congo
Congo	Companies and industries	WAN LI Liu	Wang Sam Ressources and Trading Company Congo
Congo	NGOs	EWOSSAKA Arsène	Ministère de l'Economie Forestière (MEF)
Congo	NGOs	MFOUTOU BANGA Sylvie Nadège	Plateforme pour la gestion durable des forêts (PGDF)
Congo	NGOs	LAKI-LAKA Lambert	Cadre de concertation des organisations de la société civile et des populations autochtones pour la REDD+ (CACO-REDD+)
Congo	NGOs	MOUSSELE DISEKE Guy/NGOMA Guy Serge	Réseau national des populations autochtones du Congo (RENAPAC)



Country	Stakeholder group	Name	Organization
Congo	NGOs	NZILA KENDE Trésor Chardon et KIYINDOU Nina	Observatoire congolais des droits de l'homme (OCDH)
Congo	NGOs	BOUKAKA OUADIABANTOU Dévoué et SITA Alfred Bienvenu	Association des exploitants artisanaux, coupeurs et scieurs de bois (AEACSB)
Congo	NGOs	NZOBO Roch Euloge et KOUMBHAT Alvin	Centre pour les droits de l'homme et le développement (CDHD)
Congo	NGOs	Alain Tiotsop	Association International des Bois Tropicaux (ATIBT)
Congo	NGOs	Bertin Tchikangwa	FSC Bassin du Congo (FSC)
Congo	NGOs	Cédric Sépulcre	WWF Congo (WWF)
Congo	NGOs	Mathieu Schwartzenberg	Agence Française de Développement (AFD)
Congo	NGOs	Inès Mvoukani	Comptoire Juridique Junior (CJJ)
Congo	NGOs	Lambert Mabilia NKODIA Alfred	Cercle d'Appui à la Gestion Durable des Forêts (CAGDF)
Congo	NGOs	Lionel Cafferini	AFD (Agence Française de Développement)
Congo	NGOs	Luc Mathot	Conservation Justice
Congo	NGOs	Richard Malonga	Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS)
Congo	NGOs	Aurélie Ahmim-Richard	Fonds Français pour l'Environnement Mondial (FFEM)
Congo	NGOs	Ingrid Lewis	Projet Bwanga (Project Bwanga)
Congo	NGOs	Perrine Odier	Projet d'Appui à l'Application de Loi sur la Faune sauvage (PALF)
Congo	NGOs	Eric Parfait Essomba	WRI Congo (WRI)
Congo	NGOs	Tanja Venisnik	Client Earth
Congo	NGOs	Suspens IFO	Ecole normale supérieure (ENS)
Congo	NGOs	Patrick Misamba-Lola	SSD
Congo	NGOs	Hubert Nombo	Association Sauvons Nos Forêts (ASNF)
Congo	Forest owners	SITA Dieudonné	Ministere de l'Economie Forestiere (MEF)
Congo	Forest owners	NGANONGO Jean Bosco	Ministere de l'Economie Forestiere (MEF)
Congo	Forest owners	EBINA Paulette	Ministere de l'Economie Forestiere (MEF)
Congo	Forest owners	TABAKA Mexan	Ministere de l'Economie Forestiere (MEF)
Congo	Forest owners	DJO PEA	Ministere de l'Economie Forestiere (MEF)
Congo	Forest owners	OSSEBI Alain	Ministere de l'Economie Forestiere (MEF)
Congo	Forest owners	BOUETOU KADILAMIO Leslie Nucia	Ministere de l'Economie Forestiere (MEF)
Congo	Forest owners	PACKO BOCKANDZA	Ministere de l'Economie Forestiere (MEF)
Congo	Forest owners	BOUNZANGA Georges Claver	Ministere de l'Economie Forestiere (MEF)
Congo	Forest owners	NKODIA Alfred	Ministere de l'Economie Forestiere (MEF)
Congo	Forest owners	LOUKENGO Augustin	Ministere de l'Environnement du Developpement Durable et du Tourisme (MEDDT)



