

PEFC Conformity Assessment

PEFC Latvia Certification System for
Sustainable Forest Certification

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Client

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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
PEFC	Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification
PEFC Latvia	Association PEFC Latvijas Padome
PEFC GD	Guidance Document of PEFC International
PEFC IGD	PEFC Informative Guide
PEFC ST	Standard Document of PEFC International
PEFCC TD	PEFC Council Technical Document
Req.	Requirement
SFM	Sustainable Forest Management
TBD	To be determined
TOF	Trees outside Forest

1. Introduction

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

This report presents the results of the evaluation of the PEFC Latvia Certification System for Sustainable Forest Certification (PEFC Latvia system) against PEFC Council requirements for forest certification systems. The application for PEFC endorsement was submitted in January 2023.

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 Council about the maintenance of endorsement of the PEFC Latvia system.

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 system, for example for the Forest Stewardship Council and Keurhout. Moreover, Form International has carried out conformity assessments for PEFC, such as the Certification Systems of Australia, Austria, Belgium, Congo Basin, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, 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, Ms. Esther Boer, Mr. Jos Westdijk, Mr. Niels Rebel, Ms. Anke Scheper, and Ms. Maria Escobar (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 revised system, as elaborated in PEFC GD 1007:2017 chapter 6.3.1. The conformity of the PEFC Latvia system 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 PEFC Latvia are shown in Table 1. Table 2 lists the documents used from PEFC Council. Besides these documents, the website used by PEFC Latvia was consulted during the assessment.

Table 1 Documents used for the conformity assessment

Number	Title
PEFC LV 05:2020	Standard setting – Requirements for development and revision of PEFC Latvia documentation (August 2020)
PEFC LV 02:2022	Requirements for certification bodies carrying out PEFC forest management certification (Amended version July 2023)
PEFC LV 06:2022	Group forest certification – Requirements (Amended version July 2023)
PEFC FMS:2022	Latvian National PEFC Forest Management Standard (Amended version August 2023)
PEFC LV 03:2022	Procedure for the notification of the Certification Bodies (July 2022)
PEFC LV 08:2022	Procedure for the issuance of PEFC Trademark usage license (July 2022)
PEFC LV 07:2022	Procedure for resolving complaints and appeals (July 2022)
(none)	Development report
(none)	System Description
(none)	Documents providing evidence of the revision process, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments from consultation • Stakeholder information • Identified stakeholders • Application letter • Minutes of meetings
(none)	PEFC Checklists for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standard Setting Procedures and Process • Certification and Accreditation Procedures • Group Forest Management Certification • Scheme Administration • Sustainable Forest Management

Table 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
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

	PEFC Council document	Date
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 in which an evaluation of the conformity was conducted. The assessment enabled the Assessor to identify any missing information, similarities and differences between the PEFC Latvia system 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 PEFC Latvia system 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:

- compliance of the system documented procedures ('Procedures')
- compliance of the standard-setting process itself with the procedures ('Process')

To assess the standard-setting process, the standard development report, explanations from PEFC Latvia, 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 system, and a stakeholder survey was organized by Form International through questionnaires that were sent out to members of the Working Groups and other relevant stakeholders identified by PEFC Latvia during the standard-setting process.

2. Assessment of the Sustainable Forest Management standard

The compliance of the PEFC Latvia system with PEFC ST 1003:2018 Sustainable Forest Management – Requirements (including Appendix 1 and Appendix 2) was assessed based on the PEFC Checklist.

3. Assessment of the Chain of Custody standard

The compliance of the PEFC Latvia system with PEFC ST 2002:2020 – Chain of Custody of Forest and Tree Based Products - Requirements was assessed based on the provided documentation.

4. Assessment of the Group Certification model

The compliance of the PEFC Latvia system with PEFC ST 1002:2010, Group Forest Management Certification – Requirements was assessed based on the PEFC Checklist.

5. Assessment of the Certification and Accreditation Procedures

The compliance of the PEFC Latvia System with PEFC TD Annex 6 (Certification and accreditation procedures) and PEFC ST 2003:2020 was assessed based on the PEFC Checklist and provided documentation.

6. Other aspects regarding functions and efficiency of the system

The functions and efficiency of the PEFC Latvia System were evaluated on the basis of descriptions and information obtained in correspondence with PEFC Latvia and stakeholders.

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.

1.5 Assessment process

The conformity assessment process consisted of the following steps:

1. Public consultation

The international public consultation was held from 27 June to 25 August 2022. No comments were received (Annex 3).

The national stakeholder survey was held from 8 to 25 June 2023. Form International sent out questionnaires to all stakeholders that were members of the Working Group and additional stakeholders that were invited and/or participated in public consultation during the revision process. In total 77 questionnaires were sent out, 3 responses were received. Results of the stakeholder survey (Annex 2) were used in the assessment.

2. Technical desk study

The technical desk study was carried out on the PEFC Latvia System documentation. It comprised of a review of the documentation and a verification of the elaborated PEFC Checklists. During the assessment additional information was requested from PEFC Latvia.

3. Elaboration of draft report

The draft report was sent to PEFC Latvia and PEFC Council Secretariat on 30 June 2023.

4. Commenting period

Based on the draft report, PEFC Latvia provided responses, additional references, information and clarifications to the draft report.

5. 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 sent to PEFC Council Secretariat on 16 October 2023.

6. Internal review of the final draft report

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



7. 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 2 November 2023.

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. Commenting period PEFC Poland															
5. Field visit **															
6. Elaboration of final draft report															
7. Internal review															
8. Elaboration final report															

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

** Not applicable for this assessment

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 PEFC Council should maintain the endorsement the PEFC Latvia System
Chapter 3	Summary of the findings
Chapter 4	Overview of the key structures of the system
Chapter 5	Standard-setting Procedures – assessment results
Chapter 6	Standard-setting process – assessment results
Chapter 7	Forest management standard – assessment results
Chapter 8	Group Certification Model – assessment results
Chapter 9	Chain of Custody standard – assessment results
Chapter 10	Certification and accreditation arrangements – assessment results
Chapter 11	Other aspects related to the System



Annex 1	PEFC Checklists
Annex 2	Results of the stakeholder survey
Annex 3	Results of international consultation
Annex 4	Report on the field assessment
Annex 5	Internal review

2. Recommendation

Based on the results of this conformity assessment, Form International recommends the PEFC Council **to maintain the endorsement of the PEFC Latvia System**, on the condition that the two (2) remaining nonconformities shall be corrected within six (6) months after endorsement.

The nonconformities found in the System documentation:

- Two (2) in the Forest Management Standard

All nonconformities are classified as minor. In relation to the standard-setting process, two (2) nonconformities are found. The nonconformities found in the standard-setting process did not undermine or damage the review process. It would therefore not be adequate to redo the standard-setting process based on the nonconformities found in the process. However, it's recommended that one (1) nonconformity, related to PEFC ST 1001:2017 9.4.2, is addressed within six (6) months after endorsement.

3. Summary of the findings

The table below presents a summary of the assessment findings. Four (4) nonconformities were found. The following colour coding is applied indicating the level of compliance with PEFC benchmark:

	In compliance with PEFC benchmark
	Not in compliance with PEFC benchmark, only minor nonconformities
	Not in compliance with PEFC benchmark, includes major nonconformities

Assessment scope	Reference documentation	Non-conformities	Assessment conclusion	Compliance with PEFC benchmark
Structure of the system	System documentation	None	The system includes all relevant standards, procedures and arrangements.	Yes
Standard-setting Procedures	PEFC LV 05:2020	None	All the procedures for the standard-setting process are included.	Yes
Standard-setting process	Process documentation, including invitations, minutes, websites etc.	2 minors	Well implemented process with clear and transparent documentation. Additional evidence might be provided to solve the nonconformities.	No
Forest Management Standard	PEFC FMS:2022	2 minors	Well-developed standard. Corrective actions required for remaining nonconformities.	No
Group Certification Model	PEFC LV 06:2022	None	Well-developed standard.	Yes
Chain of Custody Standard	PEFC ST 2002:2020	None	PEFC ST 2002:2020 is adopted	Yes
Forest Management certification and accreditation arrangements	PEFC LV 02:2022	None	System documentation includes normative reference to ISO 17021.	Yes
Chain of Custody Certification and Accreditation Procedures	PEFC ST 2003:2020	None	PEFC ST 2003:2020 is adopted	Yes

* 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 (if needed).

Any nonconformity is further elaborated and justified in the chapter covering the respective standard or procedure.

4. Structure of the system

4.1 Introduction to the forestry sector in Latvia

As of 2021, around 52% of Latvia's territory (3.08 Mha) was forest cover, consisting mainly of coniferous trees (51%).¹ The regions of Vidzeme in the Northeast and Kurzeme in the Northwest have the most tree cover, which mostly consist of natural forest.² According to the National Forest Inventory, the dominating tree species in Latvia are coniferous (51%) species like Scots pine and Norway spruce, followed by birch (30%), white alder (7%), aspen (7%), black alder stands (4%) and stands of other species (1%).¹

In the last few years, the area of regenerated forests has increased. According to FAO, by 2015 there were 2.73 Mha of naturally regenerated forest areas in Latvia.² In 2020 there was increase of 39,391 ha new regenerated forest areas.³ This trend is expected to continue due to natural regeneration of lands that were previously used for agriculture, as well as afforestation efforts.

The Latvian forests are nearly divided between private ownership (51%) and state ownership (49%).³ Private owners have had a leading role in regeneration efforts, as for example, over 59% of the newly regenerated area in 2020 was on their properties. Since 2000, the state forest area has been managed and administered by the Joint Stock Company *Latvijas Valsts Meži* (LVM-Latvian State Forests).¹ LVM is a state company, linked to the Ministry of Agriculture. It manages and administers 1.63 Mha of public land, including 1.60 Mha of forest land.⁴ The company's main management goal is the production of high-quality timber, for which 1.17 Mha of forest area have been assigned.⁴

The forestry sector is the largest export industry for Latvia.³ In 2020, exports of wood and wood products accounted for 19% of the country's total export value (EUR 2.6 billion). Wood exports have been dominated by sawn wood, fuel wood and round wood, accounting together for 50% of the share of export value. The main export destinations traditionally are European countries such as the United Kingdom, Sweden and Denmark.³

4.2 Organisation of the System

The Association PEFC Latvijas Padome (PEFC Latvia) was founded in 1999, with the aim to "develop national system documentation based on the PEFC benchmark standards". PEFC Latvia is responsible for development, administration, maintenance of the national system. The Latvia PEFC Certification system was first endorsed by PEFC International in 2001 and has been re-endorsed two times since then (2011 & 2016). Currently more than 50% of all forest areas (1.2 Mha) including all State-owned forests, are PEFC-certified.³ About 50 companies have obtained the

¹ Valsts meža dienests (2021) Retrieved 2 June 2023, from <https://www.vmd.gov.lv/lv/meza-ipasniekiem>

² Global Forest Watch (2020) Retrieved 12 June 2023, from <https://www.globalforestwatch.org/>

³ Investment and Development Agency of Latvia. Retrieved 12 June 2023, from https://www.liaa.gov.lv/en/trade/industries/forest?utm_source=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com%2F

⁴ Latvijas Valsts Meži (n.d) Retrieved 12 June 2023, from <https://www.lvm.lv/en/about-us/our-forests>



system's certification for their supply chains. Forest management certification is performed by the certification bodies: BM Certification, SIA "SGS Latvija Ltd" and Soil Association Certification.⁴

PEFC Latvia has the following organisational structure:

- The Member Meeting, the authority responsible for the final approval of the Forest management standard for Latvia.
- The PEFC Latvia Council, consisting of 4 members. Its responsibilities include the establishment of a Technical Committee, authorization for the development or revision of the Forest Management Standard and review of PEFC Latvia's documentation (except the Standard).
- The PEFC board, consisting of 1 person
- The PEFC Latvia secretariat, responsible for, inter alia, the implementation of the document procedures and other rules relating to the development of the Standard, like identification of stakeholders, public announcements and management of public consultations.

Depending on the need to address various tasks and issues, the Council sets up standing or ad hoc Working Groups.

4.3 The PEFC Latvia system

PEFC Latvia has developed a structured national PEFC certification system (referred to as PEFC LV). The revised PEFC LV 2022 consists of seven updated standards:

- PEFC FMS:2022, Latvian National PEFC Forest Management Standard;
- PEFC LV 06:2022, Group Forest Management Certification – Requirements;
- PEFC LV 02:2022, Requirements for certification bodies carrying out PEFC Forest Management certification;
- PEFC LV 05:2020, Standard - setting – Requirements for development and revision of PEFC Latvia documentation;
- PEFC LV 03:2022, Procedure for the notification of the Certification Bodies;
- PEFC LV 08:2022, Procedure for the issuance of PEFC Trademark usage license;
- PEFC LV 07:2022, Procedure for resolving complaints and appeals.

The Procedural and Standard documents are schematically presented in the table at the end of this section. No country specific standards for *Chain of Custody*, *Requirements for Certification Bodies operating Certification against the PEFC International Chain of Custody Standard* and for *PEFC Logo usage rules* are developed. Instead, the PEFC benchmark procedures PEFC ST 2002, PEFC ST 2003 and PEFC ST 2001 are adopted.

PEFC Latvia for sustainable forest management offers either individual or group certification. As described in the System Description of PEFC Latvia, the certification works:

- For individual certification, the forest owner applies for certification individually (PEFC FMS:2022 and any other relevant system documentation)



- For group certification, forest owners are joining a group to reduce costs for certification. Certification is applied for and managed by the group leader on behalf of their members⁵ (PEFC LV 06:2022, PEFC FMS:2022 and any other relevant system documentation).

Standards for operators	Standards for certifying bodies	System governance
<p>PEFC FMS:2022 Latvian National PEFC forest management</p> <p>PEFC LV 06:2022 Group forest management certification – Requirements</p> <p>PEFC ST 2002:2020 Chain of Custody of Forest and Tree Based Products – Requirements OK</p> <p>PEFC ST 2001:2020 PEFC Trademarks Rules – Requirements</p>	<p>PEFC LV 02:2022 Requirements for Certification Bodies carrying out PEFC Forest Management Certification.</p> <p>PEFC ST 2003:2020 Requirements for Certification Bodies operating Certification against the PEFC International Chain of Custody Standard</p> <p>PEFC LV 03:2022 Procedure for the notification of the Certification Bodies</p>	<p>System Description of the Latvian PEFC System</p> <p>PEFC LV 05:2020 Standard setting – Requirements for development and revision of PEFC Latvia documentation</p> <p>PEFC LV 08:2022 Procedure for the issuance of PEFC Trademark usage license</p> <p>PEFC LV 07:2022 Procedure for resolving complaints and appeals</p>

⁵ Derived from: “Latvia PEFC Scheme – System description”

5. Standard-setting Procedures

This chapter presents the findings of the assessment of the Standard-setting Procedures. The PEFC Checklist related to the Standard-setting Procedures can be found in Annex 1 part I, which presents all the assessment results including references and quotations to system documentation.

5.1 Analysis

The procedures for standard-setting are regulated in PEFC LV 05:2020 Standard-setting – Requirements for development and revision of PEFC Latvia documentation. The document is clearly structured and contains elaborate requirements for standard-setting processes. The structure of the standard setting procedures is very similar to the PEFC ST 1001:2017 benchmark standard. It is noted that PEFC ST 1001:2017 is also included as normative reference, but since the System developed its own standard setting procedures, the requirements are expected to be met within the System specific procedures.

5.2 Nonconformities

The procedures comply with the PEFC requirements, no non-conformities are found.

6. Standard-setting process

This chapter presents the findings of the assessment of the standard-setting process. The PEFC Checklist related to the standard-setting process can be found in Annex 1 part I, which presents all the assessment results including references and quotations to system documentation.

6.1 Analysis

The standard revision process was started in May 2020. Based on the nominations received, a working group was installed in October 2020, consisting of 13 members, which were supported by 19 technical experts. The working group held meetings from January 2021 to May 2022 to prepare a preliminary draft for public consultation. The public consultation was held from February 2022 until April 2022, after which received comments and remarks were processed and a final draft was prepared. Consensus was reached in July 2022, and the final versions were formally adopted by PEFC Latvia in July 2022.

The standard setting process was mostly implemented according to the standard setting procedures of the PEFC Latvia system. The process is generally well-implemented and mostly well-documented in numerous minutes of the meetings and other supporting documents.

6.2 Nonconformities

There are two (2) nonconformities found, both classified as minor. The nonconformities found in the standard-setting process did not undermine or damage the review process. It would therefore not be adequate to redo the standard-setting process based on the nonconformities found in the process.

The nonconformities found in the standard-setting process are presented in the table below. One can be addressed by providing additional evidence.

In the table, 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 System, minutes etc.
- *Italic text* – Comments made by the Assessor.

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
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	NO	Assessor: <i>The formally approved standard(s) and normative documents are publicly available on the website of PEFC Latvia: http://pefc.lv/dokumenti-un-materiali/standarti-2/pazinojums-2. However, it is unclear whether the standard was published on the website within 14 days of approval.</i>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
approval, or as otherwise defined by the standardising body.		
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.	NO	<p>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>“Approval date: 21.07.2022. Amended: 28.07.2023. Date of entry into force (application date): 01.12.2023. Transition period: 01.12.2024. Date of next periodic review: 21.07.2027.”</p> <p>Assessor: <i>The application date stated is 01.12.2023, but the approved FMS:2022 standard was published on 21st July 2022. The requirement that the application date shall not be more than one year after the publication date will therefore not be met.</i></p>



7. Forest Management Standard

This chapter presents the findings of the assessment of the Forest Management Standard. The PEFC Checklist related to the Forest Management Standard can be found in Annex 1 part III, which presents all the assessment results including references and quotations to system documentation.

7.1 Analysis

The Forest Management Standard is found in PEFC FMS:2022 Latvian National PEFC Forest Management Standard and largely follows the PEFC benchmark standards. It contains the following sections:

- Introduction
- 1. The scope of the standard
- 2. Normative references
- 3. Terms and definitions
- 4. General requirements to the management system
- 5. Leadership
- 6. Planning
- 7. Resources, competence, communication, complaints, documented information and use of certification claims
- 8. Management operations, including the following criteria for sustainable forest management:
 - Criterion 1: Maintenance and appropriate enhancement of forest resources and their contribution to the global carbon cycle
 - Criterion 2: Maintenance of forest ecosystem health and the health and vitality of the forest ecosystem
 - Criterion 3: Maintenance and encouragement of productive functions of forests (wood and non-wood)
 - Criterion 4: Maintenance, conservation and appropriate enhancement of biological diversity in forest ecosystems
 - Criterion 5: Maintenance or appropriate enhancement of protective functions in forest management (notably soil and water)
 - Criterion 6: Maintenance or appropriate enhancement of socio-economic functions and conditions
- 9. Assessment of the management operations
- 10. Improvement of the management system

In addition, the standard includes two appendices: Guidance for the interpretation of requirements in the case of plantation forests (Appendix 1) and ecosystem services (Appendix 2) which is designed as a tool to help forest managers to identify the most significant ecosystem services, management objectives/indicators and activities in the certified area. Next, the PEFC Latvia system includes a Carbon calculation table with default values for forest operation emissions.

PEFC FMS:2022 is applicable “in the entire territory of Latvia, to all types of forest, to all forest holdings, regardless of their type and size.” Also forest plantations are covered by the standard, for which interpretations are defined in Appendix 1 of the standard. Forest managers can apply for certification individually or by joining one of the groups of forest owners or forming a new group. All requirements in the PEFC FMS:2022 referring to “forest” are also applicable to plantation forests unless otherwise indicated in Appendix 1. The PEFC benchmark criteria listed in chapter 8 of PEFC ST 1003:2018 are also cited in the respective chapter of PEFC FMS:2022, however they are not considered normative, but rather guidelines for the development of normative indicators: “The Guidelines define general goals and principles of management of forests and plantation forests to achieve sustainable management. The indicators provide measurable criteria for an independent third-party evaluation against the requirements of the guidelines to determine compliance with the Standard.”

The definition of forest land is “land covered by a forest, land under forest infrastructure objects, as well as overflowing clearings, marshes, and glades that are part of the forest and adjacent marshes”. The definition of forest is “an ecosystem in all stages of its development where the major producer of organic mass is trees the height of which at the particular location may reach at least five metres and the present or potential projection of the crown of which is at least 20% of the area covered by the forest stand.” The definition of plantation forest is “forest stands established or naturally regenerated in non-forest lands, the primary purpose of which is the production of timber or non-timber products and provision of services.” A note is provided that plantation forests must be registered in the State Forest Register. With regards to plantations the cut-off date is set to 31 December 2010, and plantation exceeding 50 ha shall have at least 5% of set aside areas.

The standard is quite well developed and clearly structured. It does not contain any requirements related to Trees outside Forests (TOF). The following observations⁶ are made:

- Clause 7.1 requires that forest manager shall determine and provide resources. The clause gives as example the number of workers and technical means, but financial resources are not mentioned, which would be the primary resource;
- Indicator 1.2.2 requires that ecologically important non-forest areas shall not be afforested, unless it entails a small proportion of the area. Since the term “small” is not defined it will be difficult for auditors to assess compliance with this requirement;
- Indicator 5.4.2 notes that “no silvicultural methods will be used that can negatively affect water quality in areas, which provides protective functions of water resources”. Due to the wording of indicator 5.4.2 it is unclear whether “which provides protective functions of water resources” refers to “areas” or to the use of certain silvicultural methods;
- Clause i 1.2.1 d) and i 1.2.2 d) do not further define the wording “areas of significantly high carbon stock”, it therefore remains up to the interpretation of auditors how to assess these components.

⁶ Observations are weaknesses found in the System, which are not considered to be a nonconformity.

- Clause 9.1.1 requires that the forest manager shall regularly conduct monitoring of forest, but as the term “regularly” is multi-interpretable it leaves it to the interpretation to the organisation.
- Clause 9.1.2 requires that the forest manager shall carry out regular monitoring of the health and vitality of the forest, but as the term “regular” is multi-interpretable it leaves it to the interpretation to the organisation.

7.2 Nonconformities

There are two (2) non-conformities found, all of which are classified as minor. They are presented in the table below and can be addressed by providing additional evidence and/or adjusting the standard.

In the table, 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 System, minutes etc.
- *Italic text* – Comments made by the Assessor.

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
4.1 The requirements for sustainable forest management defined by regional, national or sub-national forest management standards shall: d) require record-keeping that provides evidence of compliance with the requirements of the forest management standards;	NO	PEFC FMS:2022 “7.5.1 Forest manager shall develop the documentation that forest manager considers necessary to meet the requirements of the Standard.” <i>Assessor: Clause 7.5.1 leaves the decision to the forest manager, whereas the certification process will have to define whether sufficient evidence is provided.</i>
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	NO	PEFC FMS:2022 “i 2.5.1 Non-organic waste generated as a result of management operations and waste dumped in the forest must be regularly collected and taken to appropriate waste collection points i 2.5.2 Forest manager shall take actions to prevent the leakage of oil, fuel and other chemical substances, but in case of leakage, these substances shall be collected according to the documented procedures i 2.5.3 Materials absorbing oil products shall be available and used accordingly in the machinery engaged in forest management works and in the places of maintenance of equipment and filling of fuel i 2.5.4 When carrying out forest management works, technical liquids, oil products, chemical substances and water shall be stored in suitable, appropriately marked containers or packages.