Country	Stakeholder group	Name	Organization
Congo	Forest owners	NDINGA Gaëlle	Ministere de l'Environnement du Developpement Durable et du Tourisme (MEDDT)
Congo	Forest owners	CAMPES Jean Pierre	Ministere de la Recherche Scientifique (MRS)
Congo	Forest owners	KOUMBEMBA Marcel	Ministere de l'Agriculture, de l'Elevage et de la Peche (MAEP)
Congo	Forest owners	DIANGA Daniel	Ministere de l'Amenagement du Teritoire et des Grands Travaux (MATGT)
Congo	Forest owners	NGAYINO Nino	Ministere des Affaires Foncières et du Domaine Public (MAFDP)
Congo	Forest owners	QURETH	Ministere des Mines et de la Geologie (MMG)
Congo	Forest owners	OUANDE Raymond	Ministere de la Fonction Publique, du Travail et de la Reforme de l'Etat (MFPTRE)
Congo	Forest owners	BOUNGOU Vlady	Ministere de la Justice, des Droits Humains et Populations Autochtones (MJDHPA)
Congo	Forest owners	BITSOTSO Gérard	Ministere des Finances et du Budget (MFB)
Congo	Forest owners	ITOUA Fidèle	Ministere du Transport de l'Aviation Civile et de la Marine Marchande (MTACMM)
Congo	Forest owners	OBELE BONGO Athanase	Ministere du Commerce et de l'Approvisionnement (MCA)
Congo	Forest owners	ANDOKA Gaston	Ministere de l'Economie de l'industrie et du Portefeuille Public (MEIPFP)
Congo	Forest owners	NZALA Donatien	Ministère de l'Education Nationale (M.E.N)
Congo	Forest owners	YAMANDAN Norbert	Ministère de l'Enseignement Technique, professionnelle et de la Formation qualifiante (METPFQ)
Congo	Forest owners	MOUBOUNDOU Leonard	Présidence de la Republique (P.R)
Congo	Forest owners	ABIA Maurice	Ministère délégué aux collectivités locales et à la decentralisation (M.D.C.L.D)
Congo	Forest owners	GOMA Jean Albert	Ministère de l'Economie Forestière (M.E.F)
Congo	Forest owners	MOMBUILOU Joseph	Direction Générale de l'Economie Forestière (DGEF)
Congo	Forest owners	NZALA Donatien	Ministère de l'Education Nationale (M.E.N)
Congo	Forest owners	YAMANDAN Norbert	Ministère de l'Enseignement Technique, professionnelle et de la Formation qualifiante (METPFQ)
Congo	Forest owners	GOMA Jean Albert	Ministère de l'Economie Forestière (M.E.F)
Congo	Forest owners	Faustin Joseph DEMBI	Service national de reboisement (SNR)
Congo	Forest owners	Maurice GOMA	Eucalyptus Fibre du Congo (EFC)
Congo	Workers and unions	GOMA Pierre	Unibois
Congo	Workers and unions	SAMBA Jean Jacques PLANELLES Alexandre	Unicongo
Congo	Workers and unions	ONDELE KANGA André	Syndicat National des Travailleurs des Eaux et Forêts (S.N.T.E.F)
Congo	Workers and unions	Elault BELLO BELLARD	Confédération Syndicale des Travailleurs du Congo (C.S.T.C)
Congo	Workers and unions	Daniel MONGO	Confédération Syndicale Congolaise (C.S.C)
Gabon	Scientific and technological community	Jean François CHEVALIER	Foret RessourceManagement (FRM)



Country	Stakeholder group	Name	Organization
Gabon	Scientific and technological community	Benoit DEMARQUEZ	TEREA
Gabon	Scientific and technological community	ESSONO ONDO Protet Judicaël	Cabinet SESE
Gabon	Scientific and technological community	Marius Kombila	Cabinet marius (GFEC)
Gabon	Scientific and technological community	Prof NDOUTOUME Auguste	Institut de Recherche Agricole et Forestière (IRAF)
Gabon	Scientific and technological community	Dr Alfred Ngomanda	Institut de Recherche en Ecologie Tropicale (IRET)
Gabon	Scientific and technological community	directeur	Ecole Nationale des Eaux et Forêts (ENEF)
Gabon	Scientific and technological community	Daniel Franck IDIATA	Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CENAREST)
Gabon	Scientific and technological community	Rose ONDO	Centre Universitaire de Recherche et d'action en Foresterie sociale et Développement Durable (CURFOD)
Gabon	Scientific and technological community	Philippe Vigneron	Centre de coopération internationale en recherche agronomique pour le développement (CIRAD)
Gabon	Scientific and technological community	Olivier Ahimin	Bureau d'étude (GFEC)
Gabon	Scientific and technological community	AHIMIN Olivier	Organisation Africaine du Bois (OAB / OIBT)
Gabon	Companies and industries	Françoise VAN DE VEN	Union des Forestiers aménagistes et Industriels du bois du Gabon (UFIGA)
Gabon	Companies and industries	Vijay Kumar	Evergreen Gabon
Gabon	Companies and industries	HU ZHAOYU	BONUS HARVEST (BH)
Gabon	Companies and industries	Mme Susan Zou Qin	TransportBois Négoce International (TBNI)
Gabon	Companies and industries	kevin XU/ Alex XU	Africa Sustainable Investment SAS (ASI)
Gabon	Companies and industries	Christine Boret	Bois et Sciage de l'Ogooué (BSO)
Gabon	Companies and industries	Guillaume FENART	Compagnie des Bois du Gabon (CBG)
Gabon	Companies and industries	AfASSIFIHRI /A.CHAMI	CEMA
Gabon	Companies and industries	CHEN Hao	Société des Bois de Lastourville (SBL)
Gabon	Companies and industries	SPAYMANT	Exploitation Gabonaise de Grumes (EGG)
Gabon	Companies and industries	N. EYMERY	PDG
Gabon	Companies and industries	Frédéric OBER	PRECIOUS WOODS (CEB -PW)
Gabon	Companies and industries	Benoit SICARD	ROUGIER GABON (RG)
Gabon	Companies and industries	Andrea RIGONI	Société de Mise en Valeur du Bois (SOMIVAB)
Gabon	Companies and industries	Camille NASR/Martin BAUDY	Tropical Timber Industry Board (TTIB)
Gabon	Companies and industries	Jean Roland SENTUC	THEBAULT
Gabon	Companies and industries	Philip A.MEYER	GabonWood industrie / Bois et Scierie du Gabon (GWI /BSG)
Gabon	Companies and industries	Pierre LUO	Sunry/Sunly (Sunry/ Sunly)
Gabon	Companies and industries	J.F. CAMI	CORAWOOD
Gabon	Companies and industries	Pierre LUO	BORDAMUR
Gabon	Companies and industries	Celia MEGRE	MAC VENEER