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
<p>operations shall be prevented.</p> <p>Emergency procedures for the minimisation of risk of environmental harm arising from the accidental spillage shall be in place.</p>		<p>1. Appendix Guidance for the interpretation of requirements in the case of plantation forests</p> <p>“i 2.5.3(p) Materials absorbing oil products shall be available and used accordingly in the machinery engaged in plantation forest management works and in the places of maintenance of forest management instruments and filling of fuel</p> <p>i 2.5.4(p) When carrying out management works in plantation forests, technical liquids, oil products, chemical substances and water shall be stored in suitable, appropriately marked containers or packages.”</p> <p>Waste Management Law</p> <p>“Section 4. (1) Waste management shall be performed in such a way as not to threaten human life and health.</p> <p>(2) Waste management shall not negatively affect the environment, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) cause threats to the water, air, soil, and also plants and animals; 2) cause a nuisance through noise or odours; 3) negatively affect the countryside and specially protected nature territories; 4) pollute or litter the environment. <p>(3) Waste shall be regarded as secondary raw materials if such waste conforms to the end-of-waste criteria set out in the legal acts of the European Union or the end-of-waste criteria stipulated by the Cabinet and if materials which will be used for the production of an end product have been obtained therefrom. If recycling of waste results in a material which may not be considered a secondary raw material, it shall be considered waste.</p> <p>(4) If secondary raw materials are transported to a landfill site for disposal or if such raw materials are not sold and are stored longer than one year after their production, they shall be regarded as waste and shall be managed in accordance with the requirements laid down in this Law. The Cabinet shall determine the procedures by which the waste manager records secondary raw materials.”</p> <p>Explanation provided by PEFC Latvia</p> <p>“In Latvia common problem is that waste is illegally dumped in the forest by general public. Therefore in the standard we stressed that forest managers would have to assure that all illegally dumped waste is collected (irrespective who did the littering). If we would include the requirement in the standard, that the indiscriminate disposal of waste on forest land shall be strictly avoided, then forest managers from one audit to another would receive non-compliances for dumping made by general society. In this situation prevention of dumping is outside of power of forest manager to control. According to the forest law, people have free access to the forest for recreation and collection of non-timber products.</p>

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p>Besides, the clause 6.3.3 requires, that: "Forest manager shall identify the risks of illegal activities (e.g. illegal logging, land use, illegally initiated fires, etc.) and, if necessary, take measures to protect the forest management unit against illegal activities to the extent possible", therefore certificate holders are required to implement preventive measures to protect forest from illegal activities, including illegal waste disposal."</p> <p>Assessor: While clause i 2.5.1 requires that waste dumped in the forest must be collected and taken to appropriate waste collection points, no reference was found that the indiscriminate disposal of waste on forest land shall be strictly avoided.</p>

8. Group Certification Model

This chapter presents the findings of the assessment of the Group Certification Model. The PEFC Checklist related to the Group Certification Model can be found in Annex 1 part II, which presents all the assessment results including references and quotations to system documentation.

8.1 Analysis

The Group Certification Model is found in PEFC LV 06:2022 Group forest certification – Requirements and allows for multiple forest owners/managers to be certified under a single certificate. In Latvia, approximately half of the forests are under private ownership, mainly family and community owned forests. Most private forests are small in size, with an average plot size of 6 ha, to whom group forest certification is an appropriate means to certification.

The requirements of the Group Certification Model are well developed, clearly structured, and largely reflect the structure and wording of the PEFC benchmark requirements. Little country specific requirements are developed. The following observations⁷ are made:

- The wording of clause 5.1 and 5.2.1 of PEFC LV 06:2022 is unclear. The clauses require that “functions and responsibilities of the group entity shall be specified”, whereas they are already given in the subclauses.
- Clause 9.4.1 b) refers to the “management system”, without specifying that this is related to the group management system (not the forest management system). This might lead to misinterpretation, but due to the context of the clause it is concluded that it’s related to the group management system.

8.2 Nonconformities

The Group Certification Model complies with the PEFC requirements, no non-conformities are found.

⁷ Observations are weaknesses found in the System, which are not considered to be a nonconformity.



9. Chain of Custody Standard

The System Description document provides further explanation on systems documentation. The document states that: “The chain of custody certification is conducted according to the Chain of Custody of Forest Based Products – Requirements, PEFC ST 2002:2020”.

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

10. Certification and accreditation arrangements

This chapter presents the findings of the assessment of the certification and accreditation arrangements. The PEFC Checklist related to the certification and accreditation arrangements can be found in Annex 1 part IV, which presents all the assessment results including references and quotations to system documentation.

10.1 Analysis

The requirements for accreditation and certification are regulated in PEFC LV 02:2022 (Requirements for certification bodies carrying out PEFC forest management certification). PEFC LV 02:2022 is a clearly structured document. PEFC LV 03:2022 (Procedure for the notification of the Certification Bodies) requires in clause 6: “The notified certification body shall comply to Requirements for Certification Bodies operating Certification against the PEFC International Chain of Custody Standard PEFC ST 2003 in the case of the chain of custody certification.” This sufficiently ensures that the requirements of PEFC ST 2003:2020 are met by PEFC Latvia.

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

- Latvian National PEFC Forest Management Standard PEFC FMS:2022;
- Annex 1 PEFC Terms and Definitions to the Technical Document of the PEFC International Council;
- Annex 6 Certification and Accreditation Procedures to the Technical Document of the PEFC International Council;
- EN ISO 19011:2018 – Guidelines for Management System Auditing;
- EN ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015 – Conformity Assessment. Requirements for Bodies Providing Audit and Certification of Management Systems;
- LVS EN ISO 9000:2015 – Quality Management Systems. Basic Principles and Glossary of Terms.

10.2 Nonconformities

The procedures comply with the PEFC requirements, no non-conformities are found.



11. Other aspects

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

- **Notification of Certification Procedures**

These procedures are elaborated in PEFC LV 03:2022 Procedure for the notification of the Certification Bodies;

- **PEFC Logo Usage Licensing**

These procedures are elaborated in PEFC ST 2001:2020 PEFC Trademarks Rules – Requirements, which is adopted by the PEFC Latvia system;

- **Complaints and Dispute Resolution Procedures**

These procedures are elaborated in PEFC LV 07:2022 Procedure for resolving 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 system 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 (if needed).



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 System, minutes etc.
- *Italic text* – Comments made by the Assessor

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

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.

PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment 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>System Description</p> <p>“The Association PEFC Latvijas Padome (further – PEFC Latvia) was established in 1999, focused in developing the national system documentation based on the PEFC benchmark standards. PEFC Latvia is responsible for development, administration, maintenance of the national system. PEFC Latvia has following organizational structure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Members Meeting - Council (consisting of 4 persons, one of them acting as chairman) - Board (consisting of 1 person) - Secretariat <p>Working groups are set up on bases when necessary.</p> <p>The PEFC Latvia Board and Secretariat in cooperation with PEFC Latvia Council is responsible for management of PEFC Latvia system (e.g. standard development, maintenance of PEFC Latvia website, maintenance of certificate database,</p>

PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			marketing of PEFC Latvia system, issuing PEFC trademarks). Also, is responsible to ensure that PEFC Latvia is in line with the requirements of PEFC International.” PEFC LV 05:2020 “3.14 Standartising body Body that has recognized activities in standardization (ISO Guide 2). Note: PEFC Latvia develops and maintains standards and related documents of the national forest certification system.” <i>Section 6.4 further describes the working group requirements and section 7.1 includes the procedures for formal adoption of the standard.</i>
(b) procedures for keeping documented information,	Procedures	YES	PEFC LV 05:2020 “5.2.2 PEFC Latvia will keep documented information about the relevant standard until the next review or revision of the standard. In other cases, documented information must be kept for at least five years after publication of the standard”
(c) procedures for balanced representation of stakeholders,	Procedures	YES	PEFC LV 05:2020 <i>PEFC LV 05:2020 describes the procedures for balanced representation of stakeholders, with main aspects of the process described in chapter 6, section 6.2.2 and 6.4.3”?</i>
(d) the standard-setting process,	Procedures	YES	<i>PEFC LV 05:2020 describes the procedures for standard-setting, with main aspects of the process described in chapters 6 and 7.</i>
(e) the mechanism for reaching consensus, and	Procedures	YES	<i>PEFC LV 05:2020 describes the mechanism for reaching consensus with main aspects of the process described in chapters 5.3.1, 6.4.5 and 6.4.8.</i>
(f) review and revision of standard(s)/normative document(s).	Procedures	YES	<i>PEFC LV 05:2020 describes the procedures for the review and revision of standard(s)/normative documents, with main aspects of the process described in chapters 8 and 9.</i>
5.1.2 The standardising body shall make its standard-setting	Procedures	YES	PEFC LV 05:2020 “5.1.2. PEFC Latvia makes its standard-setting procedure publicly available and regularly reviews it. During the review process proposals and comments received from stakeholders are taken into account.”

PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
procedures publicly available and shall review its standard-setting procedures regularly. The review shall consider feedback from stakeholders.	Process	YES	<p>Explanation provided by PEFC Latvia</p> <p>"Between working group meetings, feedback received was registered. Synopsis of how feedback was addressed is reflected in the minutes of the working group meetings and in the separate excel file, which was further communicated with all working group members and technical experts.</p> <p>In response to the public announcement three comments received. As a result PEFC LV 05:2020 clause 6.4.1 was updated with a note. Other two comments were forwarded to the working group for further consideration."</p> <p><i>Standard-setting procedures are available on the PEFC Latvia website (http://pefc.lv/dokumenti-un-materiali/standarti), these were last endorsed in 2015, and their review started in 2020. Feedback received was taken into consideration.</i></p>
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	<p>PEFC LV 05:2020</p> <p>"5.2.1 PEFC Latvia keeps documented information related to standard-setting and review process, including:</p> <p>a) standard-setting procedure;"</p>
	Process	YES	<i>Standard-setting procedures are found in the tender dossier.</i>
(b) Stakeholder identification mapping,	Procedures	YES	<p>PEFC LV 05:2020</p> <p>"5.2.1 b) stakeholder identification mapping"</p>
	Process	YES	<i>A stakeholder map was found.</i>
(c) Contacted and/or invited stakeholders,	Procedures	YES	<p>PEFC LV 05:2020</p> <p>"5.2.1 c) list of contacted and/or invited stakeholders"</p>
	Process	YES	<i>Emails from contacted and invited stakeholders were found.</i>
(d) Stakeholders involved in standard-setting activities including participants in each working group meeting,	Procedures	YES	<p>PEFC LV 05:2020</p> <p>"5.2.1 d) a list of stakeholders involved in standard-setting activities including participants in each working group meeting"</p>
	Process	YES	<i>Examples of attendance lists of working group meetings was found in a selection of minutes.</i>

PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
(e) Feedback received and a synopsis of how feedback was addressed,	Procedures	YES	PEFC LV 05:2020 "5.2.1 e) summary of feedback received and a synopsis of how feedback was addressed"
	Process	YES	<i>An overview of feedback received and a synopsis of how feedback was addressed was found.</i>
(f) All drafts and final versions of the standard,	Procedures	YES	PEFC LV 05:2020 "5.2.1 f) all drafts and final draft of the standard"
	Process	YES	<i>All draft versions and final versions of the standard were found.</i>
(g) Outcomes from working group considerations,	Procedures	YES	PEFC LV 05:2020 "5.2.1 g) outcomes from working group considerations"
	Process	YES	<i>The agendas, minutes, and decisions from all working group considerations are found in the evidence</i>
(h) Evidence of consensus on the final version of the standard(s),	Procedures	YES	PEFC LV 05:2020 "5.2.1 h) evidence of consensus on the final draft of the standard"
	Process	YES	<i>Proof of voting on final version of the PEFC Latvian Sustainable Forest Management Standard and consensus on the final version was found in minutes of the WG meeting on 21.07.2022, with the tally of votes provided.</i>
(i) Evidence relating to the review process, and	Procedures	YES	PEFC LV 05:2020 "5.2.1 i) evidence relating to the review process"
	Process	YES	<i>Evidence for the review process was found in the development report, meeting minutes, invitations for participation in the process, public announcements, and a list of working draft versions of the standard.</i>
(j) Final approval by the standardising body.	Procedures	YES	PEFC LV 05:2020 "5.2.1 j) PEFC Latvia final decision on standard approval"
	Process	YES	Minutes of members meeting no. 2-2/22/3 on July 21, 2022 (Translation provided) "The members are introduced to the final draft of the forest management standard and its appendices, informing that the standard will be submitted for reconfirmation without the appendix 2 " Trees outside the forest " (...). M. Ailts asks all members, with the exception of representatives of certification organizations (because these members do not have voting rights regarding the approval of certification standards), to vote for the approval of the final draft of the Latvian National PEFC Forest Management Standard, including the CO2 Methodology and Annex 2 of the standard "Ecosystem Services".

PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			Voting results: Voted for: 4, against: 0, abstained: 0."
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	PEFC LV 05:2020 "5.2.2 PEFC Latvia will keep documented information about the relevant standard until the next review or revision of the standard. In other cases, documented information must be kept for at least five years after publication of the standard"
	Process	YES	Explanation provided by PEFC Latvia: "All relevant documented information will be retained (e.g. minutes of working group meetings, excel files, communication exchange)." <i>Additionally, numerous documents are found on the website of PEFC Latvia http://pefc.lv/dokumenti-un-materiali/standarti</i>
5.2.3 Documented information shall be available to interested parties upon request.	Procedures	YES	PEFC LV 05:2020 "5.2.3 Documented information referred to in clause 5.2.1 of this document shall be available to interested parties upon request."
	Process	YES	Explanation provided by PEFC Latvia: "PEFC Latvia will retain all documented information and will make it available to interested parties upon request." <i>Various documents are also available at the PEFC Latvia website (http://pefc.lv/dokumenti-un-materiali/standarti/).</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 appeal to the complainant,	Procedures	YES	PEFC LV 05:2020 "5.3.1 PEFC Latvia has developed a procedure (PEFC LV 07:2023) for dealing with any significant complaints and appeals submitted in connection with the standard-setting process. This procedure shall be available to interested parties upon request. After receiving a complaint or appeal, PEFC Latvia: a) acknowledge receipt of the complaint or appeal to the complainant"

PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
	Process	N.A.	Explanation provided by PEFC Latvia “No comments or complaints, appeals during the standard-setting activities received.” <i>The three respondents to the stakeholder survey were not aware of any complaints.</i>
(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	PEFC LV 05:2020 “5.3.1 b) gather and verify all necessary information to validate the complaint or appeal in order to evaluate the subject matter of the complaint or appeal impartially and objectively; and make a decision; c) complaints are handled by PEFC Latvia; d) appeals, as well as cases where consensus cannot be reached, are assessed by a commission consisting of 3 people. Both parties involved in the dispute nominate one representative each, who will participate in the commission, while the head of the commission is appointed by PEFC Latvia. The head of the commission is a person who is not directly involved in practical forestry, is not involved in the standard revision process, but has sufficient knowledge of forestry sector. This commission makes a final decision, which is not subject to appeal. Each member of the commission has one vote. The decision is taken by majority vote. Each party to the dispute shall bear their own costs”
	Process	N.A.	Explanation provided by PEFC Latvia “No comments or complaints, appeals during the standard-setting activities received.”
(c) formally communicate the decision on the complaint or appeal to the complainant and describe the handling process.	Procedures	YES	PEFC LV 05:2020 “5.3.1 e) formally notify the complainant of the decision taken and describe the progress of the complaint or appeal.”
	Process	N.A.	Explanation provided by PEFC Latvia “No comments or complaints, appeals during the standard-setting activities received.”
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	Procedures	YES	PEFC LV 05:2020 “5.3.2 PEFC Latvia, whose contact details can be found on the website www.pefc.lv , answers questions about the standard-setting process, as well as about the process of submitting complaints and appeals.”
	Process	YES	PEFC LV 07:2022 “To submit your comments, suggestions, complaints or appeals to the Association “PEFC Latvijas Padome” please use following methods of communication:

PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
contact point shall be easy to access and readily available.			<p>- E-mail: info@pefc.lv, or</p> <p>- Address: Republikas laukums 2, Riga, LV – 1010”</p> <p><i>A document containing the procedure for collecting comments, complaints and appeals on the PEFC standards was found including a post address and an email address as contact points. On the website of PEFC Latvia, a contact point for enquiries, complains and appeals is easily accessible and readily available.</i></p>
Standard-setting process			
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>PEFC LV 05:2022</p> <p>“6.1.1 For the creation of a new standard, the PEFC Latvia develops a proposal including:</p> <p>a) the scope of the standard;”</p>
	Process	N.A.	<i>During the revision of the system no new standard was developed.</i>
(b) a justification of the need for the standard,	Procedures	YES	<p>PEFC LV 05:2020</p> <p>“6.1.1 b) justification of the need for the standard”</p>
	Process	N.A	<i>During the revision of the system no new standard was developed.</i>
(c) a clear description of the intended outcomes	Procedures	YES	<p>PEFC LV 05:2020</p> <p>“6.1.1 c) a clear description of the intended outcomes”</p>
	Process	N.A	<i>During the revision of the system no new standard was developed.</i>
(d) a risk assessment of potential negative impacts arising from implementing the standard, such as • factors that could affect the achievement of the outcomes negatively,	Procedures	YES	<p>PEFC LV 05:2020</p> <p>“6.1.1 d) a risk assessment of potential negative impacts arising from implementing the standard, such as:</p> <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”
	Process	N.A	<i>During the revision of the system no new standard was developed.</i>

PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unintended consequences of implementation, • actions to address the identified risks, and 			
(e) a description of the stages of standard development and their expected timetable. ⁸	Procedures	YES	PEFC LV 05:2020 “6.1.1 e) a description of the stages of standard development and their expected timetable.”
	Process	N.A	<i>During the revision of the system no new standard was developed.</i>
6.1.2 For the revision of a standard the proposal shall cover at least (a) and (e) of clause 6.1.1.	Procedures	YES	PEFC LV 05:2020 “6.1.2 For the revision of a standard the proposal shall cover at least (a) and (e) of clause 6.1.1.”
	Process	YES	Proposal for the revision of the standard on the website of PEFC Latvia, available at: http://pefc.lv/dokumenti-un-materiali/standarti-2/priekslikums1 (translated by google translate) “Considering that both International PEFC and PEFC national representatives (including PEFC Latvia) regularly review the compliance of maintained standards with the latest knowledge and economic, social and environmental requirements, in addition, International PEFC has already reviewed the PEFC Forest Management Standard (Sustainable Forest Management - Requirements PEFC ST 1003:2018) PEFC Latvia is also starting a review of its PEFC Forest Management Standard for Latvia according to the following schedule:

⁸ 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	Assessment basis	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																						
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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	Procedures	YES	<p>PEFC LV 05:2020</p> <p>“6.2.1 The PEFC Latvia identifies stakeholders as well as identifies which stakeholder groups would be important to involve in the setting of a particular standard and why. For each stakeholder group the PEFC Latvia identifies the likely key issues, key stakeholders, and which means of communication would be best to reach them.”</p>																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																						
	Process	YES	<p>Explanation provided by PEFC Latvia:</p> <p>“Stakeholder mapping was conducted in July and August 2020. PEFC Latvia mapped the following stakeholder groups: business and industry, children and youth, forest owners, local authorities, non- government organizations, scientific and technological community, women and workers and trade unions. During the mapping process, it was concluded that there are no disadvantaged stakeholders in Latvia. The most suitable means of communication were e-mails and phone calls.</p> <p>As a basis for stakeholder mapping, we took the stakeholder list from the previous standard revision. Then we revised the list - updated e-mails, identified if those organizations still exist. After that we added new stakeholders and even</p>																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																						

PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)																
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>new categories who was not identified previous time. We paid attention if there are identified stakeholders in the main (mandatory) groups (...). After that key stakeholders were identified primary in the 5 mandatory categories - considering which organizations could be the most affected from the standard implementation and whose participation is critical to the outcome of the standard-setting process.</p> <p>PEFC Latvia along with identifying key stakeholder groups also identified their key issues. The analysis were completed during PEFC Latvia staff and Council meeting prior stakeholder mapping and working group establishment. All files developed during those meetings stored. The key issues for each stakeholder group are identified. Please see the table below:</p>																
			<table><tr><th>Stakeholder group</th><th>Key issues/interests</th></tr><tr><td>Forest owners</td><td>PEFC certification accessible for all forest owners. Group certification. The national PEFC scheme and documentation achieve international endorsement. The national PEFC management standard harmonized with the national legislation. Engagement in the national PEFC forest management standard development/revision process. Simplified certification process/cost efficiency.</td></tr><tr><td>Business and industry</td><td>The national PEFC scheme and documentation achieve international endorsement. PEFC Chain of Custody certification/standard. Availability of PEFC certified wood. Alignment with EU regulations. Simplified certification process/cost efficiency.</td></tr><tr><td>Non-governmental organisations</td><td>All requirements included in the PEFC national forest management and PEFC chain of custody standards are implemented/independently assessed. Engagement in the national PEFC forest management standard development/revision process.</td></tr><tr><td>Scientific and technology community</td><td>Latest scientific knowledge and innovations would be considered and included in the PEFC certification. Contribute to PEFC national forest management standard development/revision process. Support for scientists.</td></tr><tr><td>Workers and trade unions</td><td>Protect worker's rights. Ensure safe working conditions. Contribute to PEFC national forest management standard development/revision process.</td></tr><tr><td>Local authorities</td><td>Development of local economies. Acknowledgment of the national laws and regulations.</td></tr><tr><td>Children and youth</td><td>To be informed about the PEFC certification.</td></tr></table>	Stakeholder group	Key issues/interests	Forest owners	PEFC certification accessible for all forest owners. Group certification. The national PEFC scheme and documentation achieve international endorsement. The national PEFC management standard harmonized with the national legislation. Engagement in the national PEFC forest management standard development/revision process. Simplified certification process/cost efficiency.	Business and industry	The national PEFC scheme and documentation achieve international endorsement. PEFC Chain of Custody certification/standard. Availability of PEFC certified wood. Alignment with EU regulations. Simplified certification process/cost efficiency.	Non-governmental organisations	All requirements included in the PEFC national forest management and PEFC chain of custody standards are implemented/independently assessed. Engagement in the national PEFC forest management standard development/revision process.	Scientific and technology community	Latest scientific knowledge and innovations would be considered and included in the PEFC certification. Contribute to PEFC national forest management standard development/revision process. Support for scientists.	Workers and trade unions	Protect worker's rights. Ensure safe working conditions. Contribute to PEFC national forest management standard development/revision process.	Local authorities	Development of local economies. Acknowledgment of the national laws and regulations.	Children and youth	To be informed about the PEFC certification.
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			Local authorities	Development of local economies. Acknowledgment of the national laws and regulations.															
Children and youth	To be informed about the PEFC certification.																		



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)	
			Woman	Gender equality. Availability of employment opportunities in the forest sector.
			“ <i>A stakeholder map was found that identifies all stakeholders (total of 77 divided into 8 groups), and which indicates the key stakeholders by group (17 divided into 6 groups) and the best means of communicating with them (email and phone calls). PEFC Latvia provided evidence of the identification of the key issues of each stakeholder group. The three respondents of the stakeholder survey confirmed that all stakeholders that are relevant to the standard-setting process have been proactively identified and invited.</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,	Procedures	YES	PEFC LV 05:2020 “6.2.2 Identification of stakeholder groups is based on nine major stakeholder groups as defined by Agenda 21 of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (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-governmental organizations;• scientific and technological community;• workers and trade unions. If no stakeholder volunteers to represent one of these 6 groups, PEFC Latvia can invite an expert in the relevant field to represent this group. Other groups may be involved if their participation in the standard-setting activities is important. *According to the definition of the United Nations, there are no indigenous peoples in Latvia”	
	Process	YES	Explanation provided by PEFC Latvia “PEFC Latvia mapped the following stakeholder groups: business and industry, children and youth, forest owners, local authorities, non- government organizations, scientific and technological community, women and workers and trade unions. During the mapping process, it was concluded that there are no indigenous peoples and disadvantaged stakeholders in Latvia.”	

PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> workers and trade unions. <p>Other groups shall be added if relevant to the scope of standard-setting activities.⁹</p>			<p><i>All required groups are present in the stakeholder identification mapping. PEFC Latvia also included the local government as a stakeholder group, children and youth and a women's rights group. It shall be noted that there are no indigenous peoples in Latvia.</i></p>
<p>6.2.3 The standardising body shall identify disadvantaged stakeholders and key stakeholders and address any constraints to their participation in standard-setting activities.¹⁰</p>	Procedures	YES	<p>PEFC LV 05:2020</p> <p>"6.2.3 PEFC Latvia identifies disadvantaged stakeholders and key stakeholders and address any constraints to their participation in standard-setting activities.</p> <p>Note: A stakeholder can be both a disadvantaged and a key stakeholder at the same time."</p>
	Process	YES	<p>Public Announcement on 20th August 2020 found on the website of PEFC Latvia, available on: http://pefc.lv/dokumenti-un-materiali/standarti-2/pubpazinojums (translated with Google Translate)</p> <p>"Each interested party whose representative will participate in the Standard Review Working Group is responsible for covering the costs of the work itself. PEFC Latvia will try to ensure that interested parties who are disadvantaged in terms of participation in the revision of the standard have the opportunity to participate in this work."</p> <p>Explanation provided by PEFC Latvia</p> <p>"During stakeholder mapping PEFC Latvia concluded that there are no disadvantaged stakeholders in the country, however we do not exclude that such stakeholders might be discovered, therefore in the public announcement PEFC Latvia stressed that all interested parties will have the opportunity to participate in this work. Also, following the public announcement, no disadvantaged stakeholders were identified.</p> <p>Key stakeholders were identified primary in the 5 mandatory categories - considering which organizations could be the most affected from the standard implementation and whose participation is critical to the outcome of the standard-setting process. All key stakeholders were successfully communicated via e-mails."</p> <p>Key stakeholders identified in the stakeholder map</p> <p>"</p>

⁹ 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.

¹⁰ NOTE A stakeholder can be both a disadvantaged and a key stakeholder at the same time.

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The stakeholder map identifies key stakeholders by group, at least one from each of the mandatory groups.																																																	

PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
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 manner ¹¹ through suitable media ¹² , as appropriate, to give stakeholders an opportunity for meaningful contributions.	Procedures	YES	PEFC LV 05:2020 “6.3.1 PEFC Latvia publicly announces the start of the standard-setting process and sends an invitation to stakeholders to participate in the process. The announcement shall be made in a timely manner through suitable media, as appropriate, to give stakeholders an opportunity for meaningful contributions in the standard-setting process. (...)” Note 1: In a timely manner means (at the latest) four weeks before the first standard-setting activity is scheduled to occur. Note 2: Through suitable media means information is provided at least on the PEFC Latvia website www.pefc.lv and by email and/or letter to identified stakeholders. Other media includes press releases, news articles, features in trade-press, information sent to branch organizations, social media, digital media, etc.”
	Process	YES	Public Announcement on 20th August 2020 found on the website of PEFC Latvia, available on: http://pefc.lv/dokumenti-un-materiali/standarti-2/pubpazinojums (translated with Google Translate) “PEFC Latvia starts work on the revision of the Standard on August 20, 2020. (...) PEFC Latvia invites you to nominate your candidate for work in the Standard Revision Working Group by September 20, 2020. Apply for membership in the Standard Revision Working Group here: https://forms.gle/vcuVCf5gd8EFS9S56 .” Explanation provided by PEFC Latvia “The public announcement was published on the website on 20th August 2020 as well as sent via e-mails to all identified stakeholders. The first working group meeting took place on 7th January 2021.” <i>The announcement and request to participate in standard setting activities are made in a timely manner (more than four weeks before the first meeting of the working group).</i>
6.3.1 The announcement and invitation shall include:			
(a) overview of the standard-setting process,	Procedures	YES	PEFC LV 05:2020 “6.3.1 (...) The announcement and invitation include: a) a description of the standard-setting stages and timetable;”

¹¹ NOTE 1 *In a timely manner* means (at the latest) four weeks before the first standard-setting activity is scheduled to occur.

¹² 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	Assessment basis	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
	Process	YES	<p>Public Announcement on 20th August 2020 found on the website of PEFC Latvia, available on: http://pefc.lv/dokumenti-un-materiali/standarti-2/pubpazinojums (translated with Google Translate)</p> <p>“PEFC Latvia starts work on the revision of the Standard on August 20, 2020. A proposal for a revision of the Standard is available on the website www.pefc.lv. So far, stakeholders have been identified and invited in writing to participate in the working group. By December 2020, it is planned to carry out clarification of standard changes and the review process (if necessary), the establishment of a Working Group on Standard Review. Work on the revision of the Standard is planned for one year. The date of the first meeting of the working group will be clarified. (...) No later than 2022, the Standard Review Report will be prepared, the Standard approved and submitted to the International PEFC Council (by August 20, 2022).”</p> <p><i>The Public Announcement on 20th August 2020 on the website of PEFC Latvia had an overview of the different stages for the standard-setting process. The invitation letter (email) to stakeholders was sent on 20 August 2020 and contains very similar information.</i></p>
(b) access to the proposal for the standard (refer to 6.1),	Procedures	YES	<p>PEFC LV 05:2020</p> <p>“6.3.1 b) access to the proposal for the standard (refer to clause 6.1)”</p>
	Process	YES	<p><i>In the Public Announcement on 20th August 2020 on the website of PEFC Latvia a description and a link were found to the drafting proposal for the standard.</i></p>
(c) information about opportunities for stakeholders to participate in the process,	Procedures	YES	<p>PEFC LV 05:2020</p> <p>“6.3.1 c) information about opportunities for stakeholders to participate in the process”</p>
	Process	YES	<p>Public Announcement 20th August 2020 on the website of PEFC (translated with Google Translate)</p> <p>“PEFC Latvia invites you to nominate your candidate for work in the Standard Revision Working Group by September 20, 2020. To join the Standard Revision Working Group, apply here: https://forms.gle/vcuVCf5gd8EF59S56. Each interested party whose representative will participate in the Standard Review Working Group is responsible for covering the costs of the work itself.”</p>
(d) requests to stakeholders to nominate their representative(s) or	Procedures	YES	<p>PEFC LV 05:2020</p> <p>“6.3.1 d) request to stakeholders to nominate their representatives or themselves to the working group (refer to clause 6.4). The request to disadvantaged stakeholders and key stakeholders is made in a manner that is easy to understand.”</p>

PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
themselves to the working group (refer to 6.4). The request to 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,	Process	YES	<p>Public Announcement on 20th August 2020 found on the website of PEFC Latvia (translated with Google Translate)</p> <p>““PEFC Latvia invites you to nominate your candidate for work in the Standard Revision Working Group by September 20, 2020. (...) PEFC Latvia will try to ensure that interested parties who are disadvantaged in terms of participation in the revision of the standard have the opportunity to participate in this work.”</p> <p>Explanation provided by PEFC Latvia</p> <p>“During the mapping process, it was concluded that there are no disadvantaged stakeholders in Latvia. The most suitable means of communication were e-mails and phone calls.</p> <p>All key stakeholders were successfully communicated via e-mails.”</p> <p><i>An e-mail invitation on August 20, 2020 including a request to nominate themselves or a representative to participate, was sent to all identified stakeholders, including the 17 key 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>PEFC LV 05:2020</p> <p>“6.3.1 e) invitation and clear instruction on how to submit feedback on the scope and standard-setting process”</p>
	Process	YES	<p>Public Announcement 20th August 2020 found on the website of PEFC Latvia (translated with Google Translate)</p> <p>“All interested parties will be given the opportunity to participate in the Standard public consultation by providing their comments and suggestions. Information about the Standard can be found on the website www.pefc.lv, while questions, comments and proposals are invited to be submitted by writing to the e-mail address info@pefc.lv.”</p>
(f) access to the standard-setting procedures.	Procedures	YES	<p>PEFC LV 05:2020</p> <p>“6.3.1 f) access to the standard-setting procedure”</p>
	Process	YES	<p>Public Announcement 20th August 2020 found on the website of PEFC Latvia (translated with Google Translate)</p> <p>“The work on the revision of the Standard will be carried out in accordance with the Conditions for the development and revision of PEFC Latvia documentation (PEFC LV 05:2020). The document is attached to this public announcement and is also available on the website www.pefc.lv.”</p> <p><i>The standard setting procedures are clearly available on a web page below the public announcement, as well as attached to the invitation to stakeholders.</i></p>
	Procedures	YES	<p>PEFC LV 05:2020</p>

PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
6.3.2 The standardising body shall review the standard-setting process based on feedback received in response to the public announcement.			"6.3.2 PEFC Latvia reviews the standard-setting process based on feedback received in response to the public announcement"
	Process	YES	<p>Explanation provided by PEFC Latvia</p> <p>"All stakeholders were invited to comment the standard setting process (e-mail sent on 20th August 2020). Three comments received:</p> <p>1) One comment received related to the standard setting process. Requesting PEFC Latvia during standard setting process to involve youth and student organizations that are directly or indirectly related to the forest industry. In response PEFC Latvia amended Standard-setting – Requirements PEFC LV 05:2020 clause 6.4.1 with a note which allows interested stakeholders to become technical experts and receive up-to-date information regularly regarding the standard as well as to provide input in the standard development/revision process.</p> <p>2) Two comments received regarding to the FM standard draft. One comment requesting PEFC Latvia to assure the revised standard preferably would be shorter, clearer and easier to understand. Other comment requesting PEFC Latvia to set clear nature and environmental protection requirements to ensure sustainable forest development, especially in area of forest ecosystem health. PEFC Latvia informed the Standard working group about those two comments and requested the Standard working group to consider during standard revision process. PEFC Latvia acknowledge the working group delivered the final draft of the standard and both issues were taken into account."</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	Procedures	YES	<p>PEFC LV 05:2020</p> <p>"6.4.1 PEFC Latvia establishes a permanent or temporary working group or adjust the composition of an already existing working group based on nominations 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 organization, an individual's competence, an individual's relevant experience and resources available for standard-setting. The organization that has delegated its representative to the standard development working group is responsible for covering the costs of its representative's work.</p> <p>Note: After evaluation, the received nominations can be included in the working group or offered to participate as technical experts (technical experts do not have the right to vote in the working group meetings but have the opportunity to participate in the standard-setting process by providing their proposals to the working group)."</p>
	Process	YES	<p>Explanation provided by PEFC Latvia</p> <p>"PEFC Latvia received 32 nominations for the working group. Following assessment 13 nominates were included in the working group, but 19 were appointed as technical experts.</p>

PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
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>After the public announcement about scheme revision the interest of stakeholders was very low, we received only few submissions to participate on the WG. So I called to all stakeholders and ask them if they would like to participate and tried to convince them. Those 32 in the list are those who agreed to participate, but part of those 32 already mentioned that they have no time to participate in WG meetings but they would like to be informed about the process all the time. Then we had discussion in PEFC Latvia how big we would like to have WG. If it would be too large there would be risk that it could take too much time for discussions to reach consensus. So we decided to take 2 from all mandatory and most in forestry involved stakeholders categories (3 from category Business and industry because it includes both business and certification organizations). We asked all 32 candidates about they interest and possibilities really take part in WG meetings and standard revision process. Then we considered key stakeholders, the most active organizations related to the forest management and standard scope. We did not want to reject any of submitted stakeholder so we included rest of them as technical experts.</p> <p>Work group members were chosen mainly from the key stakeholders if they have agreed to participated. Knowledge and competences of candidates related to standard scope were taken into account. If there were no competent member in the WG regarding to particular issue, PEFC Latvia could invite independent specialist. We invited to scientist participate in WG meetings when there were discussions related to CO2 emissions calculation.</p> <p>All organisations that were assigned as working group members, were asked to delegate their candidates with the best knowledge to contribute the working group. Despite this approach gender representation was very well balanced (the working group consisted of 6 females and 7 males). PEFC Latvia avoided any kind of discrimination when selecting working group members.</p> <p>Secondly, for PEFC Latvia it was very important that all key stakeholders would be involved in the standard revision process. Relevance of each organisation was discussed during working group establishment process. All organisation selected for the working group are relevant and significant to the PEFC forest management certification. "</p> <p>List of stakeholders that were part of the working group or a technical expert:</p>

PEFC Conformity Assessment of the PEFC Latvia Certification System for Sustainable Forest Certification

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			<p>Forest owners representatives</p> <table> <tr> <td>MĪA "Vidzemes augstienes meži"</td><td>Birutė Nebare</td><td>birutanebare@inbox.lv</td><td>technical expert</td></tr> <tr> <td>MPKS Mūs mežs</td><td>Toms Kalvis</td><td>toms@musumezs.lv</td><td>technical expert</td></tr> <tr> <td>Sodra Latvia</td><td>Rimants Brālis</td><td>rimants.bralis@sodra.com</td><td>technical expert</td></tr> <tr> <td>Rīgas Meži</td><td>Juris Buškevičs</td><td>juris.buskevics@riga.lv</td><td>technical expert</td></tr> <tr> <td>Latvijas Valsts Meži</td><td>Edvīns Zakovičs</td><td>e.zakovics@lvm.lv</td><td>WG</td></tr> <tr> <td>Latvijas Meža īpašnieku biedrība</td><td>Arnis Muižnieks</td><td>info@mezaipasnieki.lv</td><td>WG</td></tr> <tr> <td>Latvijas Meža īpašnieku un apsaimniekotāju konfederācija</td><td>Māris Liopa</td><td>ml@hs.lv</td><td>technical expert</td></tr> <tr> <td>LTRK</td><td>Līva Šteinberga</td><td>liva.steinberga@chamber.lv</td><td>technical expert</td></tr> </table> <p>2. Entrepreneurs and production representatives</p> <table> <tr> <td>"Latvijas Biomasas asociācija"</td><td>Beāte Paleja</td><td>beate@latbio.lv</td><td>technical expert</td></tr> <tr> <td>Latvijas Neatkarīgo mežizstrādātāju asociācija</td><td>Artūrs Bukonts</td><td>arturs.bukonts@latvianwood.lv</td><td>WG</td></tr> <tr> <td>Latvijas Kokrūpniecības Federācija</td><td>Kristaps Klausis</td><td>kristaps.klauss@latvianwood.lv</td><td>WG</td></tr> <tr> <td>BM Certification</td><td>Jānis Švirksts</td><td>janis.svirksts@bmcertification.com</td><td>WG</td></tr> <tr> <td>Vides kvalitāte</td><td>Guntars Šņepsts</td><td>guntars.snepsts@silava.lv</td><td>technical expert</td></tr> <tr> <td>SGS</td><td>Sandra Lāce</td><td>sandra.lace@sgs.com</td><td>technical expert</td></tr> </table> <p>3. 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Children and young people</p> <table> <tr> <td>Studentu biedrība "Šalkone"</td><td>Gints Jansons</td><td>gints142536987@gmail.com</td><td>technical expert</td></tr> <tr> <td>Mazpulki</td><td>Ilze Kļava</td><td>ilze@druva.lv</td><td>technical expert</td></tr> </table>	MĪA "Vidzemes augstienes meži"	Birutė Nebare	birutanebare@inbox.lv	technical expert	MPKS Mūs mežs	Toms Kalvis	toms@musumezs.lv	technical expert	Sodra Latvia	Rimants Brālis	rimants.bralis@sodra.com	technical expert	Rīgas Meži	Juris Buškevičs	juris.buskevics@riga.lv	technical expert	Latvijas Valsts Meži	Edvīns Zakovičs	e.zakovics@lvm.lv	WG	Latvijas Meža īpašnieku biedrība	Arnis Muižnieks	info@mezaipasnieki.lv	WG	Latvijas Meža īpašnieku un apsaimniekotāju konfederācija	Māris Liopa	ml@hs.lv	technical expert	LTRK	Līva Šteinberga	liva.steinberga@chamber.lv	technical expert	"Latvijas Biomasas asociācija"	Beāte Paleja	beate@latbio.lv	technical expert	Latvijas Neatkarīgo mežizstrādātāju asociācija	Artūrs Bukonts	arturs.bukonts@latvianwood.lv	WG	Latvijas Kokrūpniecības Federācija	Kristaps Klausis	kristaps.klauss@latvianwood.lv	WG	BM Certification	Jānis Švirksts	janis.svirksts@bmcertification.com	WG	Vides kvalitāte	Guntars Šņepsts	guntars.snepsts@silava.lv	technical expert	SGS	Sandra Lāce	sandra.lace@sgs.com	technical expert	Par zaļu pierīgu	Pauls Rēvelis	Jelgavniex@inbox.lv	WG	Latvijas Mednieku Savienība	Jānis Baumanis	janis.baumanis@lms.org.lv	technical expert	Latvijas Zaļā kustība	Jānis Matulis	janis.matulis@zalie.lv	Tehn eksperts	Latvijas Pašvaldību savienība	Sniedze Sproģe	sniedze.sproge@lps.lv	technical expert	Latvijas orientēšanās federācija	Dagnis Dubrovskis	dagnis.dubrovskis@llu.lv	WG	Ezeru un purvu izpētes centrs	Ilze Ozola	ilze.ozola@epicentrs.lv	technical expert	LVMi Silava	Daiga Zute	daiga.zute@silava.lv	WG	Meža un koksnes produktu pētniecības un attīstības institūts	Roberts Keraitis	roberts.keraitis@inbox.lv	technical expert	Meža fakultāte	Līga Liepa	liga.liepa@llu.lv	technical expert	Meža Pētīšanas stacija	Andra Ziedīņa	andra.ziedina@agenturamps.lv	WG	Latvijas Meža nozares arodbiedrība	Ingūna Siņica	inguna.sinica@lmna.lv	WG	LDDK	Inese Olafsone	inese.olafsone@lodd.lv	technical expert	Latvijas Finiera arodbiedrība	Kristīne Rapa	kristine.rapa@finieris.lv	WG	Vides un reģionālās attīstības ministrija	Zane Brice	zane.brice@varam.gov.lv	WG	Zemkopības ministrija	Ilze Silamikele	ilze.silamikele@zm.gov.lv	WG	VMD	Andis Pūrs	andis.purs@vmd.gov.lv	technical expert	Studentu biedrība "Šalkone"	Gints Jansons	gints142536987@gmail.com	technical expert	Mazpulki	Ilze Kļava	ilze@druva.lv	technical expert
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PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<i>The working group is made up of a balanced mix of stakeholder groups, with a least two representatives from all main stakeholder groups. PEFC Latvia explained that all nominations were accepted and that a focus was put on adding key stakeholders to the working group. The group children and young people was an additional group identified during the mapping, and they representatives were part WG as technical experts. Even so, it is unclear from the evidence provided how PEFC Latvia considered the elements of an 1) appropriate gender balance, 2) relevance of the organisation, 3) resources available for standard-setting in their establishment of the working group members.</i>
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	PEFC LV 05:2020 “6.4.2 The working group shall: a) have balanced representation by stakeholder groups, where no single concerned stakeholder group can dominate, nor be dominated in the process relevant and where decisions are made in accordance with the scope of the standard. 6.4.3 In order to achieve balanced representation, the PEFC Latvia tries to provide to have all identified stakeholder groups (refer to clause 6.2) represented”
	Process	YES	Explanation provided by PEFC Latvia “All interested stakeholders had opportunity to contribute to the working group either as working group member or as technical expert. No stakeholder group was to dominate, nor was dominated in the process. All stakeholders were able to express their opinions.” <i>The working group is made up of a balanced mix of stakeholder groups, containing two people of each stakeholder group(total 13), hence ensuring that no single group can dominate. The group Business and production representatives has three representatives as it also includes certification bodies. These findings are supported by the stakeholder survey, in which the three respondents also found that there was good representation of all stakeholders and good representation of stakeholder from all areas of Latvia.</i>
(b) include stakeholders with expertise relevant to the subject matter of the standard, those that affected by the standard, and those that can influence	Procedures	YES	PEFC LV 05:2020 “6.4.2 b) include stakeholders with expertise relevant to the scope 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.”
	Process	YES	Explanation provided by PEFC Latvia



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
implementation of the standard. The affected stakeholders shall be represented in an appropriate proportion among participants.			<p>"The working group consisted from 13 working group members representing various stakeholder groups including forest owner, managers and producers</p> <p>Firstly, for PEFC Latvia it was very important that all key stakeholders would be involved in the standard revision process. All organisations that were assigned as working group members, were asked to delegate their candidates with the best knowledge to contribute the working group. Despite this approach gender representation was very well balanced (the working group consisted of 6 females and 7 males). PEFC Latvia avoided any kind of discrimination when selecting working group members.</p> <p>Secondly, for PEFC Latvia it was very important that all key stakeholders would be involved in the standard revision process. Relevance of each organisation was discussed during working group establishment process. All organisation selected for the working group are relevant and significant to the PEFC forest management certification.</p> <p>Thirdly, PEFC Latvia prior approval of the working group reached out to each potential organisation to make sure that all organisations have sufficient resources to take part into the standard revision process. Also, during the first working group meeting all issues related to practical arrangements were discussed. No issues that would prevent organisation participation were identified/all working group members have good internet connection. For working group members it was easy to participate in the standard working group meetings because all meetings were conducted remotely."</p> <p><i>The working group has balanced representation with stakeholders from all main stakeholder groups. It includes stakeholders that are affected by the standard and that can influence its implementation (forest owners and stakeholders from business and industry) as well as stakeholders with expertise relevant to the subject matter (scientific community).</i></p>
6.4.3 In order to achieve balanced representation, the standardising body shall strive to have all identified stakeholder groups (refer to 6.2)	Procedures	YES	<p>PEFC LV 05:2020</p> <p>"6.4.3 In order to achieve balanced representation, the PEFC Latvia tries to provide to have all identified stakeholder groups (refer to clause 6.2) represented.</p> <p>PEFC Latvia sets targets for the participation of key stakeholders and proactively seek their participation by using outreach such as personal emails, phone calls, meeting invitations and other methods of communication.</p> <p>Note: When a stakeholder group is not represented and key stakeholders cannot be encouraged to participate, the PEFC Latvia may consider alternative options."</p>
	Process	YES	<p>Explanation provided by PEFC Latvia</p> <p>"All key stakeholder groups in the working group were represented. PEFC Latvia some of stakeholders reached directly to encourage them to participate in the standard setting process."</p>

PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
represented. ¹³ 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.			<i>The Stakeholder list provides an overview of all WG members and to which stakeholder group they belong. All identified stakeholder groups (as referred to in 6.2) are represented. The target to involve all key stakeholder groups in the working groups of the standards is met. There are no Indigenous Peoples in Latvia.</i>
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	PEFC LV 05:2020 “6.4.4 Meetings of the working group shall be organized in an open and transparent manner where: a) working drafts shall be available to all members of the working group”
	Process	YES	Explanation provided by PEFC Latvia “All working drafts were available to all working group members.” <i>The stakeholder survey confirmed that working group members were provided with all relevant documents in a timely manner.</i>
(b) all members of the working group shall be given meaningful opportunities to contribute to the development or revision of the standard and to provide feedback on working drafts, and	Procedures	YES	PEFC LV 05:2020 “6.4.4 b) all members of the working group shall be given meaningful opportunities to contribute to the development or revision of the standard and to provide feedback on working drafts”
	Process	YES	<i>Evidence was found in minutes that various comments were provided by WG members. Respondents to the stakeholder survey also confirmed that they had been given meaningful opportunities to participate in the revision process.</i>

¹³ 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	Assessment basis	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
(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	PEFC LV 05:2020 “6.4.4 c) feedback 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 in the minutes of the meeting or in other document”
	Process	YES	<i>Minutes of WG meetings were found in which the views of various members of the WG are found. The stakeholder survey also confirmed that feedback and views of WG members were considered in an open and transparent manner.</i>
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	PEFC LV 05:2020 “6.4.5 The decision of the working group to recommend the final draft standard 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 utilize the following methods: a) face-to face meeting 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 votes (opinions); organize closed formal voting, etc.”
	Process	N.A.	<i>This method was not used.</i>
(b) telephone conference meeting(s) where there is a verbal yes/no vote,	Procedures	YES	PEFC LV 05:2020 “6.4.5 b) telephone or video conference meeting(s) where there is a verbal yes/no vote”
	Process	N.A	<i>This method was not used.</i>
(c) e-mail request to the working group for agreement or objection where the members provide a formal	Procedures	YES	PEFC LV 05:2020 “6.4.5 c) e-mail request to the working group for agreement or objection of a proposal where the members provide a formal (written) response (vote)”
	Process	YES	Explanation provided by PEFC Latvia

PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
(written) response (vote),			<p>"We considered consensus is reached if there are no sustained opposition. So, if I sent e-mail to approve the final version and I did not receive any vote "against" then we assume that consensus was reached.</p> <p>I sent the first e-mail about approval the final draft version on the 7th of December 2021. Some of WG members (two) responded that still editorial changes were necessary (other WG members already accepted the final draft). So I implemented those editorial changes and on 24th of January 2022 sent again the improved final draft version for approval. I did not receive any objections or votes "against."</p> <p><i>Evidence was found of e-mails sent to the WG asking for agreement or objection. A consensus was reached as there were no e-mails sent to PEFC Latvia indicating an objection or a vote against recommending the final draft standard for formal approval.</i></p>
(d) combinations of these methods.	Procedures	YES	<p>PEFC LV 05:2020</p> <p>"6.4.5 d) combinations of these methods may be used."</p>
	Process	N.A	<p>Explanation provided by PEFC Latvia</p> <p>"The final draft was formally approved by the working group by using e-mail"</p>
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>PEFC LV 05:2020</p> <p>"6.4.6 Where a vote is used in decision-making, consensus shall be achieved, however, a majority vote cannot override sustained opposition in order to achieve consensus.</p> <p>3.1 Consensus</p> <p>General agreement characterized by the absence of sustained opposition to substantial issues by any important part of the concerned interests and by a process that involves seeking to take into account the views of all parties concerned and to reconcile any conflicting arguments.</p> <p>Note: Consensus need not imply unanimity (ISO/IEC Guide 2)."</p>
	Process	YES	<p>Explanation provided by PEFC Latvia</p> <p>"We considered consensus is reached if there are no sustained opposition. So, if I sent e-mail to approve the final version and I did not receive any vote "against" then we assume that consensus was reached.</p> <p>I sent the first e-mail about approval the final draft version on the 7th of December 2021. Some of WG members (two) responded that still editorial changes were necessary (other WG members already accepted the final draft). So I implemented those editorial changes and on 24th of January 2022 sent again the improved final draft version for approval. I did not receive any objections or votes "against."</p>

PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
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 disputed issue within the working group,	Procedures	YES	PEFC LV 05:2020 “6.4.7 If the working group is unable to reach agreement on a substantial issue for a sustained period, the issue shall be resolved by the following methods: a) finding a compromise through discussion and negotiation on the disputed issue within the working group”
	Process	N.A	Answer provided by PEFC Latvia “The working group reached consensus. Further discussions and negotiations were not needed.”
(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	PEFC LV 05:2020 “6.4.7 b) finding a compromise through direct negotiation between the stakeholders making the objection and other stakeholders with different views on the disputed issue”
	Process	N.A	Answer provided by PEFC Latvia “The working group reached consensus. Further discussions and negotiations were not needed.”
(c) additional round(s) of public consultation (if necessary) where further stakeholder input can help to achieve consensus on unresolved issues. The standardising body determines the scope and duration of any additional public consultation.	Procedures	YES	PEFC LV 05:2020 “6.4.7 c) additional round(s) of public consultation (if necessary) where further stakeholder input can help to achieve consensus on unresolved issues. The PEFC Latvia determines the scope and duration of any additional public consultation.”
	Process	N.A	Answer provided by PEFC Latvia “The working group reached consensus. Further discussions and negotiations were not needed.”
	Procedures	YES	PEFC LV 05:2020

PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
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.			"6.4.8 When a substantial issue cannot be resolved and sustained opposition persists, the PEFC Latvia initiates dispute resolution in accordance with its procedures for impartial and objective action (ref. to clause 5.3.1)."
	Process	N.A	Answer provided by PEFC Latvia "The working group reached consensus. Further discussions and negotiations were not needed."
6.5.1 The standardising body shall organise public consultation on the enquiry draft and shall ensure that:			
(a) the start and the end dates of public consultation are announced in a timely manner ¹⁴ through suitable media,	Procedures	YES	PEFC LV 05:2020 "6.5.1 The PEFC Latvia organizes public consultation on the enquiry draft and ensures that: a) the start and the end dates of public consultation are announced in a timely manner through suitable media; Note: In a timely manner means at the latest the day before the start of public consultation."
	Process	YES	Public announcement 6th February 2022 translated with Google Translate) "On February 7, 2022, the public discussion of the Standard project will be launched, it will last until April 7, 2022." Explanation provided by PEFC Latvia "The notice of public consultation was sent by e-mail to all stakeholders on 4th February 2022 and published on the website 6th February 2022." <i>As the start date of public consultation was 7th February 2022, the announcement was made in a timely manner.</i>
(b) a direct invitation to comment on the enquiry draft is sent to	Procedures	YES	PEFC LV 05:2020 "6.5.1 b) a direct invitation to comment on the enquiry draft is sent to each stakeholder identified by stakeholder identification mapping (refer to clause 6.2) aiming for a balanced participation of stakeholder groups"

¹⁴ NOTE In a timely manner means (at the latest) the day before the start of public consultation.

PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
each stakeholder identified by stakeholder identification mapping (refer to 6.2) aiming for a balanced participation of stakeholder groups,	Process	YES	Explanation provided by PEFC Latvia "All identified stakeholders were contacted directly. All the relevant documentation (e.g enquiry draft) was attached." <i>An invitation email for the public consultation was sent on February 4th to all mapped stakeholders.</i>
(c) invitations are sent to disadvantaged and key stakeholders by methods that ensure they reach recipients and are easy to understand,	Procedures	YES	PEFC LV 05:2020 "6.5.1 c) invitations are sent to disadvantaged and key stakeholders by methods that ensure they receive the information in a way that they can understand"
	Process	YES	Explanation provided by PEFC Latvia "According to the stakeholder mapping there was concluded that there are no disadvantaged stakeholders in Latvia. All key stakeholders were contacted directly." <i>An invitation email for the public consultation was sent on February 4th to all mapped and key stakeholders.</i>
(d) the enquiry draft is made publicly available,	Procedures	YES	PEFC LV 05:2020 "6.5.1 d) the enquiry draft is made publicly available"
	Process	YES	<i>The enquiry draft was made publicly available and accessible through the Public Announcement 6th February 2022 on the PEFC Latvia website.</i>
(e) public consultation is for at least 60 days,	Procedures	YES	PEFC LV 05:2020 "6.5.1 e) public consultation is for at least 60 days"
	Process	YES	<i>The public consultation period started on the 7th of February and ended on the 7th of April, lasting exactly 60 days.</i>
(f) all feedback is considered by the working group in an objective manner, and	Procedures	YES	PEFC LV 05:2020 "6.5.1 f) all feedback is considered by the working group in an objective manner"
	Process	YES	<i>Minutes from the working group were found in which feedback was discussed. Respondents to the stakeholder survey confirmed that the working group operated in an objective and transparent manner.</i>
	Procedures	YES	PEFC LV 05:2020

PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
(g) a synopsis of feedback is compiled for each material issue, including the outcome of considering the issue. ¹⁵ The synopsis is made publicly available (e.g. on a website) and is sent to each stakeholder/party that gave feedback.			“6.5.1 g) a synopsis of feedback is compiled for each significant issue, including the outcome of considering the issue. The synopsis is made publicly available (e.g. on a website) and is sent to each stakeholder that provided feedback. Note: For clarity the PEFC Latvia preparing synopsis may combine responses on significant issues on which different stakeholders provided similar feedback. However, best practice would be to publish each comment of original feedback and the response, to allow each stakeholder to identify its own feedback”
	Process	YES	<i>A synopsis of all public comments received and the outcome of considering the issues is available on the PEFC Latvia website at: http://pefc.lv/dokumenti-un-materiali/standarti-2/pazinojums-2</i>
6.5.2 For new standards the standardising body shall organise a second round of public consultation lasting at least 30 days.	Procedures	YES	PEFC LV 05:2020 “6.5.2 For new standards the PEFC Latvia organizes a second round of public consultation lasting at least 30 days”
	Process	N.A	<i>During the revision of the system no new standard was developed</i>
6.6 The standardising body shall organise pilot testing of new standard(s) ¹⁶ to assess the clarity, auditability and feasibility of the requirements. The working group shall consider the outcome of pilot testing.	Procedures	YES	PEFC LV 05:2020 “6.6 The PEFC Latvia organizes pilot testing of a new standard to assess the clarity, auditability and feasibility of the requirements. The working group shall consider the outcome of pilot testing. Note: Pilot testing is not required for revision of an existing standard when experience from its usage can substitute for pilot testing.”
	Process	N.A	<i>During the revision of the system no new standard was developed</i>

¹⁵ 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.

¹⁶ 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	Assessment basis	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
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	PEFC LV 05:2020 “7.1 The PEFC Latvia approves the standard/normative documents formally based on the consensus among the working group. The certification bodies cannot be involved in the standard setting process as governing or decision-making body.”
	Process	YES	Minutes of the meeting of the members of PEFC Latvia Group 21st July 2022 (Translated by Google Translate) “Members are introduced to the final draft of the Latvian National PEFC Forest Management Standard and the appendices, informing them that the standard will be submitted for reconfirmation without the appendix 2 "Trees outside the forest" (...). M. Ailts asks all members, with the exception of representatives of certification organizations (because these members do not have voting rights regarding the approval of certification standards), to vote for the approval of the final draft of the Latvian National PEFC Forest Management Standard, including the CO2 Methodology and Annex 2 of the standard "Ecosystem Services". Voting results: Voted for: 4, against: 0, abstained: 0. M. Ailts and L. Jansone introduce the revised and developed binding scheme documents to the members: · PEFC LV 02:2022 Requirements for certification organizations performing PEFC forest management certification · PEFC LV 03:2022 Procedure for recognition of certification organizations · PEFC LV 06:2022 Requirements for forest management group certification · PEFC LV 07:2022 Procedure for handling complaints and appeals · PEFC LV 08:2022 PEFC trademark licensing procedure. M. Ailts invites all members, except representatives of certification organizations (because these members do not have voting rights regarding the approval of certification standards), to vote on the mentioned binding documents of the scheme. Voting results: Voted for: 4, against: 0, abstained: 0”
7.2.1 The formally approved standard(s)/normative document(s) shall be published and made	Procedures	YES	PEFC LV 05:2020 “7.2.1 The formally approved standard/normative documents shall be published and made publicly available at no cost within 14 days of approval, or as otherwise defined by the PEFC Latvia”
	Process	NO	Explanation provided by PEFC Latvia

PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
publicly available at no cost within 14 days of approval, or as otherwise defined by the standardising body.			<p>"The standard was published on the web-site soon after approval, however, PEFC Latvia cannot prove the publication date. Previously the web-page was maintained by former PEFC Latvia employee, who has left the organisation, therefore evidence about the publishing date are not available."</p> <p><i>The formally approved standard(s) and normative documents are publicly available on the website of PEFC Latvia: http://pefc.lv/dokumenti-un-materiali/standarti-2/pazinojums-2. However, it is unclear whether the standard was published on the website within 14 of approval.</i></p>
7.2.2 Standard(s) shall include:			
(a) identification and contact information for the standardising body,	Procedures	YES	<p>PEFC LV 05:2020</p> <p>"7.2.2 Standard shall include:</p> <p>a) name and contact information of PEFC Latvia, which acts as the Standardizing body;"</p>
	Process	YES	<p>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>"PEFC Latvijas Padome Adrese: Republikas laukums 2, Rīga, LV-1010 E-pasts: info@pefc.lv"</p>
(b) official language of the standard,	Procedures	YES	<p>PEFC LV 05:2020</p> <p>"7.2.2 b) the original standard language"</p>
	Process	YES	<p>PEFC LV FMS:2022</p> <p>"The original version of the document is in Latvian. The translation of the document into English can be obtained in the office of PEFC Latvia."</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>PEFC LV 05:2020</p> <p>"7.2.2 c) a note that when there is inconsistency between versions, the English version of the standard as endorsed by the PEFC International is the reference"</p>
	Process	YES	<p>PEFC LV FMS:2022</p> <p>"When there is doubt in regard to language interpretation, the English version is the reference."</p>
	Procedures	YES	<p>PEFC LV 05:2020</p>

PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
(d) The approval date and the date of next periodic review ¹⁷			<p>“7.2.2 d) the approval date and the date of next periodic review.</p> <p>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”</p>
	Process	YES	<p>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>“Approval date: 21.07.2022.</p> <p>Amended: 28.07.2023.</p> <p>Date of entry into force (application date): 01.12.2023.</p> <p>Transition period: 01.12.2024.</p> <p>Date of next periodic review: 21.07.2027.”</p>
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	<p>PEFC LV 05:2020</p> <p>“7.2.3 Printed copies shall be made available upon request at a price that covers no more than administrative costs”</p>
	Process	YES	<p>Explanation BY PEFC Latvia</p> <p>“Printed copies are available upon request at a price that covers no more than administrative costs”</p>
7.2.4 The standardising body shall make the development report (refer to PEFC GD 1007) publicly available	Procedures	YES	<p>PEFC LV 05:2020</p> <p>“7.2.4 The PEFC Latvia makes the development report (refer to PEFC GD 1007) publicly available.”</p>
	Process	YES	<p>Explanation by PEFC Latvia</p> <p>“The standard development report is publicly available on the website: http://pefc.lv/images/Development_Report.pdf”</p>
Periodic review of standards			
8.1 The standard(s)/normative document(s) shall be reviewed at intervals that do not exceed a	Procedures	YES	<p>PEFC LV 05:2020</p> <p>“8.1 General requirements</p> <p>The standard/normative documents shall be reviewed at intervals that do not exceed a five-year period.</p> <p>The review shall be based on consideration of feedback received during the standard implementation and a gap analysis. If necessary, a stakeholder consultation shall be organized to obtain further feedback.”</p>

¹⁷ 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	Assessment basis	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
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.	Process	YES	<p>Explanation provided by PEFC Latvia</p> <p>"The decision to start the process of the revision of the Latvian Forest certification scheme was taken on the 26th of May, 2020. A gap analysis conducted by PEFC Latvia concluded that the National scheme do not comply with the PEFC International documentation due to changes of several international benchmark standards. Since the previous approval of the National scheme PEFC Latvia did not received any comments or proposals from stakeholders. The decision to revise the standard (normal revision) in accordance with the clause 9.1 of the PEFC ST 1001:2017 standard was taken by PEFC Latvia on the 26 May, 2020"</p> <p><i>The official review date for the PEFC Latvia scheme was on 18th of August 2020. The decision to start the process of revision was made on the 26th of May 2020, therefore not exceeding the 5-year period.</i></p>
8.2.1 The standardising body shall establish and maintain a permanent mechanism for collecting and recording feedback on a standard. This mechanism shall be accessible on the website of the standardising body and/or PEFC National Governing Body with clear directions for providing feedback. ¹⁸	Procedures	YES	<p>PEFC LV 05:2020</p> <p>"8.2.1 The PEFC Latvia establishes and maintains a permanent mechanism for collecting and recording feedback on a standard. This mechanism shall be accessible on the website of the PEFC Latvia with clear directions for providing feedback.</p> <p>Note: Feedback can be sent in various formats: comments, requests for clarification and/or interpretation, complaints, etc."</p>
	Process	YES	<p>Contact page of PEFC Latvia (http://pefc.lv/dokumenti-un-materiali/standarti, translated by google translate)</p> <p>"It is essential for PEFC Latvia to receive feedback from interested parties on PEFC Latvia's national documentation, including the Latvian national PEFC forest management standard, in order to ensure that PEFC Latvia's documentation takes into account the wishes and expectations of interested parties.</p> <p>Please send all proposals, comments and complaints to the e-mail info@pefc.lv or to the following address:</p> <p>PEFC Council of Latvia, Melioratoru iela 1, Koknese, Aizkraukles Nov., LV-5113."</p>

¹⁸ NOTE Feedback can be sent in various formats: ""comments, requests for clarification and/or interpretation, complaints, etc.

PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<i>The web page of PEFC Latvia also has a clear link directing to the contact point for enquires, complains and appeals.</i>
8.2.2 All feedback received through all channels, including meetings, training courses, etc. shall be recorded and considered.	Procedures	YES	PEFC LV 05:2020 "8.2.2 PEFC Latvia records and considers all feedback received through all channels, including meetings, training courses, etc"
	Process	N.A	Answer provided by PEFC Latvia "No feedback received since previous scheme revision."
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.	Procedures	YES	PEFC LV 05:2020 "8.3.1 At the start of a review, the PEFC Latvia assesses the potential gaps in the standard taking into account: - the relevant PEFC International standards, - national laws and regulations, - and other relevant standards."
	Process	YES	Explanation provided by PEFC Latvia "The decision to start the process of the revision of the Latvian Forest certification scheme was taken on the 26th of May, 2020. A gap analysis conducted by PEFC Latvia concluded that the National scheme do not comply with the PEFC International documentation due to changes of several international benchmark standards. Since the previous approval of the National scheme PEFC Latvia did not received any comments or proposals from stakeholders. The decision to revise the standard (normal revision) in accordance with the clause 9.1 of the PEFC ST 1001:2017 standard was taken by PEFC Latvia on the 26th of May, 2020." Minutes of the Member Meeting 26th May 2020 (translation by PEFC Latvia): "M. Ailts informs the members about the fact that the review or revision of the PEFC Latvia scheme should be started soon, therefore the GAP analysis has been carried out before that. M. Ailts informs that the International PEFC forest management standard (PEFC ST 1003) has changed (...) The binding international PEFC standards have also changed. Since the Latvian national PEFC forest management standard no longer complies with the International Standard, M. Ailts proposes not to carry out a detailed GAP analysis of the existing standard, but to make a decision on starting the revision process of the scheme. M. Ailts asks for a vote on the following final version of the decision: "The PEFC Latvia Council, based on the fact that the PEFC International has revised and supplemented the forest management standard, decides to initiate a revision

PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p>of the scheme of PEFC Latvia, authorizing the Council of the PEFC Latvia Council as the responsible person, with the right of delegation."</p> <p>Voting results: Voted for: 6, against: 0, abstained: 0."</p> <p><i>Minutes were found of the member meeting in which the outcome of a (brief) gap analysis were discussed. This led to the conclusion that a full revision of the standard was required.</i></p>
8.3.2 The standardising body shall consider the latest scientific knowledge, research and relevant emerging issues.	Procedures	YES	<p>PEFC LV 05:2020</p> <p>"8.3.2 The PEFC Latvia considers the latest scientific knowledge, research and relevant emerging issues."</p>
	Process	YES	<p>Explanation provided by PEFC Latvia</p> <p>"In the working group there was one member from the State forest research institute. Also in some working group meetings PEFC Latvia invited to participate external expert (researcher, dr. silv) to cover scientific issues where needed.</p> <p>We invited to scientist participate in WG meetings when there were discussions related to CO2 emissions calculation."</p> <p><i>Evidence was found that the working group included two members of the scientific and technological community, plus other two members of the scientific and technological community as technical experts.</i></p>
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 include the gap analysis in the stakeholder consultation.	Procedures	YES	<p>PEFC LV 05:2020</p> <p>"8.4.1 Where the feedback and the gap analysis do not identify a need to revise the standard, the PEFC Latvia organizes stakeholder consultation to determine whether stakeholders see a need for revising the standard. In the stakeholder consultation the PEFC Latvia uses the gap analysis carried out earlier."</p>
	Process	N.A	<p><i>No review of the standard was conducted, instead a full revision of the standards was conducted.</i></p>

PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
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	PEFC LV 05:2020 "8.4.2 At the start of a review, the PEFC Latvia updates the stakeholder identification mapping (refer to clause 6.2)."
	Process	N.A.	<i>No review of the standard was conducted, instead a full revision of the standards was conducted, in which the updating of the stakeholder identification mapping was done, see requirement 6.2.</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	PEFC LV 05:2020 "8.4.3 PEFC Latvia organizes the following for the review of the standard: a) a public consultation period of at least 30 days (following the requirements of clause 6.5.1)"
	Process	N.A	<i>No review of the standard was conducted, instead a full revision of the standards was conducted.</i>
(b) stakeholder meetings.	Procedures	YES	PEFC LV 05:2020 "8.4.3 b) stakeholder meetings."
	Process	N.A	<i>No review of the standard was conducted, instead a full revision of the standards was conducted.</i>
8.4.4 The standardising body shall announce the review in a timely manner (refer to 6.3).	Procedures	YES	PEFC LV 05:2020 "8.4.4 The PEFC Latvia announces the review of standard in a timely manner (refer to clause 6.3)."
	Process	N.A	<i>No review of the standard was conducted, instead a full revision of the standards was conducted.</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	Procedures	YES	PEFC LV 05:2020 "8.5.1 Based on the feedback received during the period of a standard implementation, the outcome of the gap analysis and the consultations, the PEFC Latvia decides whether to reaffirm the standard or whether a revision of the standard is necessary."
	Process	YES	Explanation provided by PEFC Latvia "The decision to start the process of the revision of the Latvian Forest certification scheme was taken on the 26th of May, 2020. A gap analysis conducted by PEFC Latvia concluded that the National scheme do not comply with the PEFC International documentation due to changes of several international benchmark standards. Since the previous approval of the National scheme PEFC Latvia did not received any comments or proposals from stakeholders. The

PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
whether a revision of the standard is necessary.			decision to revise the standard (normal revision) in accordance with the clause 9.1 of the PEFC ST 1001:2017 standard was taken by PEFC Latvia on the 26th of May, 2020." <i>At the members meeting of 26 May 2020 it was decided to have a full revision on the standard, because of the identified gaps.</i>
8.5.2 The decision shall be made at the highest decision-making level of the standardising body	Procedures	YES	PEFC LV 05:2020 "8.5.2 The decision is taken by the members meeting of the PEFC Latvia."
	Process	YES	Minutes of the Member Meeting 26th May 2020 (translation by PEFC Latvia): "M. Ailts asks the chairman of the Council, M. Līdums, to request members to vote for the initiation of review of the scheme, because formally the review of the scheme begins with the vote of the national representative, namely the members meeting of PEFC Latvia, the highest decision-making body on the initiation of the process. The Council propose: "The PEFC Latvia, based on the fact that the PEFC International has revised and amended the forest management standard, decides to initiate a revision of the scheme of PEFC Latvia, authorizing the Council of the PEFC Latvia as the responsible person, with the right of delegation." Discussions. M. Ailts asks members to vote on the following final version of the decision: "The PEFC Latvia, based on the fact that the PEFC International has revised and amended the forest management standard, decides to initiate a revision of the scheme of PEFC Latvia, authorizing the Council of the PEFC Latvia as the responsible person, with the right of delegation." Voting results: Voted for: 6, against: 0, abstained: 0." <i>The decision was taken by the member meeting, which is the highest-decision making body.</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	PEFC LV 05:2020 "8.5.3 Where the decision is to reaffirm a standard, the PEFC Latvia provides a justification for the decision and make the justification publicly available."
	Process	N.A.	<i>The standard was not reaffirmed, instead a full revision of the standards was conducted.</i>
	Procedures	YES	PEFC LV 05:2020

PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment 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).			"8.5.4 Where the decision is to revise the standard, the PEFC Latvia specifies the type of revision (normal or editorial revision)."
	Process	YES	<p>Minutes of the Member Meeting 26th May 2020 (translation provided by PEFC Latvia):</p> <p>"Council offer: "The PEFC Latvia Council, based on the fact that the PEFC International has revised and supplemented the forest management standard, decides to initiate a revision of the scheme of PEFC Latvia, authorizing the Council of the PEFC Latvia Council as the responsible person, with the right of delegation."</p> <p>Voting results: Voted for: 6, against: 0, abstained: 0."</p> <p>Explanation provided by PEFC Latvia</p> <p>"The decision to start the process of the revision of the Latvian Forest certification scheme was taken on the 26th of May, 2020. The decision to revise the standard (normal revision) in accordance with the clause 9.1 of the PEFC ST 1001:2017 standard was taken by PEFC Latvia on the 26th of May, 2020."</p> <p><i>During the Member Meeting on the 26th of May 2020 it was decided to have a normal revision of the standard.</i></p>
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	<p>PEFC LV 05:2020</p> <p>"9.1 Procedures for revision of standard/normative documents shall conform to those stated in paragraph 6.</p> <p>A normal revision can occur as a result of the periodic review, or between periodic reviews, but does not include editorial revisions and time-critical revisions"</p>
	Process	YES	<p><i>The revision took place at the periodic review and did not include editorial revisions and time-critical revisions. The revision process followed the procedures for standard revision.</i></p>
9.2 Editorial revisions can be made without triggering the normal	Procedures	YES	<p>PEFC LV 05:2020</p> <p>"9.2 Editorial revisions can be made without triggering the normal revision process. The PEFC Latvia approves the editorial changes formally and publish an amendment or a new edition of the standard."</p>

PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
revision process. The standardising body shall approve the editorial changes formally and publish an amendment or a new edition of the standard.	Process	N.A.	<i>No editorial revision was conducted, instead, a normal revision process was conducted.</i>
9.3.1 A time-critical revision is a revision between two periodic reviews using a fast-track process.	Procedures	YES	PEFC LV 05:2020 “9.3.1 A time-critical revision is a revision between two periodic reviews using a fast-track process.”
	Process	N.A.	<i>No time critical revision was conducted, instead, a normal revision process was conducted.</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	PEFC LV 05:2020 “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”
	Process	N.A.	<i>No time critical revision was conducted, instead, a normal revision process was conducted.</i>
(b) Instruction by PEFC International to comply with specific or new PEFC requirements within a timescale that is too short for a normal revision.	Procedures	YES	PEFC LV 05:2020 “9.3.2 b) instruction by PEFC International to comply with specific or new requirements within a timescale that is too short for a normal revision”
	Process	N.A.	<i>No time critical revision was conducted, instead, a normal revision process was conducted.</i>
9.3.3 The time-critical revision shall follow these steps:			
(a) The standardising body shall draft the revised standard,	Procedures	YES	PEFC LV 05:2020 “9.3.3 The time-critical revision shall follow these steps: a) the PEFC Latvia drafts the revised standard”

PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
	Process	N.A.	<i>No time critical revision was conducted, instead, a normal revision process was conducted.</i>
(b) The standardising body may consult stakeholders, but it is not mandatory,	Procedures	YES	PEFC LV 05:2020 "9.3.3 b) the PEFC Latvia may consult stakeholders, but it is not mandatory,"
	Process	N.A.	<i>No time critical revision was conducted, instead, a normal revision process was conducted.</i>
(c) The revised standard shall be approved formally at the highest appropriate decision-making level of the standardising body,	Procedures	YES	PEFC LV 05:2020 "9.3.3 c) the revised standard is approved formally by the members meeting of the PEFC Latvia," Statute of PEFC Latvia "6.1. The meeting of members is the highest decision-making body of the Association"
	Process	N.A.	<i>No time critical revision was conducted, instead, a normal revision process was conducted.</i>
(d) The standardising body shall explain the justification for the urgent change(s) and make the justification publicly available.	Procedures	YES	PEFC LV 05:2020 "9.3.3 d) the PEFC Latvia explains the justification for the urgent changes and make the justification publicly available"
	Process	N.A.	<i>No time critical revision was conducted, instead, a normal revision process was conducted.</i>
9.4.1 A revision shall define the application date and transition period of the revised standard(s)/normative document(s).	Procedures	YES	PEFC LV 05:2020 "9.4.1 A revision shall define the application date and transition period of the revised standard/ normative document."
	Process	YES	PEFC FMS:2022 "Approval date: 21.07.2022. Amended: 28.07.2023. Date of entry into force (application date): 01.12.2023. Transition period: 01.12.2024. Date of next periodic review: 21.07.2027."
	Procedures	YES	PEFC LV 05:2020

PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
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.			"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/normative documents, introduction of changes, information dissemination and training."
	Process	NO	PEFC FMS:2022 "Approval date: 21.07.2022. Amended: 28.07.2023. Date of entry into force (application date): 01.12.2023. Transition period: 01.12.2024. Date of next periodic review: 21.07.2027." <i>The application date stated is 01.12.2023, but the approved FMS:2022 standard was published on 21st July 2022. The requirement that the application date shall not be more than one year after the publication date will therefore not be met.</i>
9.4.3 The transition period shall not exceed one year. The standardising body may determine a longer period when justified by exceptional circumstances.	Procedures	YES	PEFC LV 05:2020 "9.4.3 The transition period shall not exceed one year. The PEFC Latvia may determine a longer period when justified by exceptional circumstances."
	Process	YES	PEFC FMS:2022 "Date of entry into force (application date): 01.12.2023. Transition period: 01.12.2024."

Part II: PEFC Checklist for Group Forest Management Certification

Part II covers requirements for sustainable forest management as defined in PEFC ST 1002:2018, Group Forest Management Certification – Requirements.

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
4. Context of the group organisation		
4.1 Understanding the group organisation and its context		
The standard shall define how relevant external and internal issues of the group organisation shall be determined. A general framework for the group organisation shall be determined:		
a) regional groups: group of forest owners/managers defined by regional borders and	N.A.	PEFC LV 06:2022 “1. Scope This document defines requirements for forest management group certification and allows multiple forest owners/managers to be certified under one certificate.” <i>PEFC LV 06:022 does not include requirement in relation to regional groups.</i>
b) other groups and/or	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 “1. Scope This document defines requirements for forest management group certification and allows multiple forest owners/managers to be certified under one certificate.”
c) whether there are any other specific circumstances which influence the implementation of the group management system.	N.A.	<i>No other specific circumstances were found.</i>
4.2 Understanding the needs and expectations of affected stakeholders		
4.2.1 The standard requires that the group organisation shall identify:		
a) the affected stakeholders that are relevant for the group management system and	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 “4.1.1 The group entity shall identify: a) the stakeholders and the directly affected stakeholders that are relevant for the group management system”

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
b) the relevant expectations of these affected stakeholders.	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 "4.1.1 b) the relevant needs and expectations of these stakeholders and directly affected stakeholders."
4.3 Determining the scope of the group management system		
4.3.1 The standard shall provide definitions relating to the following terms, which are in conformity with the definitions of those terms presented in chapter 3:		
a) the group organisation and the elements of the group organisation (group entity and participant),	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 "3.5 Group. A group of members represented by the group entity for the purposes of implementation of the Standard and its certification. A binding written agreement shall be established between a group members and the group entity. 3.6 Group member. A forest owner/manager covered by the group certificate, who has the ability to implement the requirements of this document and the Standard in a certified area. Note 1: Group member - forest owner/manager can be any natural person, legal person or a group of forest owners (association) who apply for group certification and who is bound by the requirements of this document and the Standard. Note 2: The requirements set for the group member - forest owner/manager apply equally to the owner/manager of plantation forest unless specified otherwise. 3.9 Group entity. A legal entity that represents the group members, with overall responsibility for ensuring the conformity of forest management in the certified area to the Standard and other applicable requirements of the forest certification system. For this purpose the group entity is using a group management system. Note: The structure of the group entity should follow the operations, number of members and other basic conditions for the group. It may be represented by one person."
b) the certified area,	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 "3.15 Certified area. An area of a forest and/or a plantation forest which is certified according to the Latvian National PEFC Forest Management Standard. Note: In the group certification context the certified area is the sum of forest areas of the group members and covered by a group forest certificate."
c) the group certificate and	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p>"3.17 Group forest management certificate (also – certificate). A document confirming that the group complies with the requirements of the Standard and other applicable requirements of the forest certification system.</p> <p>3.18 Standard. In the context of this document, it is the Latvian National PEFC Forest Management Standard PEFC FMS:2022."</p>
d) the document confirming participation in group certification.	YES	<p>PEFC LV 06:2022</p> <p>"3.4 Document confirming participation in group forest certification. A document issued to a group member that refers to the group certificate and that confirms the member as being covered by the scope of the group certification."</p>
4.3.2 The standard requires that for the establishment of the scope for the group management system the boundaries and applicability of the group management system shall be determined.	YES	<p>PEFC LV 06:2022</p> <p>"4.2.1 The group entity shall determine the boundaries and applicability of the group management system in order to establish the scope for the group management system."</p>
4.3.3 The standard shall define which requirements of the sustainable forest management standard may be fulfilled on group level.	YES	<p>PEFC LV 06:2022</p> <p>"1. (...) In all cases, the requirements of the Latvian National PEFC Forest Management Standard PEFC FMS:2022 shall be followed for group certification, with the exception of chapters 4, 5, 7, 9 and 10 of the Standard, which are set out in this document and adapted for group certification. In the group level the following requirements of the Latvian National PEFC Forest Management Standard PEFC FMS:2022 can be achieved: 6.1, 6.2, i3.4.1, i3.4.2, i4.2.3, i1.2.1, i1.2.2, i1.2.3, i1.2.9, i1.2.10, i6.1.1, i6.1.3, i6.2.3, i6.2.4, i6.2.5, i6.3.2, i6.4.1.</p> <p>6. Group entity shall comply with all requirements included in the Standard Chapter 6. Requirements of clauses 6.1 and 6.2 can be achieved in the group level.</p> <p>9.1.3 The group entity shall regularly conduct monitoring of forest resources and evaluation of their management, including assessment of the ecological, social and economic impacts, and monitoring results shall be reflected in the planning process. Ecological, social and economic impacts can be assessed at the group level."</p>
4.3.4 The standard requires that the scope shall be made available as documented information.	YES	<p>PEFC LV 06:2022</p> <p>"4.2.2 The scope shall be made available as documented information."</p>
4.4 Group management system		

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
4.4.1 The standard requires that all participants shall be subject to the internal monitoring and the internal audit programme.	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 “4.3.1 The group entity shall include in their group management system requirement that all group members shall be subject to the internal monitoring and the internal audit programme.”
4.4.2 The standard requires that a certified PEFC chain of custody system shall be in place if a group entity acts as a trader of forest based material not covered by group certificate.	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 “4.3.2 Group entity shall ensure that in cases when forest based material not covered by sustainable forest management group certificate are traded; certified PEFC chain of custody system shall be in place.”
5. Leadership		
5.1 Organisational roles, responsibilities and authorities		
5.1.1 Functions and responsibilities of the group entity		
The standard requires that the following functions and responsibilities of the group entity shall be specified:		
a) to implement and maintain an effective management system covering all participants of the group;	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 “5.1 Functions and responsibilities of the group entity. The following functions and responsibilities of the group entity shall be specified: a) to implement and maintain an effective group management system covering all members of the group;” <i>Observation: the wording of clause 5.1 of PEFC LV 06:2022 is unclear. The clause requires that “functions and responsibilities of the group entity shall be specified”, whereas they are already given in the subclauses.</i>
b) to represent the group organisation in the certification process, including in communications and relationships with the certification body, submission of an application for certification, and contractual relationship with the certification body;	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 “5.1 b) to represent the group in the certification process, including in communications and relationships with the certification body, submission of an application for certification, and contractual relationship with the certification body;”
c) to establish written procedures for the management of the group organisation;	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 “5.1 c) to establish written procedures for the group entity;”
d) to establish written procedures for the acceptance of new participants of the group organisation. These	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
acceptance procedures shall cover at least the verification of the applicant's information about contact details, clear identification of their forest property and its/their size(s)		"5.1 d) to establish written procedures for the acceptance of new group members. The acceptance procedure shall include at least verification of the following facts: contact details of the applicant, information on forest ownership, location and area of the forest property;"
e) to establish written procedures for the suspension and exclusion of participants who do not correct/close nonconformities. Group participants excluded from any certification group based on nonconformities cannot be accepted within 12 months after exclusion	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 "5.1 e) to establish written procedures for the suspension and exclusion of group members who do not correct/close nonconformities. Group member excluded from any group certification based on nonconformities cannot be accepted within 12 months after exclusion;"
f) to keep documented information of: i. the group entity and participants' conformity with the requirements of the sustainable forest management standard, and other applicable requirements of the forest certification system, ii. all participants, including their contact details, identification of their forest property and its/their size(s), iii. the certified area, iv. the implementation of an internal monitoring programme, its review and any preventive and/or corrective actions taken;	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 "5.1 f) to keep documented information of: • the group entity and group members conformity with the requirements of the Standard, and other applicable requirements of the forest certification system; • all group members, including their contact details, identification of their forest property and size; • the certified area; • the implementation of an internal monitoring programme, its review and any preventive and/or corrective actions taken;"
g) to establish connections with all participants based on a binding written agreement which shall include the participants' commitment to comply with the sustainable forest management standard. The group entity shall have a written contract or other written agreement with all participants covering the right of the group entity to implement and enforce any corrective or preventive measures, and to initiate the exclusion of any participant from the scope of	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 "5.1 g) to establish connections with all group members based on a binding written agreement which shall include the group members commitment to comply with the Standard. The group entity shall have a written contract or other written agreement with all group members covering the right of the group entity to implement and enforce any corrective or preventive measures, and to initiate the exclusion of any group member from the scope of certification in the event of nonconformity with the Standard; Note: The requirements for "a binding written agreement" and "written contract or other written agreement with all group members" can also be met by a written agreement between forest owner/manager or forest owner association, if the organisation can demonstrate that it has the legal

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
certification in the event of nonconformity with the sustainable forest management standard; Note: The requirements for “participant’ commitment” and “written contract or other written agreement with all participants” may also be satisfied by the commitment of and written agreement of a pre-existing organisation or group or the members participation, such as a forest owners’/managers’ association, SFM programme and submission to tax programming, where the organisation can demonstrate that it has a legal mandate to represent the participants and where its commitment and the terms and conditions of the contract are enforceable.		authority to represent the group members and that its obligations and the terms and conditions of the contract are enforceable.”
h) to provide all participants with a document confirming participation in the group forest certification;	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 “5.1 h) to provide all group members with a document confirming participation in group forest certification;”
i) to provide all participants with information and guidance required for the effective implementation and maintenance of the sustainable forest management standard and other applicable requirements of the forest certification system;	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 ‘5.1 i) to provide all group members with information and guidance required for the effective implementation and maintenance of the Standard and other applicable requirements of the forest certification system;”
j) to address nonconformities reported from group members which were identified under other PEFC certifications than the particular group certification and to ensure implementation with all group members;	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 “5.1 j) to address nonconformities reported from group members which were identified under other PEFC certifications than the particular group certification and to ensure implementation with all group members;”
k) to operate an internal monitoring programme that provides for the evaluation of the participants’ conformity with the certification requirements;	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 “5.1 k) to operate an internal monitoring programme that provides for the evaluation of the group members conformity with the certification requirements;”

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
l) to operate an annual internal audit programme covering both group members and group entity;	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 "5.1 l) to operate an annual internal audit programme covering both group members and group entity;"
m) to operate a management review of the group forest certification and acting on the results from the review;	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 "5.1 m) to operate a management review of the group certification and acting on the results from the review;"
n) to provide full co-operation and assistance in responding effectively to all requests from the certification body, accreditation body, PEFC International or the National Governing Body for relevant data, documentation or other information; allowing access to the forest area covered by the group organisation and other facilities, whether in connection with formal audits or reviews or otherwise related or with implications for the management system.	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 "5.1 n) to provide full co-operation and assistance in responding effectively to all requests from the certification body, accreditation body, PEFC International or the PEFC Latvia for relevant data, documentation or other information; allowing access to the forest area covered by the group and other facilities, whether in connection with formal audits or reviews or otherwise related or with implications for the group management system."
5.1.2 Function and responsibilities of participants The standard requires that the following functions and responsibilities of the participants shall be specified:		
a) To provide the group entity with a binding written agreement, including a commitment on conformity with the sustainable forest management standard and other applicable requirements of the forest certification system; group participants excluded from any certification group cannot apply for group membership within 12 months after exclusion. Note: The requirement for "written agreement" and participants' "commitment" is also satisfied by the commitment of and written agreement of a pre-existing organisation or group or the members participation, such as a forest owners'/managers' association, SFM programme and submission to tax programming, where the organisation can demonstrate	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 "5.1 Functions and responsibilities of the group entity. The following functions and responsibilities of the group entity shall be specified: g) to establish connections with all group members based on a binding written agreement which shall include the group members commitment to comply with the Standard. The group entity shall have a written contract or other written agreement with all group members covering the right of the group entity to implement and enforce any corrective or preventive measures, and to initiate the exclusion of any group member from the scope of certification in the event of nonconformity with the Standard; Note: The requirements for "a binding written agreement" and "written contract or other written agreement with all group members" can also be met by a written agreement between forest owner/manager or forest owner association, if the organisation can demonstrate that it has the legal authority to represent the group members and that its obligations and the terms and conditions of the contract are enforceable.

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
that it has a legal mandate to represent the participants and where its commitment and the terms and conditions of the contract are enforceable.		<p>5.2.1 The following functions and responsibilities of the group members shall be specified:</p> <p>a) to provide the group entity with a binding written agreement, including a commitment on conformity with the Standard and other applicable requirements of the forest certification system;</p> <p>Note: The requirement for “written agreement” and “commitment” by group members is also met by the commitment and written agreement by an existing organisation or group or by the members participation, such as a forest owner/manager association, if the organisation can demonstrate that it has a legal authority to represent its members.</p> <p>b) group members excluded from any group certification cannot apply for group membership within 12 months after exclusion;”</p> <p><i>The note in clause 5.2.1.a does only refer to representation of its members, and does not explicitly indicate they have the legal authority to enforce the commitment and the terms and conditions of the contract. This is however sufficiently met by the requirements for a binding agreement of the group members under clause 5.1 g) where there is a specific reference to an enforceable contract.</i></p> <p><i>Observation: the wording of clause 5.2.1 is a bit vague, because the clause requires that “functions and responsibilities of the group entity shall be specified”, whereas they are already given in the subclauses.</i></p>
b) To provide the group entity with information about previous group participation.	YES	<p>PEFC LV 06:2022</p> <p>“5.2.1 c) to provide the group entity with information about previous group membership;”</p>
c) to comply with the sustainable forest management standard and other applicable requirements of the certification system as well as with the requirements of the management system;	YES	<p>PEFC LV 06:2022</p> <p>“5.2.1 d) to comply with the Standard and other applicable requirements of the certification system as well as with the requirements of the group management system;”</p>
d) to provide full co-operation and assistance in responding effectively to all requests from the group entity, or certification body for relevant data, documentation or other information; allowing access to the forest and other facilities, whether in connection with formal audits or reviews or otherwise related or with implications for the management system;	YES	<p>PEFC LV 06:2022</p> <p>“5.2.1 e) to provide full co-operation and assistance in responding effectively to all requests from the group entity, or certification body for relevant data, documentation or other information; allowing access to the forest and other facilities, whether in connection with formal audits or reviews or otherwise related or with implications for the group management system;”</p>

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
e) to inform the group entity about nonconformities identified under other PEFC certifications than the particular group certification.	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 "5.2.1 f) to inform the group entity about nonconformities identified under other PEFC certifications than the particular group certification;"
f) to implement relevant corrective and preventive actions established by the group entity.	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 "5.2.1 g) to implement relevant corrective and preventive actions established by the group entity."
5.2 Commitment and policy		
5.2.1 The standard requires that the group entity shall provide a commitment:		
a) to comply with the sustainable forest management standard and other applicable requirements of the certification system;	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 "5.3.1 The group entity shall provide a commitment: a) to comply with the Standard and other applicable requirements of the certification system;"
b) to integrate the group certification requirements in the group management system;	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 "5.3.1 b) to integrate the group certification requirements in the group management system;"
c) to continuously improve the group management system;	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 "5.3.1 c) to continuously improve the group management system;"
d) to continuously support the improvement of the sustainable management of the land/forests by the participants.	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 "5.3.1 d) to continuously support the improvement of the sustainable management of the land/forests by the group members."
5.2.2 The commitment of the group entity may be part of a group management policy and shall be publicly available as documented information upon request.	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 "5.3.2 The commitment of the group entity referred to in clause 5.3.1. may be part of a group management policy and shall be publicly available as documented information upon request."
5.2.3 The standard requires that the participants shall provide a commitment		
a) to follow the rules of the management system;	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 "5.3.3 The group members shall provide a commitment: a) to follow the rules of the group management system;"
b) to implement the requirements of the sustainability standard in their operations in their area.	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 "5.3.3 b) to implement the requirements of the Standard in their operations in their area."