Country	Stakeholder group	Name	Organization
Gabon	Companies and industries	Rishabh Shrishrma I	Africa View Panels SA
Gabon	Companies and industries	Sushil Mandal	Nature Wood Industries Sarl
Gabon	Companies and industries	Jean Christophe RICORDO	Société Equatoriale d'Exploitation Forestière (SEEF)
Gabon	NGOs	BOUSSAMBA	Aventure Sans Frontière (ASF)
Gabon	NGOs	DJINANG Martial	Brainforest
Gabon	NGOs	MEYE Mathurin	Elik Minkébé
Gabon	NGOs	KOUMBA KOUMBA Guy	FOGAPED
Gabon	NGOs	Hervé OMVA OVONO	IDRC Africa
Gabon	NGOs	Annie MEDIK	KEVA INITIATIVE
Gabon	NGOs	Ladislav NDEMBET	MOUISSY ENVIRONNEMENT
Gabon	NGOs	Nicaise Moulombi	Croissance Saine Environnement (CSE)
Gabon	NGOs	PAMA PAMA Jean Nestor	Nyanga Tour
Gabon	NGOs	Constant Allogo	Gabon Ma Terre Mon Droit (GMTMD)
Gabon	NGOs	Marthe Mapangou	World Wildlife Fund (WWF)
Gabon	NGOs	Gaspard Abitsi	Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS)
Gabon	NGOs	Marie-Claire PAIZ	The Nature Conservancy (TNC)
Gabon	NGOs	Luc Mathot	Conservation Justice (CJ)
Gabon	Local populations	Asso-Essingone Fabrice	Forêt Communautaire de Ngokoela (Ovan ,Ogooué ivindo)Asso Essingone Fabrice (FCN)
Gabon	Local populations	Elie	Forêt communautaire d'Ebeigne Département de l'Ivindo -Makokou (FCE)
Gabon	Local populations	MINKUE MI-ELLA Jeanne Marthe	Association Gabonaise des Femmes Indigènes Pygmé (AGAFI)
Gabon	Local populations	Leonard Odambo ou Boris VIVI	Mouvement National des Pygme du Gabon (MINAPYGA)
Gabon	Forest owners	Lee WHITE, Ministre	Ministère de la Forêt de la Mer et de l'Environnement chargé du Plan Climat (MFME)
Gabon	Forest owners	Delphin MAPAGA	Direction Générale des Forêts (DGF)
Gabon	Forest owners	Lidie Irène MANDY NZEMENANGA	Direction Générale des Industries ,du Commerce du Bois et de la valorisation des produits forestiers (DGICB)
Gabon	Forest owners	Emmanuel BAYANI	Direction Générale de l'Environnement (DGE)
Gabon	Forest owners	Vivien Joseph OKOUYI	Agence Nationale des Parcs Nationaux (ANPN)
Gabon	Forest owners	Jean Marie NTOUTOUME	Agence d'Exécution des Activités de la Filière Forêt Bois (AEAFFB)
Gabon	Forest owners	Jean Nestor MINTSA	Agence Gabonaise de Normalisation (AGANOR)
Gabon	Forest owners	MONANGZE	Ministère du Travail , de l'emploi et du développement durable (MTE)
Gabon	Forest owners	Nitin MISRA	Gabon Special Economic Zone (GSEZ)
Gabon	Forest owners	Aimée MEKUI ALLOGHO	Direction Générale de la Faune et des Aires Protégées (DGFAP)
Gabon	Forest owners	Mabala	Commission des forêts et Environnement de l'Assemblée Nationale (CFEAN)



Country	Stakeholder group	Name	Organization
Gabon	Forest owners	Nicaise Moulombi	Conseil Economique , Social et Environnemental (CESE)
Gabon	Forest owners	Axel Antchouet	Service de la communication du Ministère de la Forêt de la Mer et de l'environnement
Gabon	Workers and unions		Caisse Nationale d'Assurance Maladie et Garantie Sociales (CNAMGS)
Gabon	Workers and unions		Caisse Nationale de Sécurité Sociale (CNSS)
Gabon	Workers and unions	Franck CHAMBRIER	Syndicat des Industriels Aménagiste Gabonais (SIAG)
Gabon	Workers and unions	Pierre LUO	Union Forestière des Industries Asiatiques du Gabon (UFIAG)
Gabon	Workers and unions	Léon Mebiame	Entente Syndicale des Travailleurs du Gabon (ENSYTG)
Gabon			agence Française de Développement (AFD)
Cameroon	Scientific and technological community	Dr JIOFACK René	Higher Insitute of Environmental Science (HIES)
Cameroon	Scientific and technological community	DR EBA'A ATYI	Institut de recherche (CIFOR)
Cameroon	Scientific and technological community	Dr ABDON AWONO	Institut de recherche (CIFOR)
Cameroon	Scientific and technological community	Dr TCHOUNDJEU Zac	Higher Insitute of Environmental Science (HIES)
Cameroon	Scientific and technological community	Dr DEGRANDE Anne	Institut de formation (ICRAF)
Cameroon	Scientific and technological community	BANGUE BISSENI	Global Forest Parnarship de Douala (GFP)
Cameroon	Scientific and technological community	FOUOTSOP Diane	Université de Dschang (Uds)
Cameroon	Scientific and technological community	NJANKOUO Jacques Michel	Filière bois (VITRABOIS)
Cameroon	Scientific and technological community	BOBO KADIRIS	Université de Dschang (FASA/Université de Dschang)
Cameroon	Scientific and technological community	IMBEY Moise	Institut de formation (Ecole des Eaux et Forêt de Mbalmayo)
Cameroon	Scientific and technological community	BELL Serge	Institut de formation (IUT-Bois de Mbalmayo/CRESA)
Cameroon	Scientific and technological community	NGUEMA Fabrice	Filière des Métiers de Bois, de l'Eau et de l'Environnement (FMBEE)
Cameroon	Scientific and technological community	NSANGOU MOUSSA Njamyi	Institut de formation (ISMAM)
Cameroon	Scientific and technological community	NJANKOUO Jacques Michel	Institut de formation (ENSET D'EBOWA)
Cameroon	Scientific and technological community	BIWOLE Achille	Institut universitaire (Université de Douala)
Cameroon	Scientific and technological community	Didier Hubert	Organisation internationale de coopération étatique (GIZ)
Cameroon	Scientific and technological community	Jean Marie NOIRAUD	Cabinet Jean Marie Noiraud (JMN)
Cameroon	Scientific and technological community		Agence Française de Développement (AFD)
Cameroon	Companies and industries	PA'AH Patrice André	Coopérative (CAFT- COOP-CA)