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
6. Planning		
6.1 The standard requires that if a group organisation plans any changes in the group management system, these changes shall be included in a group management plan.	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 “6.1 If a group plans any changes in the group management system, these changes shall be included in a group forest management plan.”
6.2 The standard requires that if a group organisation decides to fulfil requirements of the sustainable forest management standard on the group level, these requirements shall be considered in a group management plan.	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 “6.2 If a group decides to fulfil some of the requirements of the Standard on the group level, these requirements shall be reflected in a group forest management plan.”
7. Support		
7.1 The standard requires that resources needed for the establishment, implementation, maintenance and continual improvement of the group management system shall be determined and provided.	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 “7.1 Group entity shall determine and provide resources (e.g. the number of workers, technical means) necessary for the establishment, implementation, maintenance and continuous improvement of group management system.”
7.2 The standard shall define the necessary competence of persons doing work in the group management system.	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 “7.2.1 Person/-s managing the group shall have necessary competences and knowledge to implement the requirements of the Standard and other applicable requirements of the certification system. 7.2.2 Group entity shall ensure that workers have received training relevant to their job and/or sufficient information on sustainable forest management (including training on the enhancement of forest biodiversity and/or specially protected species and habitats, forest regeneration, tending, etc.).”
7.3 The standard requires that communication processes shall be in place to raise the awareness of participants concerning:		
a) the group management policy;	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 “7.3.3 Internal communication shall address at least the following issues: a) the group management policy;”
b) the requirements of the sustainable forest management standard;	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 “b) the requirements of the Standard;”

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
c) their contribution to the effectiveness of the group management system and the sustainable forest management, including the benefits of improved group performance;	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 “c) group member contribution to the effectiveness of the group management system and the sustainable forest management, including the benefits of improved group performance;”
d) the implications of not conforming with the group management system requirements.	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 “d) the implications of not conforming with the group management system requirements.”
7.4 The standard requires that the internal and external communications relevant to the group management system shall be determined. This includes:		
a) on what to communicate;	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 “7.3.1 The internal and external communications relevant to the group management system shall be determined in the group (on what, when, with whom and how to communicate).”
b) when to communicate;	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 “7.3.1 The internal and external communications relevant to the group management system shall be determined in the group (on what, when, with whom and how to communicate).”
c) with whom to communicate;	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 “7.3.1 The internal and external communications relevant to the group management system shall be determined in the group (on what, when, with whom and how to communicate).”
d) how to communicate.	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 “7.3.1 The internal and external communications relevant to the group management system shall be determined in the group (on what, when, with whom and how to communicate).”
7.5 The standard requires that appropriate mechanisms shall be in place for resolving complaints and disputes relating to group management and sustainable forest management operations.	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 “7.4.1 The group entity shall establish appropriate mechanisms for resolving complaints and disputes relating to group management and sustainable forest management operations.”
7.6 The standard requires that the documented information relevant to the group management system and the conformance with the requirements of the sustainable forest management standard is:		
a) up to date;	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p>"7.5.1 The documented information relevant to the group management system and the conformance with the requirements of the Standard and this document shall be developed to meet the requirements of the Standard and this document.</p> <p>7.5.3 Group entity shall implement, periodically review and/or update the documented information referred to in clauses 7.5.1 and 7.5.2."</p>
b) available and suitable for use, where and when it is needed;	YES	<p>PEFC LV 06:2022</p> <p>"7.5.1 (...) This documented information shall be available and suitable for use, where and when it is needed"</p>
c) adequately protected against loss of confidentiality, improper use, or loss of integrity.	YES	<p>PEFC LV 06:2022</p> <p>"7.5.1 (...) and adequately protected against loss of confidentiality, improper use, or loss of integrity."</p>
8. Operation		
8.1 The standard requires that the group organisation shall plan, implement and control processes needed:		
a) to meet the requirements of the group certification standard and the sustainable forest management standard and	YES	<p>PEFC LV 06:2022</p> <p>"8.1 The group entity shall plan, implement and control necessary processes needed: a) to meet the requirements of this document and the Standard;"</p>
b) to implement the actions determined in 6.	YES	<p>PEFC LV 06:2022</p> <p>"8.1 b) to implement the actions specified in paragraph 6.</p> <p>Note: All operational requirements are included in Latvian National PEFC Forest Management Standard PEFC FMS:2022."</p>
8.2 The standard requires that this planning, implementing and controlling shall be done by:		
a) defining the necessary processes and establishing criteria for those;	YES	<p>PEFC LV 06:2022</p> <p>"8.2 Planning, implementing and controlling shall be done by: a) defining the necessary processes and establishing criteria for those;"</p>
b) implementing control of the processes in accordance with the criteria;	YES	<p>PEFC LV 06:2022</p> <p>"8.2 b) implementing control of the processes in accordance with the criteria;"</p>

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
c) keeping documented information to the extent necessary to have confidence that the processes have been carried out as planned.	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 "8.2 c) keeping documented information to the extent necessary to have confidence that the processes have been carried out as planned."
9. Performance evaluation		
9.1 Monitoring, measurement, analysis and evaluation		
9.1.1 The standard requires that an ongoing internal monitoring programme provides confidence in the conformity of the group organisation with the sustainable forest management standard. In particular, it shall be determined:		
a) what shall be monitored and measured;	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 "9.1.1 An ongoing internal monitoring programme, that may be developed at the group level, shall provide confidence in the conformity of the group with the requirements of this document and Standard. In particular, it shall be determined: a) what shall be monitored and measured;"
b) the methods for monitoring, measurement, analysis and evaluation, as applicable, to ensure valid results;	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 "9.1.1 b) the methods for monitoring, measurement, analysis and evaluation to ensure valid results;"
c) when the monitoring and measuring shall be performed;	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 "9.1.1 c) when the monitoring and measuring shall be performed;"
d) when the results from monitoring and measurement shall be analysed and evaluated;	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 "9.1.1 d) when the results from monitoring and measurement shall be analysed and evaluated;"
e) what documented information shall be available as evidence of the results.	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 "9.1.1 e) what documented information shall be available as evidence of the results."
9.1.2 The standard requires that the group entity shall evaluate the group management performance and the effectiveness of the group management system concerning the implementation of the sustainable forest management requirements.	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 "9.1.2 The group entity shall evaluate the group management system performance and effectiveness concerning the implementation of requirements of this document and the Standard."
9.2 Internal audit		

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
9.2.1 Objectives		
9.2.1.1 The standard requires that an annual internal audit programme shall provide information on whether the group management system:		
a) conforms to i. the group organisation's own requirements for its group management system; ii. the requirements of the national group certification standard;	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 "9.2.1 The group entity shall determine and implement an annual internal audit programme, appropriate to the scale and intensity of operations, to ensure that the management system is effectively implemented and maintained in accordance with the requirements set by the Standard, the group itself, as well as the requirements of this document, which are set for the group management system."
b) ensures the implementation of the sustainable forest management standard on the participant level;	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 "9.2.2 The group entity shall establish the group management system that ensures the implementation of the Standard on the group member level."
c) is effectively implemented and maintained.	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 "9.2.1 The group entity shall determine and implement an annual internal audit programme (...) to ensure that the management system is effectively implemented and maintained (...)."
9.2.1.2 The standard requires that the internal audit programme shall cover the group entity and all group participants. The group entity shall be audited annually. The participants may be selected on a sample basis.	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 "9.2.3 The internal audit programme shall cover the group entity and all the group members. The group entity shall be audited annually. The group members for internal audit may be selected on a sample basis."
9.2.2 Organisation		
The standard requires an internal audit programme which shall cover at least:		
a) planning, establishing, implementing and maintaining an audit programme(s) including the frequency, methods, responsibilities, planning requirements and reporting, which shall take into consideration the importance of the processes concerned and the results of previous audits;	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 "9.2.4 An internal audit programme shall, according to the scale and intensity of the operations, include at least: a) planning, establishment, implementation and maintenance of the audit programme(s) specifying the frequency, methods, responsibilities, audit planning and reporting requirements, taking into consideration the importance of the processes concerned and the results of previous audits;"

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
b) definition of the audit criteria and scope for each audit;	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 "9.2.4 b) defining of the audit criteria and scope for each audit;"
c) competence of internal auditor (forest knowledge, standard knowledge);	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 "9.2.4 c) competence of internal auditor (forest knowledge, knowledge of binding PEFC documents)"
d) selection of auditors and conducting of audits to ensure objectivity and the impartiality of the audit process;	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 "9.2.4 d) selection of internal auditors and conduct of internal audits, ensuring objective and impartial audit process (the internal auditor can also be group member who performs the functions of an auditor and can ensure an impartial and objective audit process, even if the specifics and qualifications of the designated person's work do not correspond to the auditor's profession); e) selection of auditors and conducting of internal audits to ensure objectivity and the impartiality of the audit process;"
e) ensuring that the results of the audits are reported to relevant group management;	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 "9.2.4 f) requirement that the results of the internal audits are reported to group entity;"
f) retaining of the documented information as evidence of the implementation of the audit programme and the audit results.	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 "9.2.4 g) requirement to retain documented information as evidence of the implementation of the internal audit programme and the internal audit results."
9.3 Selection of participants in the internal audit programme		
9.3.1 General		
9.3.1.1 The standard requires the establishment of requirements for the selection of participants in the internal audit programme. These requirements shall include the following procedures for:		
a) determination of the sample size (9.3.2);	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 "9.3.1 The internal audit programme regarding to the selection of members shall include the following procedures for: a) determination of the sample size (9.3.2, 9.3.3)"
b) determination of sample categories (9.3.3);	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 "9.3.1 b) determination and distribution of sample categories(9.3.5);"
c) distribution of the sample to the categories (9.3.4);	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		"9.3.1 b) determination and distribution of sample categories(9.3.5);"
d) selection of the participants (9.3.5).	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 "9.3.1 c) risk-based procedure for the selection of the group members (9.3.6)."
9.3.1.2 The standard may define additional requirements on the regional, national or sub-national level.	N.A.	<i>PEFC LV 06:2022 does not define additional requirements.</i>
9.3.1.3 The standard shall define additional sampling requirements in case of participation of pre-existing organisations or group or the members participation, such as a forest owners'/managers' association, SFM programme and submission to tax programming which have their own members.	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 "9.3.3 If the group includes organisations or subgroups, for example, a cooperative or forest manager that has its own participants, then an internal audit in this subgroup shall be carried out annually, and the size of the sample within the subgroup should calculated in the same way as in the group - as the square root of the number of the subgroup participants ($y = \sqrt{x}$)."
9.3.2 Determination of the sample size		
9.3.2.1 The sample size shall be calculated for the participants of the group organisation.	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 "9.3.2 The sample size shall be calculated for the group members."
9.3.2.2 The size of the sample generally should be the square root of the number of participants: ($y = \sqrt{x}$), rounded to the upper whole number.	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 "9.3.2 (...) The size of the sample generally should be the square root of the number of group members: ($y = \sqrt{x}$), rounded to the upper whole number.""
9.3.2.3 The size of the sample may be adapted by a standard taking into account one or more of the following indicators:		
a) results of a risk assessment. In this case deviations of sample sizes in case of low or high risk for individual categories shall be defined;	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 "9.3.4 The size of the sample calculated in clause 9.3.2 and 9.3.3 can be adapted, based on: a) results of a risk assessment (9.3.5); 9.3.5 The indicators used in the risk assessment shall reflect the scope of the standard and divide the risk for each indicator on low, medium and high level, as well as determine the number of score for calculating the risk level. The risk shall be assessed according to the risk indicators listed in Table 1, and as a result of the assessment, each group member is assigned a risk level (category): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low 0 – 3 score Medium 4 – 8 score

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<div><div><div><div><div><div>Nr.</div><div>Risk indicator</div></div><div><div><div>Risk level</div><div><div>Low (0)</div><div>Medium (1)</div><div>High (2)</div></div></div></div></div><div><div><div>1</div><div>Total forest management area, ha</div><div>0 - 100</div><div>100 - 1000</div><div>More than 1000</div></div><div><div><div>2</div><div>Experience in forest management</div><div>8 years or more</div><div>3 - 7</div><div>Less than 3 years</div></div><div><div><div>3</div><div>Number of identified health and safety non-compliances during the past 3 years</div><div>0</div><div>1 - 3</div><div>4 or more</div></div><div><div><div>4</div><div>Number of negative comments received from stakeholders during the past 2 years</div><div>0</div><div>1 - 3</div><div>4 or more</div></div><div><div><div>5</div><div>Legal violations identified by the competent state institutions during the past 2 years</div><div>0</div><div>1 - 3</div><div>4 or more</div></div><div><div><div>6</div><div>Forest management operations are performed by PEFC certified contractors</div><div>All contractors are certified according to the PEFC Standard for Forestry Contractors PEFC LV MDS</div><div>Both PEFC certified and uncertified contractors</div><div>No contractors are certified according to the PEFC Standard for Forestry Contractors PEFC LV MDS</div></div><div><div><div>7</div><div>Experience in PEFC Forest Management certification</div><div>Certified more than 5 years</div><div>Certified 3 - 5 years</div><div>Certified less than 3 years</div></div></div></div></div><div><p>9.3.6 The group entity shall establish a risk-based procedure for the selection of the sample for internal audits including requirement that at least 25% of the sample of group members are selected at random, and other internal audit participants shall be selected based on the risk assessment results: 10% of participants shall be selected from the low-risk category, 20% from the medium and 45% from the high-risk category. All numbers selected shall be rounded to the upper whole number.”</p></div></div></div></div></div></div></div></div>
b) results of internal audits or previous certification audits;	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 “9.3.4 b) results of internal audits or previous certification audits;”
c) quality / level of confidence of the internal monitoring programme;	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 “9.3.4 c) quality / level of confidence of the internal monitoring programme;”
d) use of technologies allowing the gathering of information concerning specified requirements;	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 “9.3.4 d) use of technologies allowing the gathering of information concerning specified requirements;”

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)																																	
Note: Such technologies may be e.g. the use of satellite data or drones and allow compliance statements for specific requirements of a sustainability standard or support the risk based sampling.		Note: Technologies can help to demonstrate compliance for specific requirements of the Standard or support the risk based sampling. Such technologies can be e.g. satellite data or drones”																																	
e) based on other means of gathering information about activities on the ground. Note: One way could be a survey with participants who provide some information about their activities on the ground.	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 “9.3.4 e) use of other means of gathering information. Note: One way could be a group member survey which provides sufficient information about relevant activities.”																																	
9.3.3 Determination of sample categories																																			
9.3.3.1 The sample categories shall be established based on the results of a risk assessment. The indicators used in the risk assessment shall reflect the geographical scope of the standard. The following non exhaustive list of indicators may be used for the risk assessment:																																			
a) ownership type (e.g. state forest, communal forest, private forest);	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 “9.3.4 The size of the sample calculated in clause 9.3.2 and 9.3.3 can be adapted, based on: a) results of a risk assessment (9.3.5); 9.3.5 The indicators used in the risk assessment shall reflect the scope of the standard and divide the risk for each indicator on low, medium and high level, as well as determine the number of score for calculating the risk level. Nr. <table><tr><th rowspan="2">Nr.</th><th rowspan="2">Risk indicator</th><th colspan="3">Risk level</th></tr><tr><th>Low (0)</th><th>Medium (1)</th><th>High (2)</th></tr><tr><td>1</td><td>Total forest management area, ha</td><td>0 - 100</td><td>100 - 1000</td><td>More than 1000</td></tr><tr><td>2</td><td>Experience in forest management</td><td>8 years or more</td><td>3 - 7</td><td>Less than 3 years</td></tr><tr><td>3</td><td>Number of identified health and safety non-compliances during the past 3 years</td><td>0</td><td>1 - 3</td><td>4 or more</td></tr><tr><td>4</td><td>Number of negative comments received from stakeholders during the past 2 years</td><td>0</td><td>1 - 3</td><td>4 or more</td></tr><tr><td>5</td><td>Legal violations identified by the competent state institutions during the past 2 years</td><td>0</td><td>1 - 3</td><td>4 or more</td></tr></table>	Nr.	Risk indicator	Risk level			Low (0)	Medium (1)	High (2)	1	Total forest management area, ha	0 - 100	100 - 1000	More than 1000	2	Experience in forest management	8 years or more	3 - 7	Less than 3 years	3	Number of identified health and safety non-compliances during the past 3 years	0	1 - 3	4 or more	4	Number of negative comments received from stakeholders during the past 2 years	0	1 - 3	4 or more	5	Legal violations identified by the competent state institutions during the past 2 years	0	1 - 3	4 or more
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PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)																												
		<table><tr><td>6</td><td>Forest management operations are performed by PEFC certified contractors</td><td>All contractors are certified according to the PEFC Standard for Forestry Contractors PEFC LV MDS</td><td>Both PEFC certified and uncertified contractors</td><td colspan="2">No contractors are certified according to the PEFC Standard for Forestry Contractors PEFC LV MDS</td></tr><tr><td>7</td><td>Experience in PEFC Forest Management certification</td><td>Certified more than 5 years</td><td>Certified 3 - 5 years</td><td colspan="2">Certified less than 3 years</td></tr></table> <p>9.3.6 The group entity shall establish a risk-based procedure for the selection of the sample for internal audits including requirement that at least 25% of the sample of group members are selected at random, and other internal audit participants shall be selected based on the risk assessment results: 10% of participants shall be selected from the low-risk category, 20% from the medium and 45% from the high-risk category. All numbers selected shall be rounded to the upper whole number.“</p> <p><i>PEFC LV 06:2022 does not include ownership type as an indicator.</i></p>					6	Forest management operations are performed by PEFC certified contractors	All contractors are certified according to the PEFC Standard for Forestry Contractors PEFC LV MDS	Both PEFC certified and uncertified contractors	No contractors are certified according to the PEFC Standard for Forestry Contractors PEFC LV MDS		7	Experience in PEFC Forest Management certification	Certified more than 5 years	Certified 3 - 5 years	Certified less than 3 years													
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b) size of management units (different size classes);	YES	<p>PEFC LV 06:2022</p> <p>“9.3.5 (...)</p> <table><tr><th rowspan="2">Nr.</th><th rowspan="2">Risk indicator</th><th colspan="3">Risk level</th></tr><tr><th>Low (0)</th><th>Medium (1)</th><th>High (2)</th></tr><tr><td>1</td><td>Total forest management area, ha</td><td>0 - 100</td><td>100 - 1000</td><td>More than 1000</td></tr></table> <p>”</p>					Nr.	Risk indicator	Risk level			Low (0)	Medium (1)	High (2)	1	Total forest management area, ha	0 - 100	100 - 1000	More than 1000											
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c) biogeographic region (e.g. lowlands, low mountain range, high mountain range);	N.A.	<p><i>PEFC LV 06:2022 does not include this as an indicator.</i></p>																												
d) operations, processes and products of potential group participants;	YES	<p>PEFC LV 06:2022</p> <p>“9.3.5 (...)</p> <table><tr><th rowspan="2">Nr.</th><th rowspan="2">Risk indicator</th><th colspan="3">Risk level</th></tr><tr><th>Low (0)</th><th>Medium (1)</th><th>High (2)</th></tr><tr><td>2</td><td>Experience in forest management</td><td>8 years or more</td><td>3 - 7</td><td>Less than 3 years</td></tr><tr><td>4</td><td>Number of negative comments received from stakeholders during the past 2 years</td><td>0</td><td>1 - 3</td><td>4 or more</td></tr><tr><td>6</td><td>Forest management operations are performed by PEFC certified contractors</td><td>All contractors are certified according to the PEFC Standard for Forestry Contractors PEFC LV MDS</td><td>Both PEFC certified and uncertified contractors</td><td colspan="2">No contractors are certified according to the PEFC Standard for Forestry Contractors PEFC LV MDS</td></tr></table>					Nr.	Risk indicator	Risk level			Low (0)	Medium (1)	High (2)	2	Experience in forest management	8 years or more	3 - 7	Less than 3 years	4	Number of negative comments received from stakeholders during the past 2 years	0	1 - 3	4 or more	6	Forest management operations are performed by PEFC certified contractors	All contractors are certified according to the PEFC Standard for Forestry Contractors PEFC LV MDS	Both PEFC certified and uncertified contractors	No contractors are certified according to the PEFC Standard for Forestry Contractors PEFC LV MDS	
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e) deforestation and forest conversion;	N.A.	PEFC LV 06:2022 does not include this as an indicator.																						
f) rotation period(s);	N.A.	PEFC LV 06:2022 does not include this as an indicator.																						
g) richness of biological diversity;	N.A.	PEFC LV 06:2022 does not include this as an indicator.																						
h) recreation and other socio-economic functions of the forest;	N.A.	PEFC LV 06:2022 does not include this as an indicator.																						
i) dependence of and interaction with local communities and indigenous people;	N.A.	PEFC LV 06:2022 does not include this as an indicator.																						
j) available resources for administration, operations, training and research;	N.A.	PEFC LV 06:2022 does not include this as an indicator.																						
k) governance and law enforcement.	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 “9.3.5 (...) <table><tr><th rowspan="2">Nr.</th><th rowspan="2">Risk indicator</th><th colspan="3">Risk level</th></tr><tr><th>Low (0)</th><th>Medium (1)</th><th>High (2)</th></tr><tr><td>3</td><td>Number of identified health and safety non-compliances during the past 3 years</td><td>0</td><td>1 - 3</td><td>4 or more</td></tr><tr><td>5</td><td>Legal violations identified by the competent state institutions during the past 2 years</td><td>0</td><td>1 - 3</td><td>4 or more</td></tr></table> ”					Nr.	Risk indicator	Risk level			Low (0)	Medium (1)	High (2)	3	Number of identified health and safety non-compliances during the past 3 years	0	1 - 3	4 or more	5	Legal violations identified by the competent state institutions during the past 2 years	0	1 - 3	4 or more
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9.3.3.2 Conditions which constitute risk for each indicator on low, medium and high level and the respective consequences for the sampling shall be defined.	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 “9.3.5 The indicators used in the risk assessment shall reflect the scope of the standard and divide the risk for each indicator on low, medium and high level, as well as determine the number of score for calculating the risk level. <table><tr><th rowspan="2">Nr.</th><th rowspan="2">Risk indicator</th><th colspan="3">Risk level</th></tr><tr><th>Low (0)</th><th>Medium (1)</th><th>High (2)</th></tr><tr><td>1</td><td>Total forest management area, ha</td><td>0 - 100</td><td>100 - 1000</td><td>More than 1000</td></tr></table> ”					Nr.	Risk indicator	Risk level			Low (0)	Medium (1)	High (2)	1	Total forest management area, ha	0 - 100	100 - 1000	More than 1000					
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PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)					
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			7	Experience in PEFC Forest Management certification	Certified more than 5 years	Certified 3 - 5 years	Certified less than 3 years
		“					
9.3.4 Distribution of the sample The sample shall be distributed to the categories according to the result of the risk assessment.	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 “9.3.6 The group entity shall establish a risk-based procedure for the selection of the sample for internal audits including requirement that at least 25% of the sample of group members are selected at random, and other internal audit participants shall be selected based on the risk assessment results: 10% of participants shall be selected from the low-risk category, 20% from the medium and 45% from the high-risk category. All numbers selected shall be rounded to the upper whole number.”					
9.3.5 Selection of the participants							
9.3.5.1 At least 25% of the sample should be selected at random.	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 “9.3.6 (...) at least 25% of the sample of group members are selected at random.”					
9.3.5.2 A risk-based procedure for the selection of the participants shall be specified.	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 “9.3.6 The group entity shall establish a risk-based procedure for the selection of the sample for internal audits (...)”					
9.4 Management review							
9.4.1 The standard requires that an annual management review shall at least include:							

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
a) the status of actions from previous management reviews;	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 “9.4.1 An annual management system review shall at least include: a) the status of actions described in previous management system reviews;”
b) changes in external and internal issues that are relevant to the group management system;	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 “9.4.1 b) changes in external and internal issues that are relevant to the management system;” <i>Observation: clause 9.4.1 b) refers to the “management system”, without specifying that this is related to the group management system (not the forest management system). This might lead to misinterpretation, but due to the context of the clause it is concluded that it’s related to the group management system.</i>
c) the status of conformity with the sustainable forest management standard, that includes reviewing the results of the internal monitoring programme, the internal audit and the certification body’s evaluations and surveillance;	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 “9.4.1 c) information on the group performance results, including non-compliances and corrective actions, monitoring and evaluation results and audit results;
d) information on the group performance, including trends in: i. nonconformities and corrective actions; ii. monitoring and measurement results; iii. audit results;	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 “9.4.1 c) information on the group performance results, including non-compliances and corrective actions, monitoring and evaluation results and audit results;
e) opportunities for continual improvement.	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 “9.4.1 d) opportunities for continual improvement of the system, foreseeing the necessary improvements.”
9.4.2 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 group management system.	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 “9.4.2 The outputs of the management system review shall include decisions related to continual improvement opportunities and any need for changes to the group management system.”

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
9.4.3 The standard requires that the group organisation shall retain documented information as evidence of the results of management reviews.	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 “9.4.3 The group entity shall retain documented information as evidence of the results of management system reviews.”
10. Improvement		
10.1 Non conformity and corrective action		
10.1.1 The standard requires when a nonconformity occurs, the group organisation shall:		
a) react to the nonconformity and, as applicable: i. take action to control and correct it; ii. deal with the consequences;	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 “10.1.1 When a non-conformity occurs, the group entity shall: a) act accordingly: - to plan actions to control and correct non-conformities; - to deal with the consequences caused by the non-conformities as far as possible;”
b) evaluate the need for action to eliminate the causes of the nonconformity, in order that it does not recur or occur elsewhere, by: i. reviewing the nonconformity; ii. determining the causes of the nonconformity; iii. determining if similar nonconformities exist, or could potentially occur;	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 “10.1.1 b) assess the need for corrective actions in order to eliminate the risks of recurrence of non-conformities elsewhere by: - reviewing the non-conformity; - determining the causes of the non-conformity; - determining if a similar non-conformity could reoccur or occur anywhere else;”
c) implement any action needed;	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 “10.1.1 c) plan and implement the necessary actions;”
d) review the effectiveness of any corrective action taken;	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 “10.1.1. d) review the effectiveness of the corrective actions taken;”
e) make changes to the group management system, if necessary.	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 “10.1.1 e) make changes to the group management system, if necessary.”
10.1.2 The standard requires that the group organisation shall retain documented information as evidence of:		

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
a) the nature of the nonconformities and any subsequent actions taken;	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 "10.1.3 The group entity shall retain documented information about the non-conformity and the measures taken to eliminate the non-conformity"
b) the results of any corrective action.	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 "10.1.3 The group entity shall retain documented information about (...) the results of any corrective actions."
10.1.3 The standard requires that a participant who was excluded from a group certification shall be internally audited by the group entity before it is allowed to re-enter the group certification. The internal audit shall not take place sooner than 12 months after the exclusion.	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 "10.1.4 The group member who was excluded from the group certification shall be internally audited by the group entity before it is allowed to re-enter the group certification. The internal audit shall not take place sooner than 12 months after the exclusion."
10.2 Continual improvement The standard requires that the suitability, adequacy and effectiveness of the group management system and the sustainable management of the forest shall be continuously improved.	YES	PEFC LV 06:2022 "10.2 The group entity shall continuously improve the suitability, adequacy and effectiveness of the group management system, sustainable forest management system and the sustainable forest management practice."