Country	Stakeholder group	Name	Organization
Cameroon	Companies and industries	MBARGA MBALLA Siméon	Bureau d'étude (Cabinet BEST- HDS)
Cameroon	Companies and industries	NYEM Jean Christian	Coopérative (COOP Cameroun)
Cameroon	Companies and industries	NGOUE Marie	Entreprise privée (PALLISCO - CIFM)
Cameroon	Companies and industries	PIAZZANLUNGA Angelo	Entreprise privée (ALPICAM)
Cameroon	Companies and industries	TCHOKOMENI Arnaud	Entreprise privée (SEFECCAM)
Cameroon	Companies and industries	KAMDEM Camille	Entreprise privée (WIJMA)
Cameroon	Companies and industries	AZO'O Niçaise	Entreprise privée (CFC)
Cameroon	Companies and industries	Jean Félix NWATCHOCK	Entreprise privée (Société Forestière de Bouraka)
Cameroon	Companies and industries	DONGMO TANDE Jean Claude	Entreprise privée (SABADE)
Cameroon	Companies and industries	KOUSSOCK Fidèle	Bureau d'étude (WAF Consulting Sarl)
Cameroon	Companies and industries	MOTO MALLO Jean Guy	Bureau d'étude (Motto Mallo Consulting)
Cameroon	Companies and industries	NIENIE LAHBON Hedwige	Bureau d'étude (EEDEV Consulting Sarl)
Cameroon	Companies and industries	EBIA NDONGO Samuel	Bureau d'étude (BUREDIP)
Cameroon	Companies and industries	Dr TCHINDJANG Mesmin	Bureau d'étude (GMEM)
Cameroon	Companies and industries	MEKA Patrice	Bureau d'étude (AD)
Cameroon	Companies and industries	LISSOUK MOUAHA	Bureau d'étude (H&B Consulting)
Cameroon	Companies and industries	PETTANG Jules Blaise	Entreprise privée (CUF)
Cameroon	NGOs	Dr Patrice BIGOMBE	Centre d'appui au développement (CERAD)
Cameroon	NGOs	NTYAM SENGUE Sergine Mina	Association de promotion de développement (Association MUNDO)
Cameroon	NGOs	NGUIFFO Samuel	Centre d'appui au développement (CED)
Cameroon	NGOs	MATONGO SODJA Antoinette	OCBB/REFACOF
Cameroon	NGOs	ANKOH Angèle	Association (PERAD)
Cameroon	NGOs	NDJEBET Cécile	Association (CAMECO)
Cameroon	NGOs	ANJEMBE Reine Edwige	Association (Association MUNDO)
Cameroon	NGOs	ANKOM ONTSA Annie	Association (FADJOID)
Cameroon	NGOs	ANGONO Nicaise	Association (CERFAM)
Cameroon	NGOs	NGUIAMBA Jean Paul	Association (CERFAM)
Cameroon	NGOs	NGONZO Rodrigue	Association (FODER)
Cameroon	NGOs	owada Jean Cyrille	Association (FLAG)
Cameroon	NGOs	SONNE Norbert	Organisation Internationale (WWF Cameroun)
Cameroon	NGOs		Organisation Internationale (WCS)
Cameroon	NGOs	Eric Kaba Tah	Organisation régionale (LAGA)
Cameroon	NGOs	MEBERE Serge	Association (FODEC)
Cameroon	NGOs	ETOGA Gilles	Organisation Internationale (WWF Cameroun)
Cameroon	NGOs	BACHIROU NJOYA	Association (Fondation Princesse MOMAFON RABIATOU NJOYA)



Country	Stakeholder group	Name	Organization
Cameroon	NGOs	SIGNE DASSI Pierre Alex	Association (ENVIRONNEMENT VOTRE)
Cameroon	NGOs	MIANTSIA FOKAM Olivier	Association (CAREDEPA)
Cameroon	NGOs	NDZALLA NDZALLA Degaulle	Association (Earth and live)
Cameroon	NGOs	NGUELE Jérôme	Association (MIRIDI-CU/Bta)
Cameroon	NGOs	TCHOULACK Albertine	Association (CAFER)
Cameroon	NGOs	TCHOFFO Benjamin	Association (CARFAD)
Cameroon	NGOs	ENOU PA'AH Reine Francine	Association (NATURE et FORET)
Cameroon	NGOs	NNA NDOBE Samuel	Association (GDA)
Cameroon	NGOs	ENDAMANA Dominique	Organisme International (UICN)
Cameroon	NGOs	PA'AH II Ricky Franck	Association de promotion de développement (UNIVERS-BIO)
Cameroon	NGOs	OTYA'A ATOU'OU Jean Bruel	Programme du Développement Durable (PDD)
Cameroon	NGOs	MAHONGHOL SIE Denis	Organisme International (TRAFFIC)
Cameroon	NGOs	TESSA Victor	Association (Association MUNDO)
Cameroon	NGOs	NANA CHIMI HOZIER	Association (SAILD)
Cameroon	NGOs	NGATCHOU Erith	Organisation Internationale (Earthworm/TFT)
Cameroon	NGOs	Romain Lorent	Programme de Promotion de l'Exploitation Certifiée des Forêts (PPECF)
Cameroon	Local populations	BISSECK Epse YIGBEDEK Monique Catherine	Organisation sous-régionale (REFADD)
Cameroon	Local populations	MESSE Venant	Organisation sous-régionale (REPALEAC)
Cameroon	Local populations	Hélène AYE MONDO	Organisation sous-régionale (REPALEAC / CADDAP)
Cameroon	Local populations	Chief TANYI Robinson	Fédération filière bois (FEDEFECOM)
Cameroon	Local populations	MGBAMINE Zacharie	GIC (FC/MEDJOH)
Cameroon	Local populations	SM MVONDO Bruno	Association (Réseau des chefs traditionnels)
Cameroon	Local populations	AKONO Anicet	Association (ONEPCAM)
Cameroon	Local populations	YAKI Gaston	Association (ASBAK)
Cameroon	Local populations	SM. LOMIE Gérard (Maire)	Commune de Lomié (CTD (Commune forestière))
Cameroon	Local populations	AKPAKOUA Valère	Association (ASBAK)
Cameroon	Forest owners	Hon. ZAM Jean Jacques	Association sous régionale des parlementaires (REPAR)
Cameroon	Forest owners	NDJETOH Pierre	Administration publique (MINRESI)
Cameroon	Forest owners	NGOMIN Anicet	Administration publique (MINFOF)
Cameroon	Forest owners	KANGA Patrick	Administration publique (MINFOF)
Cameroon	Forest owners	MINSOUMA Anicet	Agence publique (ANAFOR)
Cameroon	Forest owners	MBARGA Narcisse	Agence publique (ANAFOR)
Cameroon	Forest owners	ASSONTIA Gaston	Agence publique (ANOR)



Country	Stakeholder group	Name	Organization
Cameroon	Forest owners	NTOUMBA Mariette Judith	Administration publique (MINMIDT)
Cameroon	Forest owners	KAMGUEM Dieudonné	Administration publique (MINEPDED)
Cameroon	Forest owners	WAYANG Raphael	Administration publique (MINEPDED)
Cameroon	Forest owners	FAH Jacob	Administration publique (MINEPDED)
Cameroon	Forest owners	TCHUANTE Valérie	Plate forme interétatique (COMIFAC)
Cameroon	Forest owners	ASSEMBE MVONDO Samuel	Consultant
Cameroon	Forest owners	YUUDJEU Charles	Administration publique (MINEPDED)
Cameroon	Forest owners	NGBWA Jean	administration publique (MINFOF)
Cameroon	Forest owners	TITE Valerie	Plate forme interétatique (COMIFAC)
Cameroon	Workers and unions	OUOGUIA Blandine	Groupe ment de la Filière Bois du Cameroun (GFBC)
Cameroon	Workers and unions	MOUYENGA Valentin	Groupe ment de la Filière Bois du Cameroun (GFBC)
Cameroon	Workers and unions	NDOUMOU Thomas	Syndicat des exploitants forestiers (SEFNA)
Cameroon	Workers and unions	NYECK Sylvestre	Organisation d'entreprises de la filière bois (Interprofession Forêts Bois)
Cameroon	Workers and unions	OUWE MISSI OUKEM René	Fédération filière bois (FECAPROBOIS)
Cameroon	Workers and unions	ESSOMBA Prosper Aimé	Organisation syndicale des travailleurs (CSTC)
Cameroon	Workers and unions	BISSALA Isaac	Union Générale des Travailleurs du Cameroun (UGTC)
Cameroon	Workers and unions	MOUSSOLE Flaubert	Cameroon Confederation of Workers Trade Union (CCWTU)
Regional	Scientific and technological community	Erith NGATCHOU	Earthworm
Regional	Scientific and technological community	Denis Depommier	Centre de coopération internationale en recherche agronomique pour le développement (CIRAD)
Regional	Scientific and technological community	Richard Eba'a	Centre International pour la recherche forestière (CIFOR)
Regional	Scientific and technological community	Claude Kachaka Sudi Kaiko	Réseau des Institutions de Formation Forestière et Environnementale de l'Afrique Centrale (RIFFEAC)
Regional	Scientific and technological community	Aurelian Mbizibain	Centre for International Development and Training (CIDT)
Regional	Companies and industries	Benoit JOBBE DUVAL	Association Technique Internationale des Bois Tropicaux (ATIBT)
Regional	NGOs	Gady Inès Mvoukani / Tanja Venisnik	Clientearth - Congo
Regional	NGOs	Benjamin Ichou /Yulia Stange	Clientearth - Gabon
Regional	NGOs	Nathalie Faure	Clientearth - AC
Regional	NGOs	HAKIZUMWAMI Elie	Organisme International (TRAFFIC)
Regional	NGOs	Dany Pokem	Partenariat pour les Forêts du Bassin du Congo (PFBC)
Regional	Local populations	Guillaume TATI	Alliance pour la conservation des Grands Singes en Afrique Centrale (A-GSAC)