Part III: PEFC Checklist for Sustainable Forest Management

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

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	PEFC FMS:2022 “1. The scope of the Standard The subject of certification is a forest management unit or units that are included in the scope of certification. 9.1.1 (...) Note. Monitoring can be carried out by the forest manager, or by using the results of monitoring carried out by other competent authorities. For example, if monitoring of forest health is carried out at the national/regional level, and its results are available to the forest manager, the objective of the requirement is met without the necessity to carry out the individual monitoring in each forest management unit.” <i>The requirements in PEFC FMS:2022 include management requirements (mostly chapters 4, 5, 9 and 10) are performance based and applicable at forest management unit.</i>
b) be clear, performance based and auditable;	YES	PEFC FMS:2022 “Assessment of conformity The criteria and guidelines of the International PEFC Sustainable Forest Management Standard (PEFC ST 1003:2018) (hereinafter – the Guidelines) are included in Chapter 8 of the Latvian National Forest Management Standard. The Guidelines define general goals and principles of management of forests and plantation forests to achieve sustainable management. The indicators provide measurable criteria for an independent third-party evaluation against the requirements of the guidelines to determine compliance with the Standard.”



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p>V2.1 Health and vitality of forest ecosystems shall be maintained or enhanced and degraded forest ecosystems shall be rehabilitated wherever and as far as economically feasible, by making best use of natural structures and processes and using preventive biological measures. [8.2.1].</p> <p><i>Indicators:</i></p> <p>i 2.1.1 Forest manager shall take into account the results of research and/or monitoring carried out in the country on the health and vitality of the forest.</p> <p>i 2.1.2 Forest manager shall take the necessary measures to limit and/or prevent the risks of forest damage in the managed area.</p> <p>i 2.1.3 Forest manager shall carry out sanitary felling to improve the sanitary condition of forest stands, if necessary and unless it does not conflict with the laws and regulations.</p> <p>i 2.1.4 Forest manager shall identify degraded forest ecosystems and plan activities for their restoration if it is economically justified.</p> <p><i>The introductory part of PEFC FMS:2022 provides explanation on several parts, including the assessment of conformity. This section explains that PEFC International requirements are mentioned in chapter 8 (in blue as displayed in the example above), which is a literally citation of the benchmark standard. Both from the text and explanation provided by PEFC Latvia it is understood that the benchmark requirements cited in the standard are not part of the normative aspects, but rather provide guidance for the development of the indicators. In practice, auditors will only check whether forest management complies with the indicators. In the assessment below, the benchmark citations (blue texts) are not included as evidence.</i></p> <p><i>The requirements in PEFC FMS:2022 are clear, performance based and auditable.</i></p>
c) apply to activities of all forest operators in the defined forest area who have an impact on achieving compliance with the requirements;	YES	<p>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>“1. The scope of the Standard. The Latvian national PEFC forest management standard is applicable in the entire territory of Latvia, to all types of forest, to all forest holdings, regardless of their type and size. Certification against the Standard can be done only upon a voluntary initiative of the forest manager. The subject of certification is a forest management unit or units that are included in the scope of certification. A forest manager can establish separate forest management units and certify them all or only some of them. Forest management units shall be identifiable both on the map and in nature. The requirements of the Standard are binding to forest manager and workers who performs in the certified area.</p>

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p>3.46 Worker. A worker is any natural person who, on the basis of a contract, performs certain work for an employer, incl. under the guidance of a service provider, guest workers, as well as self-employed persons."</p> <p><i>Clause 1 indicates that the requirements of the Standard are also binding to workers. Since the definition of workers also includes persons working in the forest area who are not employed by the forest manager/owner, all forest operators are included.</i></p>
d) require record-keeping that provides evidence of compliance with the requirements of the forest management standards;	NO	<p>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>"7.5.1 Forest manager shall develop and keep the documentation that forest manager considers necessary to meet the requirements of the Standard."</p> <p><i>Clause 7.5.1 leaves the decision to the forest manager, whereas the certification process will have to define whether sufficient evidence is provided.</i></p>
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 languages other than English, are published online on the PEFC website www.pefc.org .	YES	<p>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>"7.6.1 The claim "100% PEFC certified" can be included in sales documents to inform clients who have a valid PEFC chain of custody certificate that the products come from certified forests and/or other sources approved by the PEFC International as suitable for PEFC certification, e.g. raw material originating from plantation forests to which the requirements of the Standard apply."</p>
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	<p>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>"7.6.2 Forest manager can sell with the claim "100% PEFC certified" or with another claim of the system only those products that are obtained in certified areas. In cases where the forest manager sells other products that are outside the scope of certification, they shall be sold as non-certified."</p>
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	<p>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>"7.6.1 (...) Note 2: Certification claims regarding to the origin of products from certified forest management units shall be used only by forest managers who have a PEFC-acknowledged certificate issued in accordance with this Standard."</p>

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
h) specify requirements concerning the information which need to be provided to a PEFC chain of custody certified customer;	YES	PEFC FMS:2022 “7.6.1 The claim “100% PEFC certified” can be included in sales documents to inform clients who have a valid PEFC chain of custody certificate that the products come from certified forests and/or other sources approved by the PEFC International as suitable for PEFC certification, e.g. raw material originating from plantation forests to which the requirements of the Standard apply. Sales invoices or similar documentation that refers to PEFC certified forests/ plantation forests/ products/materials, shall contain at a minimum the following information: name and address of seller and purchaser, the date of sale, product name or description (e.g. “coniferous”, “broadleaves”, “firewood”), the volume (or quantity) sold, certificate code and the claim “100% PEFC certified”. 7.6.5 Forest manager includes information about the certification status of the products sold as certified in communication with clients who have a PEFC chain of custody certificate.”
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.	YES	<i>The conformity assessment has not encountered conformities which are based on applicable legislation and not covered in the standard. It shall be noted that Chapter 2 of PEFC FMS:2022 includes an overview of applicable legislation.</i>
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	PEFC FMS:2022 “4.1 Forest manager shall identify stakeholders and directly affected stakeholders”
b) the relevant needs and expectations of these stakeholders.	YES	PEFC FMS:2022 “4.1 Forest manager shall identify stakeholders and directly affected stakeholders and determine 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	PEFC FMS:2022 “4.2 Forest manager shall determine the scope and the boundaries of the management system.”
4.3.2 The standard requires that forest management shall comprise the cycle of inventory and planning,	YES	PEFC FMS:2022

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
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.		"4.3 Forest manager shall carry out a forest inventory in accordance with national laws and regulations; the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of operations shall be done according to the scale and intensity of operations, and shall also include an assessment of the impact of forest management operations on the social sphere, environment and economy. Such an assessment shall form the basis for continuous improvement of the system."
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	PEFC FMS:2022 "5.1. Forest manager shall confirm in writing the commitment to comply with the requirements of the Standard and other applicable requirements of the certification system"
b) to continuously improve the sustainable forest management system.	YES	PEFC FMS:2022 "5.1. Forest manager shall confirm in writing the commitment to (...) continuously improving the sustainable management system."
5.2 The standard requires that this commitment shall be publicly available.	YES	PEFC FMS:2022 "5.2. The document referred to in clause 5.1 shall be publicly available. Note: Publicly available is, for example, published on the organisations website or available in the office etc."
5.3 The standard requires that responsibilities for sustainable forest management shall be clearly defined and assigned.	YES	PEFC FMS:2022 "5.3. Forest manager shall clearly define the area of responsibility and assign a person(s) responsible for the implementation of sustainable management practices."
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	PEFC FMS:2022 "6.1.1. Forest manager shall consider risks and opportunities to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Standard, taking into account the scale and intensity of management operations."
6.1.2 The standard requires that inventory and mapping of forest resources shall be established and	YES	PEFC FMS:2022

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
maintained, adequate to local and national conditions and in correspondence with the requirements described in this international benchmark standard.		"6.1.2. Forest manager shall maintain information about forest resources, including conducting and maintaining a forest inventory pursuant to the laws and regulation, as well as mapping according to the requirements of the Standard."
6.2 Management plan		
6.2.1 The standard requires that management plans shall be:		
a) elaborated and periodically updated or continually adjusted;	YES	PEFC FMS:2022 "6.2.2. The forest management plan shall be reviewed and/or revised at least once every 5 years."
b) appropriate to the size and use of the forest area;	YES	PEFC FMS:2022 "6.2.1. Forest manager, taking into account the scale and intensity of forest management operations and the different uses or functions of the managed area, shall develop a forest management plan according to the laws and regulations and other binding planning documents, including description of the resources of the managed area."
c) based on applicable local, national and international legislation as well as existing land-use or other official plans; and	YES	PEFC FMS:2022 "6.2.1 Forest manager (...) shall develop a forest management plan according to the laws and regulations and other binding planning documents."
d) adequately covering forest resources.	YES	PEFC FMS:2022 "6.2.1 Forest manager (...) shall develop a forest management plan (...) including description of the resources of the managed area."
6.2.2 The standard requires that management plans shall take into account the different uses or functions of the managed forest area.	YES	PEFC FMS:2022 "6.2.1 Forest manager, taking into account the scale and intensity of forest management operations and the different uses or functions of the managed forest area, shall develop a forest management plan according to the laws and regulations and other binding planning documents, including description of the resources of the managed area."
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	PEFC FMS:2022 "6.2.3. The forest management plan shall include long-term management goals: social, economic and environmental. 6.2.4. The forest management plan shall include information about resources and ecosystem services in the managed area:

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		a) description of the managed area and resources (including the area of managed territory, location, distribution by land categories, types of forest land and their area, forests divided by dominant tree species and site type, by tree species and age groups, sustainable harvesting volume of wood and commercial non-wood forest products and its justification);
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	PEFC FMS:2022 “6.2.4 The forest management plan shall include information about resources and ecosystem services in the managed area: a) description of the managed area and resources (including the area of managed territory, location, distribution by land categories, types of forest land and their area, forests divided by dominant tree species and site type, by tree species and age groups, sustainable harvesting volume of wood and commercial non-wood forest products and its justification); 6.2.5. Forest manager has information about the annually planned and actually performed amount of forest management activities regarding: (...) f) sale of non-wood forest products (e.g. berries, mushrooms, herbs);”
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	PEFC FMS:2022 “6.2.6. The forest management plan includes measures for the mitigation of the risk of degradation and damage of forest ecosystems.”
6.2.6 The standard requires that management plans shall take into account the results of scientific research.	YES	PEFC FMS:2022 “6.2.1 (...) The results of scientific research shall be taken into account when developing a forest management plan. i 2.1.1 Forest manager shall take into account the results of research and/or monitoring carried out in the country on the health and vitality of the forest. i 6.4.1 The possibility of applying knowledge, innovations and practical methods related to forest management of forest owners, NGOs and others shall be considered and, to the extent possible, rewards shall be provided for the knowledge used, if applicable.
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	PEFC FMS:2022 “6.2.7 Forest manager shall prepare a publicly available summary of the forest management plan, which corresponds to the scale and intensity of the forest management operations.”

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
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	PEFC FMS:2022 “6.2.7 Forest manager shall prepare a publicly available summary of the forest management plan (...) Note. The publicly available summary of the forest management plan may exclude confidential business and personal information and other information made confidential by applicable normative documents or for the protection of cultural heritage objects or natural resources.”
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	PEFC FMS:2022 “6.3.1 Forest manager shall have access to national and international legal acts and their requirements, and determine how these compliance obligations are binding in forest management.”
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	PEFC FMS:2022 “6.3.2 The operations of forest manager shall comply with the national and internationally binding laws and regulations that apply to forest management (including nature and environmental protection, specially protected, endangered species and habitats, fire protection, tenure and land use rights, health and safety issues; anti-corruption, fair competition, taxes and other binding payments).”
6.3.1.3 The standard requires that where no anti-corruption legislation exists, the organisation must take	YES	<i>Latvia has the anti-corruption legalisation, such as the Law On Prevention of Conflict of Interest in Activities of Public Officials (https://likumi.lv/ta/en/en/id/61913-on-prevention-of-conflict-of-interest-in-</i>

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
alternative anti-corruption measures appropriate to the risk of corruption.		<i>activities-of-public-officials</i>), the Regulations Regarding the Basic Requirements for an Internal Control System for the Prevention of Corruption and Conflict of Interest in an Institution of a Public Person (https://likumi.lv/ta/en/en/id/294518-regulations-regarding-the-basic-requirements-for-an-internal-control-system-for-the-prevention-of-corruption-and-conflict-of-interest-in-an-institution-of-a-public-person) and the Whistleblowing Law (https://likumi.lv/ta/en/en/id/329680-whistleblowing-law).
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	PEFC FMS:2022 “6.3.3 Forest manager shall identify the risks of illegal activities (e.g. illegal logging, land use, illegally initiated fires, etc.) and, if necessary, take measures to protect the forest management unit against illegal activities to the extent possible. 6.3.4 Upon detecting illegal activities, forest manager immediately informs the competent state authorities and, if possible, takes appropriate measures to avert them.”
6.3.2 Legal, customary and traditional rights related to the forest land		
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. 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.	YES	PEFC FMS:2022 “6.3.5 Forest manager shall have documents confirming ownership or management rights.”
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,	N.A.	<i>There are no indigenous peoples in Latvia.</i>

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
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.		
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	PEFC FMS:2022 “6.3.6 As part of the forest management, forest manager shall respect human rights pursuant to the UN Universal Declaration on Human Rights. Note: In Latvia, the requirements of the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights have been incorporated during the elaboration of laws and regulations.”
6.3.3 Fundamental ILO conventions		
6.3.3.1 The standard requires that forest practices and operations shall comply with fundamental ILO conventions. 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.	YES	PEFC FMS:2022 “6.3.7 Management practices and operations shall comply with the fundamental ILO conventions. Note: In Latvia, the requirements of the fundamental ILO conventions have been incorporated during the elaboration of laws and regulations.” <i>Latvia has ratified all fundamental ILO conventions.</i>
6.3.4 Health, safety and working conditions		
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	YES	PEFC FMS:2022 “6.4.1 When performing operations, forest manager shall assess the risks present in the working environment, inform the employees about them, and plan and take measures to prevent the risks in line with the laws and regulations.

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
informed about the risks involved with their work and about preventive measures.		6.4.2 Forest manager shall ensure that workers have safe working conditions by requiring or providing adequate training and instructions on safe work practices. 6.4.3 Forest manager shall conduct regular training of employees on health and safety issues, safe work techniques and methods."
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. Note: Guidance for specifying national standards can be obtained from the ILO Code of Good Practice: Safety and Health in Forestry Work.	YES	PEFC FMS:2022 "6.4.2 Forest manager shall ensure that workers have safe working conditions by requiring or providing adequate training and instructions on safe work practices. 6.4.3 Forest manager shall conduct regular training of employees on health and safety issues, safe work techniques and methods. 6.4.6 The length of working hours and vacations shall comply with the requirements of the laws and regulations."
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.	YES	PEFC FMS:2022 "6.4.5 The salary of workers who operating in the certified areas shall correspond at least to the amount of the minimum salary in the country. Note: The requirement does not apply to self-employed persons, as the amount of their income directly depends on the amount of the economic activity performed, what is beyond the influence of forest manager."
6.3.4.4 The standard requires that the organisation is committed to equal opportunities, non-discrimination and freedom from workplace harassment. Gender equality shall be promoted.	YES	PEFC FMS:2022 "6.4.9 Forest manager shall promote gender equality in the workplace, ensuring equal opportunities, eradicating discrimination and unwelcome behaviour of a sexual harassment and disrespectful nature. Note: Unwelcome behaviour of a sexual harassment and disrespectful nature – any kind of unwelcome verbal, non-verbal or physical sexual and/or disrespectful behaviour in the workplace, if the purpose or result of such behaviour is disrespect of a person's dignity, humiliation or creation of an offensive environment."

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
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	<p>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>“7.1 Forest manager shall determine and provide resources (e.g. the number of workers, technical means) necessary for the establishment, implementation, maintenance and continuous improvement of the sustainable forest management system.”</p> <p><i>Observation: examples are provided of resources, but financial resources are not mentioned, which would be the primary resource.</i></p>
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	<p>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>“7.2.1 Forest manager shall ensure that workers receive sufficient relevant information and are kept up-to-date through continuous training relevant to their job on sustainable forest management (including training on the enhancement of forest biodiversity and/or specially protected species and habitats, forest regeneration, tending, etc.).</p> <p>7.2.2 Forest manager shall receive sufficient relevant information and keep up-to-date through continuous trainings on sustainable forest management (including training on the enhancement of forest biodiversity and/or specially protected species and habitats, forest regeneration, tending, etc.).</p> <p>3.29 Forest manager. Any natural person, legal person or a group of forest owners who apply for certification and/or are certified individually or as a group of forest owners who is bound by the requirements of this Standard.</p> <p>Note 2. A forest manager can also be a forest owner, whose ownership of forest land is recorded in the Land Register, or a lawful forest possessor into whose ownership, under a decision by a specific institution, in the course of the land reform, land has been transferred (granted) for payment or whose ownership rights to the land have been restored and the land has been determined (surveyed) on site in accordance with laws and regulations; or a person who has acquired possession of the land according to the right of inheritance or on another lawful basis.”</p>
7.3 Communication		
7.3.1 The standard requires that effective communication and consultation with local communities, indigenous peoples and other	YES	<p>PEFC FMS:2022</p>

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
stakeholders relating to sustainable forest management shall be provided.		<p>"7.3.1 Forest manager shall maintain communication with stakeholders and directly affected stakeholders about sustainable forest management, respond to their questions and keep documented information.</p> <p>Note: Documented information includes minutes of meetings, if such are taken, as well as mutual correspondence."</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>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>"7.4 Written complaints about forest management shall be reviewed and responded to. Appropriate mechanisms are in place for resolving complaints and disputes relating to forest management operations, land use rights and work conditions and it complies with the requirements of the laws and regulations."</p> <p>Explanation provided by PEFC Latvia</p> <p>"Law on Submissions: https://likumi.lv/ta/en/en/id/164501-law-on-submissions (according to the Law, deadlines for providing response to submissions/complaints - Section 5 (3) – this law is binding to state institutions however most of certified companies are developing their procedures based on this law."</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>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>"7.5.1 Forest manager shall develop and keep the documentation that forest manager considers necessary to meet the requirements of the Standard."</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>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>"7.5.2. Forest manager shall implement, periodically review and/or update the documented information referred to in clause 7.5.1."</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	YES	<p>PEFC FMS:2022</p>

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
services and maintain or enhance the economic, ecological, cultural and social values of forest resources.		<p>"i 1.1.1 Forest manager shall identify the most significant ecosystem services in the certified area and determine management goals for maintaining or enhancing these services, balancing the social, environmental and economic functions of the forest.</p> <p>i 1.2.4 Forest manager shall evaluate the possibilities of increasing the forest area, for example by afforesting abandoned lands, etc"</p> <p>1. Appendix Guidance for the interpretation of requirements in the case of plantation forests</p> <p>"i 1.1.1(p) Forest manager shall identify the most significant ecosystem services in the certified area and determine the management objectives in the management plan</p> <p>i 4.1.1(p) When establishing plantation forests, the forest manager shall conserve separate clumps of naturally grown trees and shrubs, insofar as this does not contradict the purpose of establishing plantation forests</p> <p>i 4.1.2(p) When the forest manager establishes a plantation forest of one species in a continuous forest area larger than 50 ha, at least 5% of the plantation forest area shall be left for natural regeneration, if it does not include forest land inclusions and clumps of shrubs."</p>
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	<p>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>"i 1.2.2 Forest manager shall not afforest ecologically important non-forest areas, except in cases where afforestation is justified and:</p> <p>d) does not destroy areas of significantly high carbon stock</p> <p>i 1.2.4 Forest manager shall evaluate the possibilities of increasing the forest area, for example by afforesting abandoned lands, etc</p> <p>i 1.2.5 Forest manager shall identify damaged, unproductive forest stands in order to plan their regeneration, e.g. by identifying homogenous pure spruce stands of high density older than 30 years</p> <p>i 1.2.6 Forest manager shall determine silvicultural methods and volumes that do not leave a significant negative impact on the forest values and functions</p> <p>i 1.2.7 Forest manager shall carry out timely forest regeneration and use appropriate thinning models to facilitate carbon sequestration</p> <p>i 1.2.8 Forest manager shall have calculations of CO₂ stock in forest stands</p> <p>i 1.2.9 Forest manager shall determine the long-term allowable cut, which shall be balanced with the estimated long-term increment of growing stock</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p>i 1.2.10 Forest manager shall consider possibilities of providing support for conducting various studies on the extension of the life cycle of wood products and/or their recycling.”</p> <p>1. Appendix Guidance for the interpretation of requirements in the case of plantation forests</p> <p>“Indicator i 1.2.2 of Chapter 8 defines that ecologically important non-forest areas shall not be afforested, except in certain cases (...). The condition that “ecologically important nonforest areas shall not be afforested” means that it is not allowed to certify ecologically important non-forest areas that have been afforested after 31 December 2010 without observing the listed exceptional cases</p> <p>In Latvia, it is not allowed to register a plantation forests in ecologically important non-forest areas</p> <p>i 1.2.9(p) Forest manager shall have information about the amount of annually planned and actually performed management operations in plantation forests.”</p>
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	<p>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>“i 1.3.1 Forest manager shall have calculations of CO2 emissions resulting from forest management activities</p> <p>i 1.3.2 Forest manager shall optimize forest management according to the scale and intensity of the operation in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions</p> <p>i 3.4.3 Forest manager shall consider the collection of felling residues (e.g. small merchantable wood, branches) in places where it is justified</p> <p>i 3.4.4 Forest manager shall ensure that the timber products are removed from the forest in time to retain their quality and minimise the risks for the spread of wood damaging pests as far as possible</p> <p>i 1.2.10 Forest manager shall consider possibilities of providing support for conducting various studies on the extension of the life cycle of wood products and/or their recycling”</p> <p>1. Appendix Guidance for the interpretation of requirements in the case of plantation forests</p> <p>“i 1.3.1(p) Forest manager shall have calculations of CO2 emissions resulting from management operations in the plantation forest</p> <p>i 1.3.2(p) Forest manager shall optimize management according to the scale and intensity of the operations in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.”</p>
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	YES	<p>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>“i 1.2.1 Forest manager shall not convert forest, except in cases where the forest conversion is justified and:</p>

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
land-use planning governed by a governmental or other official authority including consultation with affected stakeholders; and		<p>a) complies with the laws and regulations, territorial development plans and the forest management plan, and other forest manager's internal documents, provided that consultations with directly affected stakeholders have taken place</p> <p>3.47 Territorial development plan. A set of documents consisting of a territorial development programme and a territorial plan, and which, in line with the principles and preconditions for territorial development planning, the results and forecasts of the analysis of the development of the territory and sectors of national economy, outlines comprehensive and sustainable development goals of the territory and the strategy for their achievement."</p> <p>1. Appendix Guidance for the interpretation of requirements in the case of plantation forests</p> <p>"Indicator i 1.2.1 of Chapter 8 defines that forest conversion shall not be carried out, except in certain cases (...)</p> <p>The condition that "forest conversion shall not be carried out" means that it is not allowed to certify plantation forests established as a result of forest conversion after 31 December 2010 without observing the listed exceptional cases</p> <p>In Latvia, according to the requirements of the laws and regulations, forest conversion is not allowed with the aim of establishing a plantation forest."</p> <p>Explanation provided by PEFC Latvia</p> <p>"The clauses 8.1.4a & 8.1.5a are harmonized with the terminology used in standard and national legislation/legal conversion procedures. (...) Territorial development plans are regional land use planning documents, developed by the municipalities/local governments."</p>
b) entails a small proportion (no greater than 5 %) of forest type within the certified area; and	YES	<p>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>"i 1.2.1 b) entails a small proportion (no greater than 5%) of forest type within the certified area"</p>
c) does not have negative impacts on ecologically important forest areas, culturally and socially significant areas, or other protected areas; and	YES	<p>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>"i 1.2.1 c) does not have negative impacts on ecologically important forest areas, culturally and socially significant areas</p> <p>3.14 Ecologically important forest and non-forest areas. National parks, strict nature reserves, nature reserves, nature parks, protected landscape areas, nature monuments, microreserves, as well as forests in protective belts along watercourses and swamps."</p> <p>Explanation provided by PEFC Latvia</p>