Country	Stakeholder group	Name	Organization
Regional	Local populations		Réseau femmes africaines pour le développement durable en Afrique centrale (REFADD)
Regional	Local populations	Jean-Cyrille Owada	Field Legality Advisory Group (FLAG)
Regional	Local populations	M. KAPUPU DIWA MUTIMANWA	Réseau des Populations Autochtones et Locales pour la Gestion des Ecosystèmes Forestiers d'Afrique Centrale (REPALEAC)
Regional	Local populations	Hon. ZAM Jean Jacques	Réseau des Parlementaires pour la Gestion Durable des Écosystèmes Forestiers d'Afrique Centrale (REPAR)
Regional	Local populations	Joe Eisen	Rainforest Foundation UK (RKUK)
Regional	Forest owners	Gervais ITSOUA MADZOU	Commission des Forêts d'Afrique Centrale (COMIFAC)
Regional	Forest owners	ESSOLA Louis Roger	Plate forme interétatique (CEFDHAC)
Regional	Forest owners	Hon. ZAM Jean Jacques	Association sous régionale des parlementaires (REPAR)

Questionnaire

Questionnaire on the standard-setting process of the Sustainable forest management requirements (NORM-001-2019-1) under the PAFC Congo Basin

Question to stakeholder	Answer
1. What stakeholder category do you represent?	<input type="checkbox"/> Forestry Authority <input type="checkbox"/> Indigenous people <input type="checkbox"/> Workers <input type="checkbox"/> Environment <input type="checkbox"/> Industry <input type="checkbox"/> Academic / research / professional bodies <input type="checkbox"/> Other; please specify: Click here to enter your comments
2. What country did you represent in the stakeholder consultation? (more than 1 answer possible)	<input type="checkbox"/> Cameroon <input type="checkbox"/> Congo <input type="checkbox"/> Gabon <input type="checkbox"/> Other: Click here to enter your comments



Question to stakeholder	Answer
<p>3. Did you actively participate in the standard-setting process of the Sustainable Forest Management Requirements? (more than 1 answer possible)</p> <p>► If no, why not?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes, as a member of the Forum</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes, I participated in the first regional workshop (November 2019)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes, I participated in the second regional workshop (October 2020)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes, I participated during the first public consultation round (December 2019 – February 2020)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes, I participated during the second public consultation round (May – September 2020)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes, namely: Click here to enter your comments</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No, because: Click here to enter your comments</p>
<p>4. a) How did you find out about the standard-setting process?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper or magazine</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Website of ATIBT / PAFC Cameroon / PAFC Congo / PAFC Gabon</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Personal letter or E-mail</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other: Click here to enter your comments</p>
<p>b) When were you invited to participate in the standard-setting process of the PAFC Congo Basin?</p>	<p>Please indicate</p> <p>Day: Click here to enter your comments</p> <p>Month: Click here to enter your comments</p> <p>Year: Click here to enter your comments</p>
<p>5. What was your main concern and your interest to participate in the standard-setting process of the PAFC Congo Basin?</p>	<p>Concern:</p> <p>Click here to enter your comments</p> <p>Interest:</p> <p>Click here to enter your comments</p>
<p>6. Did the organisers provide you with relevant material to participate in the scheme development?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes, because: Click here to enter your comments</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No, because: Click here to enter your comments</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I don't know: Click here to enter your comments</p>
<p>7. In your opinion, have all stakeholders that are relevant to the standard-setting process been proactively identified and invited, including disadvantaged stakeholders?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No, other stakeholders that should have been involved: Click here to enter your comments</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I don't know</p>
<p>8. a) Did the Stakeholder representatives in the Forum represent the range of interests in forest management (natural and plantation) in Congo Basin?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No, other interest groups that should have been involved: Click here to enter your comments</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I don't know</p>



Question to stakeholder	Answer
b) Did the Forum, to your opinion, have a balanced representation of various stakeholder categories?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No, underrepresented stakeholder categories are: Click here to enter your comments <input type="checkbox"/> I don't know
9. Did the stakeholder representatives in the Forum come from all relevant regions from the Congo Basin (covered by the scheme)? ► If no, which regions were not or poorly represented?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> I don't know <input type="checkbox"/> No, the following region(s) was (were) not / poorly represented: Click here to enter your comments
10.a) Are you aware of any substantive and procedural complaints relating to the standard-setting process, brought forward by you or any other stakeholder?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, there was a complaint about Click here to enter your comments <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> I don't know
b) In case of any complaints, have these complaints been validated and objectively evaluated ?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> I don't know
11. Do you believe any aspects of the PAFC Congo Basin deserve further consideration in this assessment?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes (please specify) <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> I don't know

Questions 12-19 are for Forum members only.

If you did participate in the Forum, please continue with **question 12**.

Question to stakeholder	Answer
12. Did all stakeholders in the Forum have expertise relevant to the subject matter of the standard?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> I don't know
13.a) Have records (or minutes) been kept from Forum meetings?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> I don't know
b) How did you receive invitations for the Forum meetings and documents?	<input type="checkbox"/> By mail <input type="checkbox"/> By E-mail <input type="checkbox"/> By other means: Click here to enter your comments
c) Did you receive invitations and documents for Forum meetings in a timely manner ?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> I don't know



Question to stakeholder	Answer
14. Have all working draft documents (draft versions of the standard) been available to all members of the Forum?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> I don't know
15. Have you been provided with meaningful opportunities to contribute to the development of the standard and submit comments to the working drafts?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> I don't know
16. Have comments and views submitted by any member of the Forum been considered in an open and transparent way ?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> I don't know
17. Has the (first) Public Consultation of the scheme documentation lasted for at least 60 days ?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> I don't know
18. Have all comments received during the public consultation been considered in an objective manner by the Forum?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> I don't know
19. Was the decision of the Forum to recommend the final draft for formal approval taken on the basis of consensus ? ► In case no consensus was reached on certain issues, how was the issue resolved?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No, the issue was resolved in the following way: Click here to enter your comments <input type="checkbox"/> I don't know

Please return the answers latest by 14 June 2021. You can direct your response by E-mail to: info@forminternational.nl

Thank you for your time and cooperation.



Annex 3 Results of International Consultation

There were no comments received during the International Consultation.



Annex 4 Internal review

Report chapter / Page	Assessor's report statement	PEFCC's Internal Review comment	Assessor's response
Chapter 7	(no specific session)	(in several cases PEFCC raises questions regarding applicable legislation)	Based on new evidence provided by ATIBT with references to applicable legislation, a nonconformities is raised for benchmark requirement 4.1i, which requires an overview of applicable legislation for benchmark requirements which are not reflected in the standard.
Chapter 7	(no specific session)	Definition of Forest: The rationale is not clear for us, why the SFM standard applies very low benchmarks for the definition of forest.	A general nonconformity is raised for the current forest definition used in the standard, as it does not match the intent of the standard.
Chapter 7	(no specific session)	Annex 3: It's difficult to see why these are not covered by the standard.	The inclusion of such an annex is identified by the Assessor as a nonconformity, as the benchmark standard does not include such an option. Furthermore, it is noted that certain requirements might not be relevant for the Congo Basin, but this shall be extensively justified.



Annex 5 Report on online meetings with stakeholders

In the period of 1 to 9 July 2021, the Assessor (Mr. Tieme Wanders) held online meetings with several stakeholders of the PAFC Congo Basin. Additionally, meetings were held with ATIBT and to discuss general matters of the PAFC Congo Basin and remaining issues in the assessments of the various standards and procedures

It was intended to meet with all stakeholders that participated in the Forum, and add additional stakeholders who participated in other ways in the standard setting process. These meetings were meant to discuss how the standard-setting was done and to discuss specific matters that came up during the assessment.

It was quite challenging to get in contact with these stakeholders and effectively have an online meeting. Finally, online four stakeholders could be met (listed in the table below). This urges the need for a physical field visit to the Congo Basin, to have meetings on the ground.

Table A5.1 Stakeholder that were interviewed during an online meeting

Country	Organisation	Person / representative
Cameroon	FLAG	Cyrille Owada
Cameroon	Sefeccam	Arnaud Tchokomeni
Congo	WCS	Dave Morgan
Gabon	UFIGA	Françoise van de Ven

Main outcomes of the field assessment:

- The general impression is that all stakeholder groups were sufficiently represented in the Forum and that the Forum included a balanced representation of all stakeholders. Furthermore, the impression was that sufficient effort was put into involving and inviting the indigenous people;
- Working drafts were available to Forum members, they had opportunities to contribute to the standard-setting process, feedback from Forum members and other stakeholders were considered and outcomes recorded;
- Consensus on the Forest Management standard was reached in the Forum;
- Stakeholders were not aware of any formal complaint(s) regarding the standard-setting;
- There was much discussion on the carbon issue. People were afraid this would put another burden on companies;
- No concerns came up by interviewing the stakeholders on the standard-setting process;
- No concerns came up by interviewing the stakeholder on specific issues from the forest management standard.



Annex 6 Report on the Field Assessment

From 11 to 20 October 2022, one of the Assessors (Ms. Esther Boer) visited Congo, Gabon, and Cameroon for the field assessment. The field assessment was carried out nearly 1,5 years after the initial assessment of the scheme, because of the travel restrictions imposed during the Covid-19 period. The field visit complements the initial findings of the online stakeholder assessment conducted in July 2021 (Annex 5).

The field assessment consisted of:

- Meetings with the NGBs of the respective countries to discuss the standard development process and progress made after the temporary endorsement of the scheme.
- Meetings with stakeholders in each country from the different stakeholder groups. This included meetings with members from, or representing the government administration, NGOs, scientific community, indigenous people, workers organisations, forest enterprises, and members of the Forum to discuss how the standard setting was done and what their views were on the standard development process. During the meetings also specific forestry matters in Congo, Gabon and Cameroon were discussed to get a better picture of the forestry industry in the countries.

The itinerary of the field assessment is presented in the table below.

	Stakeholder group/Sector	Organisation	Person/ representative
Republic of the Congo			
11-10-22	-	Regional PEFC coordinator	Germain YENE YENE
	NGB	PAFC Congo	Brice Severin PONGUI (President)
	NGB / Industry and Enterprises	PAFC Congo	Mexan TABAKA (Vice president)
12-10-22	Environment	Cercle d'Appui à la Gestion Durable des Forêts (CAGDF)	Alfred NKODIA (Forum member)
	Forest Enterprise	AFRIWOOD Industries	Armand Blaise DIAMVINZA
	Forest Enterprise	Asia Congo Industries	Sindouss TANGYU
	NGO	Centre pour les droits de l'homme et le développement	Alvin KOUMBHAT
13-10-22	Administration	Ministry of Forest Economics	Paulette EBINA (Forum member)
	NGO	Action Environnement et de la Solidarité	Arsène RIGOBERT



Stakeholder group/Sector		Organisation	Person/ representative	
Gabon				
2022	14-10-	Administration	Ministry of Water and Forest	Béatrice MINANGA (Forum member)
		Industry and enterprises	GSEZ	Sylvie BOLDRINI (Expert to the Forum)
2022	17-10-	NGO	Brainforest	Germain DJEUKING
		NGO	WWF	Nathalie NYARE
		Administration	AGANOR	Nestor MINTSA
		Administration	SWLC (Engineer)	Jules MBOUDI
		Worker's organisation	UTB TB BSP	Léon MEBIAME (Forum Member)
Cameroon				
2022	18-10-	Industry and enterprises	Pallisco	Marie Cécile NGOU (Forum Member)
2022	19-10-	NGB	PAFC Cameroun	Reine ANJEMBE
		Industries and enterprises	Lawyer	Patrice MEKA
		Administration	College of administration	Erick OBAM
		Industry and enterprises	Collège de ayant-droit (Beneficiary's College)	Dieudonné MINDJOM
		Industry and enterprises	Collège de ayant-droit (Beneficiary's College)	Wo'o ADJA
		Industry and enterprises	Collège de ayant-droit (Beneficiary's College)	Zambo AGNO
		Environment	Environmental College	Hedwige NIENE
		Industry and enterprises	College of forest exploitation	Ariostide BELEAS
		Industry and enterprises	Social College	Guy MOTTO
		Administration	ANOR	Assontia DJOUDJI
2022	20-10-	Administration	MINFOF	King NGUIBOURG (Forum member)
		Scientific community	Independent consultant	Isaac BINDZI
		Environment	Social and environmental college	Hedwige NIENE
		NGO	Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS)	Grace MBENA (Forum member)



Main outcomes of the field assessment:

On the standard setting process:

- Stakeholders in all three countries were positive about the standard setting process and noted that they are looking forward to the implementation of the PEFC Congo Basin scheme in their country;
- As was found by the stakeholders during the online meetings, the general impression is that all stakeholder groups were sufficiently represented in the Forum and that the Forum included a balanced representation of all stakeholders.
- Furthermore, stakeholders were under the impression that sufficient effort was put into involving indigenous people in the standard setting process. They also found that the standard sufficiently incorporated their needs and interests.
- Forum members noted that they had all been provided with opportunities to contribute to the standard-setting process and that they had received working drafts and other relevant documents. They specifically mentioned that it had been an inclusive and transparent process.
- Other stakeholders which were not part of the Forum also found that they had been given opportunities to provide their input into the standard and that it had been a participatory and transparent process;
- Forum members all stated that they had reached consensus on the final draft of the standard;
- Stakeholders were not aware of any formal complaint(s) regarding the standard-setting;
- No concerns came up by interviewing the stakeholders on the standard setting process;
- However, the stakeholder did point out several challenges they had faced during the process. These included:
 - The challenge of Covid-19 and having to discuss the standard online. Some stakeholders had found it pleasant to have to online meetings, while many others noted it made the process more difficult, more laborious, but that it was their only option at the time.
 - The unwillingness of people to participate or come to meetings without receiving financial compensation. It was pointed out that the NGB and Forum members also have other jobs they need to attend to, and that they worked voluntarily on the development of the scheme.
 - The lack of an on the ground pilot test of the standard. Some stakeholders said they would have preferred to have an on the ground pilot test of the standard, but that they had to resort to the online test due to the Covid-19 period.



On the PAFC scheme and forest management standard

- Stakeholders had a positive view on the forest management standard. In fact, most stakeholders noted that they see this new standard as an opportunity to address the many social and environmental challenges in the forestry sector of their respective countries.
- Stakeholders in all countries pointed out that they were pleased with PEFC as opposed to other forest certification schemes, because it allowed them to adapt the standard to their local realities.
- Various stakeholders commented that in the beginning they feared that the PEFC standard would not take into account challenging issues such as corruption or the proper inclusion of social and environmental factors, but that they were happily surprised by the comprehensive requirements of the standard and pleased with the final result.
- A major point which came up during nearly all stakeholder interviews was the need for implementing the standard to get a comprehensive idea on how it works and where it can be improved. Stakeholders see the standard that was developed as a good basis, but are waiting for the next steps. They said on several occasions that only during the implementation of the standard they will find out if things do, or do not work in practice. These can then be included in the revision of the standard.
- Adding to this, stakeholders said that there may be still some small difficulties within the standard, and that they will have to see how some requirements fit within their local context. However, they again pointed out that it is not until the implementation of the standard that they will have a better understanding on where further improvements/changes are needed.
- Another point which came up during interviews was the discussion on the mapping of the carbon stock that had taken place during the process. Especially stakeholders from forest enterprises noted this point. For now stakeholders said they were fine with the final outcome of the standard on this topic, but they did note the need for guidance for companies to easily implement this requirement.

Challenges encountered during the field visit

Despite significant efforts (email invitations and calls) from the national NGBs and Form International to speak to all different stakeholder groups in each country, the response and availability from stakeholders was somewhat limited. Therefore, we were not able to speak to all stakeholder groups in each country. However, the interviews conducted in the three countries did cover all stakeholder groups of the scheme. Stakeholders have also been given ample opportunity to raise any concerns about the standard development process to the assessor, after having received a request to fill in the stakeholder survey; a request for an online interview; and a request for in-person meetings. We can therefore conclude that if there were any pressing issues from a specific stakeholder group these would have been raised during any of these assessment mechanisms.