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p>"In Latvia protected areas and areas with different restrictions on economic activities apply to 28,2% from total forest areas and is constantly increasing. In total 658 areas of especially protected areas have been established that are significant at regional and national levels. Many of these areas are included in NATURA 2000 network of protected territories (source: skaitlifakti_LV_2022 (zm.gov.lv) as well as many areas are located outside of Natura 2000 network. Additionally, to especially protected areas in Latvia key species, habitats are protected through micro-reserves. According to the Nature Agency, 48410 ha micro reserves and 72000 ha buffer zones established (source: https://www.daba.gov.lv/lv/aizsargajamo-teritoriju-platiba). According to the law, establishment of a micro-reserve may be submitted to the responsible institution by any person (https://likumi.lv/ta/en/en/id/253746-regulations-regarding-the-establishment-and-management-of-micro-reserves-their-conservation-as-well-as-determination-of-micro-reserves-and-their-buffer-zones). The micro-reserve establishment can be initiated in all kind of properties (including private, state, municipalities). The responsible institution after receiving a proposal for establishment of a micro-reserve, request an opinion from the certified expert in the relevant group of biotopes or species. The expert shall perform an on-site check and submit conclusion to the responsible institution. The responsible institutions, based on expert conclusion, decides whether establishment of micro-reserve required. In Latvia the total area of micro-reserves is constantly increasing as new values are identified. In year 2020 in whole Latvia (covering all ownership types), Nature Census/habitat mapping was completed. The goal of the project was to collect detailed information about the distribution and condition of habitats and species and other natural resources. Based on this information, presently Nature Conservation Agency is revising Natura 2000 area network and planning extension of the protected areas."</p>
d) does not destroy areas of significantly high carbon stock; and	YES	<p>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>"i 1.2.1 d) does not destroy areas of significantly high carbon stock"</p> <p><i>Observation: PEFC FMS:2022 does not further define the wording "areas of significantly high carbon stock", it therefore remains up to the interpretation of auditors how to assess this component.</i></p>
e) makes a contribution to long-term conservation, economic, and social benefits.	YES	<p>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>"i 1.2.1 e) makes a contribution to long-term conservation, economic, and social benefits"</p>
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	<p>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>"i 1.2.2 Forest manager shall not afforest ecologically important non-forest areas, except in cases where afforestation is justified and:</p> <p>a) complies with the laws and regulations, territorial development plans and the forest management plan, and other forest manager's internal documents (...)</p> <p>3.47 Territorial development plan. A set of documents consisting of a territorial development programme and a territorial plan, and which, in line with the principles and preconditions for territorial development planning, the results and forecasts of the analysis of the development of the territory and sectors of national economy, outlines comprehensive and sustainable development goals of the territory and the strategy for their achievement."</p> <p>1. Appendix Guidance for the interpretation of requirements in the case of plantation forests</p> <p>"Indicator i 1.2.2 of Chapter 8 defines that ecologically important non-forest areas shall not be afforested, except in certain cases (...). The condition that "ecologically important nonforest areas shall not be afforested" means that it is not allowed to certify ecologically important non-forest areas that have been afforested after 31 December 2010 without observing the listed exceptional cases</p> <p>In Latvia, it is not allowed to register a plantation forests in ecologically important non-forest areas."</p> <p>Explanation provided by PEFC Latvia</p> <p>"The clauses 8.1.4a & 8.1.5a are harmonized with the terminology used in standard and national legislation/legal conversion procedures. (...) Territorial development plans are regional land use planning documents, developed by the municipalities/local governments."</p>
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>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>"i 1.2.2 a) (...) provided that consultations with directly affected stakeholders have taken place in transparent and participatory manner"</p>
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	YES	<p>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>"i 1.2.2 b) does not have negative impact on ecologically important non-forest areas, culturally and socially significant areas</p>

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p>3.14 Ecologically important forest and non-forest areas. National parks, strict nature reserves, nature reserves, nature parks, protected landscape areas, nature monuments, microreserves, as well as forests in protective belts along watercourses and swamps.”</p> <p>Explanation provided by PEFC Latvia</p> <p>“In Latvia protected areas and areas with different restrictions on economic activities apply to 28,2% from total forest areas and is constantly increasing. In total 658 areas of especially protected areas have been established that are significant at regional and national levels. Many of these areas are included in NATURA 2000 network of protected territories (source: skaitlifakti_LV_2022 (zm.gov.lv) as well as many areas are located outside of Natura 2000 network. Additionally, to especially protected areas in Latvia key species, habitats are protected through micro-reserves. According to the Nature Agency, 48410 ha micro reserves and 72000 ha buffer zones established (source: https://www.daba.gov.lv/lv/aizsargajamo-teritoriju-platiba). According to the law, establishment of a micro-reserve may be submitted to the responsible institution by any person (https://likumi.lv/ta/en/en/id/253746-regulations-regarding-the-establishment-and-management-of-micro-reserves-their-conservation-as-well-as-determination-of-micro-reserves-and-their-buffer-zones). The micro-reserve establishment can be initiated in all kind of properties (including private, state, municipalities). The responsible institution after receiving a proposal for establishment of a micro-reserve, request an opinion from the certified expert in the relevant group of biotopes or species. The expert shall perform an on-site check and submit conclusion to the responsible institution. The responsible institutions, based on expert conclusion, decides whether establishment of micro-reserve required. In Latvia the total area of micro-reserves is constantly increasing as new values are identified. In year 2020 in whole Latvia (covering all ownership types), Nature Census/habitat mapping was completed. The goal of the project was to collect detailed information about the distribution and condition of habitats and species and other natural resources. Based on this information, presently Nature Conservation Agency is revising Natura 2000 area network and planning extension of the protected areas.”</p>
d) entails a small proportion of the ecologically important non-forest ecosystem managed by an organisation; and	YES	<p>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>“i 1.2.2 c) entails a small proportion of the ecologically important non-forest area of certified area managed by the forest manager;</p>

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		3.14 Ecologically important forest and non-forest areas. National parks, strict nature reserves, nature reserves, nature parks, protected landscape areas, nature monuments, microreserves, as well as forests in protective belts along watercourses and swamps" <i>Observation: since the term "small" is not defined, it will be difficult for auditors to assess compliance.</i>
e) does not destroy areas of significantly high carbon stock; and	YES	PEFC FMS:2022 "i 1.2.2 d) does not destroy areas of significantly high carbon stock" <i>Observation: PEFC FMS:2022 does not further define the wording "areas of significantly high carbon stock", it therefore remains up to the interpretation of auditors how to assess this component.</i>
f) makes a contribution to long-term conservation, economic, and social benefits.	YES	PEFC FMS:2022 "i 1.2.2 e) makes a contribution to the long-term conservation, economic and social benefits"
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	N.A.	Explanation provided by PEFC Latvia "According to the national legislation, it is not allowed to convert the forest into the forest plantation. According to the law forest or degraded forest are not allowed to convert to the forest plantation. The Section 41 of the Law on Forests describes when conversion is allowed, namely for construction, extraction of mineral resources, development of land to be used in agriculture, restoration of specially protected biotopes, ensuring of protection and inviolability of the land territory of the State, or prevention of a threat to national security on military sites and their protection zones. The conversion of forest or degraded forest to forest plantations is not mentioned in the section 41, which means that conversion is forbidden. Cabinet Regulation No. 308 on Forest Regeneration, Afforestation and Plantations section 32 sets requirements for conversion of non-forest land to forest. According to the law, land converted from non-forest to forest land can be registered in the State database in two ways: forest (all legislation applicable to the forest applies) or forest plantation (different requirements, e.g. felling age, forest regeneration requirements etc.)" Law on Forests "Section 41. (1) An area shall be deforested if it is necessary for construction, extraction of mineral resources, development of land to be used in agriculture, restoration of specially protected biotopes, ensuring of protection and inviolability of the land territory of the State, or prevention of a threat to

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p>national security on military sites and their protection zones, and if an administrative act has been issued by the competent authority to a person which gives such person the right to carry out the relevant activities, and the person has compensated the State for the expenses related to the elimination of the negative consequences caused by deforestation.”</p> <p>Cabinet Regulation No. 308 on Forest Regeneration, Afforestation and Plantations (translated by using Google Translate)</p> <p>“32. Plantation forests can be registered as forests that are no more than 20 years old, which have grown naturally or have been planted by sowing or planting on land that is not registered as a forest in the Real Estate State Cadastre Information System and which meet the criteria and conditions mentioned in clauses 26, 27 and 28 of these regulations.”</p>
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	N.A.	<i>The conversion of (degraded) forests into forest plantation is not allowed. See explanation under a).</i>
c) has a positive impact on long-term carbon sequestration capacity of forest vegetation; and	N.A.	<i>The conversion of (degraded) forests into forest plantation is not allowed. See explanation under a).</i>
d) does not have negative impacts on ecologically important forest areas, culturally and socially significant areas, or other protected areas; and	N.A.	<i>The conversion of (degraded) forests into forest plantation is not allowed. See explanation under a).</i>
e) safeguards protective functions of forests for society and other regulating or supporting ecosystem services; and	N.A.	<i>The conversion of (degraded) forests into forest plantation is not allowed. See explanation under a).</i>
f) safeguards socio-economic functions of forests, including the recreational function and aesthetic values of forests and other cultural services; and	N.A.	<i>The conversion of (degraded) forests into forest plantation is not allowed. See explanation under a).</i>
g) has a land history providing evidence that the degradation is not the consequence of deliberate poor forest management practices; and	N.A.	<i>The conversion of (degraded) forests into forest plantation is not allowed. See explanation under a).</i>

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
h) is based on credible evidence demonstrating that the area is neither recovered nor in the process of recovery.	N.A.	<i>The conversion of (degraded) forests into forest plantation is not allowed. See explanation under a).</i>
8.2 Criterion 2: Maintenance of forest ecosystem health and vitality		
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	PEFC FMS:2022 <i>"i 2.1.1 Forest manager shall take into account the results of research and/or monitoring carried out in the country on the health and vitality of the forest.</i> <i>i 2.1.2 Forest manager shall take the necessary measures to limit and/or prevent the risks of forest damage in the managed area.</i> <i>i 2.1.3 Forest manager shall carry out sanitary felling to improve the sanitary condition of forest stands, if necessary and unless it does not conflict with the laws and regulations.</i> <i>i 2.1.4 Forest manager shall identify degraded forest ecosystems and plan activities for their restoration if it is economically justified</i> <i>i 2.6.2 Forest manager shall plan and carry out preventive biological measures to maintain the health and vitality of forest stands, as long as it is economically justified.</i> <i>i 4.10.1 When performing forest management works, forest manager shall preserve structural elements typical of a natural forest, including dead wood, retention trees, trees with large bird nests, hollow trees, vegetation around wet patches, animal burrows, etc., to maintain the site-specific biodiversity in the long term, and shall maintain and enhance the health and vitality of forest ecosystems, considering technological possibilities of forest management works and health and safety requirements.</i> <i>i 4.10.2 While preserving the structural elements characterising of a natural forest, forest manager also evaluates their impact on the health, vitality and stability of the forest stand."</i>
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	PEFC FMS:2022 <i>"i 2.2.1 Forest manager shall conserve the forest stands of genetic resources registered in the State Forest Register and shall ensure their regeneration with the genetic material of the same stand, if the site or other conditions allow it</i> <i>i 2.2.2 Forest manager, when regenerating the forest stand and selecting tree species, shall consider a possibility of diversifying the distribution of tree species in the managed area according to the growing conditions.</i>

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p>i.3.1.2 Forest manager shall maintain and/or facilitate the structural diversity of the forest ecosystem (e.g. stands of different tree species and ages at the landscape level) as far as possible in order to ensure the diversity of non-wood products in the managed area.</p> <p>i.4.10.1. When performing forest management works, forest manager shall preserve structural elements typical of a natural forest, including dead wood, retention trees, trees with large bird nests, hollow trees, vegetation around wet patches, animal burrows, etc., to maintain the site-specific biodiversity in the long term, also shall maintain and enhance the health and vitality of forest ecosystems, considering technological possibilities of forest management works and health and safety requirements.</p> <p>i 4.10.2 While preserving the structural elements characterising of a natural forest, forest manager also evaluates their impact on the health, vitality and stability of the forest stand.”</p> <p>1. Appendix Guidance for the interpretation of requirements in the case of plantation forests</p> <p>“i 2.2.2(p) Forest manager shall establish/regenerate plantation forests in accordance with the laws and regulations.”</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>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>“i 2.3.1 Forest manager may use controlled burning as a forest management technique for the management and restoration of species’ habitats and biotopes and for the enhancement of biological diversity or in other justified cases, if it does not contradict the binding laws and regulations. In these cases adequate management and control measures shall be taken.</p> <p>i 2.3.2 Forest manager shall keep the records of the areas referred to in indicator i 2.3.1.”</p> <p>Explanation provided by PEFC Latvia</p> <p>“In Latvia it is forbidden to use controlled burning as a management practise, with the exception for the habitat management. Special permission required to obtain prior controlled burning (https://likumi.lv/ta/id/257685-noteikumi-par-ipasi-aizsargajamo-biotopu-un-ipasi-aizsargajamo-sugu-dzivotnu-atjaunosanu-meza), also certified expert conclusion required.”</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>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>“i 2.1.2 Forest manager shall take the necessary measures to limit and/or prevent the risks of forest damage in the managed area</p> <p>i 2.4.1 In reforestation and afforestation, forest manager shall use tree species suitable for growing conditions and forest reproductive material suitable for the site</p>

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p>i 2.4.2 Forest manager shall have documents certifying the origin of forest reproductive material for forest stands that have been regenerated by planting or sowing</p> <p>i 2.4.3 Forest manager shall use such harvesting techniques and methods that mitigate the impact on the soil and remaining trees.”</p>
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.	NO	<p>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>“i 2.5.1 Non-organic waste generated as a result of management operations and waste dumped in the forest must be regularly collected and taken to appropriate waste collection points</p> <p>i 2.5.2 Forest manager shall take actions to prevent the leakage of oil, fuel and other chemical substances, but in case of leakage, these substances shall be collected according to the documented procedures</p> <p>i 2.5.3 Materials absorbing oil products shall be available and used accordingly in the machinery engaged in forest management works and in the places of maintenance of equipment and filling of fuel</p> <p>i 2.5.4 When carrying out forest management works, technical liquids, oil products, chemical substances and water shall be stored in suitable, appropriately marked containers or packages.</p> <p>1. Appendix Guidance for the interpretation of requirements in the case of plantation forests</p> <p>“i 2.5.3(p) Materials absorbing oil products shall be available and used accordingly in the machinery engaged in plantation forest management works and in the places of maintenance of forest management instruments and filling of fuel</p> <p>i 2.5.4(p) When carrying out management works in plantation forests, technical liquids, oil products, chemical substances and water shall be stored in suitable, appropriately marked containers or packages.”</p> <p>Waste Management Law</p> <p>“Section 4. (1) Waste management shall be performed in such a way as not to threaten human life and health.</p> <p>(2) Waste management shall not negatively affect the environment, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) cause threats to the water, air, soil, and also plants and animals; 2) cause a nuisance through noise or odours; 3) negatively affect the countryside and specially protected nature territories; 4) pollute or litter the environment.

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p>(3) Waste shall be regarded as secondary raw materials if such waste conforms to the end-of-waste criteria set out in the legal acts of the European Union or the end-of-waste criteria stipulated by the Cabinet and if materials which will be used for the production of an end product have been obtained therefrom. If recycling of waste results in a material which may not be considered a secondary raw material, it shall be considered waste.</p> <p>(4) If secondary raw materials are transported to a landfill site for disposal or if such raw materials are not sold and are stored longer than one year after their production, they shall be regarded as waste and shall be managed in accordance with the requirements laid down in this Law. The Cabinet shall determine the procedures by which the waste manager records secondary raw materials.”</p> <p>Explanation provided by PEFC Latvia</p> <p>“In Latvia common problem is that waste is illegally dumped in the forest by general public. Therefore in the standard we stressed that forest managers would have to assure that all illegally dumped waste is collected (irrespective who did the littering). If we would include the requirement in the standard, that the indiscriminate disposal of waste on forest land shall be strictly avoided, then forest managers from one audit to another would receive non-compliances for dumping made by general society. In this situation prevention of dumping is outside of power of forest manager to control. According to the forest law, people have free access to the forest for recreation and collection of non-timber products. Besides, the clause 6.3.3 requires, that: “Forest manager shall identify the risks of illegal activities (e.g. illegal logging, land use, illegally initiated fires, etc.) and, if necessary, take measures to protect the forest management unit against illegal activities to the extent possible”, therefore certificate holders are required to implement preventive measures to protect forest from illegal activities, including illegal waste disposal.”</p> <p><i>While clause i 2.5.1 requires that waste dumped in the forest must be collected and taken to appropriate waste collection points, no reference was found that the indiscriminate disposal of waste (by company operations itself) on forest land (by company operations) shall be strictly avoided.</i></p>
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.	YES	<p>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>“i 2.6.1 Forest manager shall give priority to integrated pest management, minimizing as much as possible the use of chemical method of plant protection (pesticides), facilitating the use of environmentally friendly pest control agents and applying suitable alternative forest management methods</p>

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		i 2.6.2 Forest manager shall plan and carry out preventive biological measures to maintain the health and vitality of forest stands, as long as it is economically justified."
8.2.7 The standard requires that any use of pesticides is documented.	YES	PEFC FMS:2022 "i 2.6.3 Forest manager shall keep records of the use of plant protection agents and/or fertilizers 3.8 Plant protection agent. A product containing or consisting of active ingredients, protective substances or synergists for any of the following uses: a) for protection of plants or plant products against harmful organisms or for prevention of the effects of such organisms, unless the main purpose of the product is protection of plants or plant products and not sanitation and hygiene; b) for influencing the life processes of plants, e.g. with substances promoting growth which are not nutrients; c) for the conservation of plant products (except conservants); d) for the destruction of unwanted plants or plant parts (except algae), provided that the product is not applied on soil or water to protect plants; e) for stopping or preventing the growth of unwanted plants (except algae), provided that the product is not applied on soil or water to protect plants."
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	PEFC FMS:2022 "i 2.7.1 Forest manager does not use chemical plant protection agents classified by the World Health Organisation (WHO) as Class 1A and 1B pesticides and other highly toxic pesticides, except in cases where their use is justified by a declared state of emergency and the permission of the State Plant Protection Service is received."
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	PEFC FMS:2022 "i 2.8.1 Forest manager does not use chemical plant protection agents such as chlorinated hydrocarbons whose derivatives remain biologically active and accumulate in the food chain beyond their intended use, and any chemical plant protection agents banned by international agreements."

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
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	PEFC FMS:2022 “i 2.9.1 Any kind of chemical plant protection agents shall be used according to the manufacturer’s instructions i 2.9.2 Workers who work with chemical plant protection agents shall be properly trained i 2.9.3 Forest manager shall control that workers handling chemical plant protection agents use appropriate personal protective equipment.”
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	PEFC FMS:2022 “i 2.10.1 Forest manager shall use fertilizers according to the environmental protection requirements and manufacturer's instructions, if there are any. Fertilisers are only used where they are necessary to secure establishment or to correct subsequent nutrient deficiencies but use of fertilizers does not replace appropriate soil nutrient management. i 2.10.2 Workers who work with fertilizers shall be properly trained i 2.10.3 Forest manager shall justify the necessity of using fertilizers i 5.1.1 Forest manager shall demonstrate a commitment to maintain or enhance the forest’s ability to protect water and soil, e.g. by taking into consideration buffer zones along water bodies, planning the harvesting in appropriate time, choosing suitable technologies for forest management activities i 5.2.2 According to the scale and intensity of the operations, forest manager shall plan forest management in areas important for the protection of water and soil in such a way as to ensure the conservation or enhancement of protecting functions.” 1. Appendix Guidance for the interpretation of requirements in the case of plantation forests “i 5.1.1 (p) Forest manager shall demonstrate a commitment to maintain or increase the capacity of a plantation forest to protect water and soil.”
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	PEFC FMS:2022 “i 3.1.1 Forest management goals that ensure the availability of wood and non-wood products in the long term shall be set i 3.1.2 Forest manager shall maintain and/or facilitate the structural diversity of the forest ecosystem (...) to ensure the diversity of non-wood products in the managed area i 3.1.3 Forest manager shall evaluate the possibilities of maintaining, renovating the existing forest drainage systems and, if necessary, building new ones in order to improve the ability of forest stands to



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p>produce various wood and non-wood products and services. In case of new drainage system establishment forest manager shall evaluate if that will not threaten capacity of the stands to supply long-term sustainable services.”</p> <p>Explanation provided by PEFC Latvia</p> <p>“In total, 1.7 billion t. of peat can be found in Latvia’s peat deposits. Marshlands cover 10 % from Latvia territory. In whole Latvia 1,6 milj. t. of peat accumulates annually. In Latvia only 50 % from the forests are on normal moisture regime soil (...) All other forests are already drained or on wet soil. The existing drainage systems were established mostly in 60s, 70s and now are only maintained. New drainage systems are established rarely and mostly in cases when it is necessary to support or improve the functionality of existing drainage systems. Prior any drainage system renovation or establishment environmental impact assessment from certified environmental expert is needed. Environmental impact assessment includes impact mitigation measures.”</p> <p>1. Appendix Guidance for the interpretation of requirements in the case of plantation forests</p> <p>“i 3.1.2 Not applicable.”</p>
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	<p>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>“i 3.2.1 The operations of forest manager shall be aimed at achieving stable economic performance, including consideration of possibilities of creating new forest products and services</p> <p>i 3.2.2 Forest manager shall consider different uses of the managed forest area in order to provide a wider range of products and services.”</p>
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	<p>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>“i 3.3.1 Forest management, including harvesting and forest regeneration shall be carried out according to the conditions and with suitable technologies and machinery in order not to reduce the productivity of the specific site in the long term</p> <p>i 3.3.2 When carrying out harvesting with machinery, shall use only the planned skid tracks or technological corridors as far as possible</p> <p>i 3.3.3 Forest manager shall take measures to mitigate the formation of ruts during the performance of works</p> <p>i 3.3.4 Forest manager shall identify and even out ruts after the completion of harvesting works in places where it is necessary.”</p> <p>1. Appendix Guidance for the interpretation of requirements in the case of plantation forests</p>

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		"i 3.3.1(p) The management, including establishment/regeneration, thinning and harvesting of plantation forests shall be carried out according to the conditions and with suitable technologies and machinery in order not to reduce the productive capacity of the specific site in the long term."
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>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>"i 3.4.1 Forest manager shall determine the annual volume of wood products as well as non-wood forest products harvested for own-commercial purposes, and those volumes shall not exceed a rate that can be sustained in the long term .</p> <p>i 3.4.2 Harvesting levels in a certain period, ranging from 5 to 10 years, do not exceed the sustainable harvesting volume determined in indicator i 3.4.1, except in cases where harvesting levels are increased due to windfalls, fires and other damage to forest stands</p> <p>i 3.4.3 Forest manager shall consider the collection of felling residues (...) in places where it is justified</p> <p>i 3.4.4 Forest manager shall ensure that the timber products are removed from the forest in time to retain their quality and minimise the risks for the spread of wood damaging pests as far as possible</p> <p>i 3.4.5 Forest manager shall ensure that timber measuring is carried out in accordance with the timber measurement standard established in the country."</p> <p>1. Appendix Guidance for the interpretation of requirements in the case of plantation forests</p> <p>"i 3.4.1(p) Forest manager shall ensure that harvesting levels do not exceed a rate that can be sustained in the long-term.</p> <p>I 3.4.2(p) Forest manager shall have information about the volume of wood products as well as non-wood forest products harvested annually for own-commercial purposes."</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>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>"i 3.5.1 Forest manager shall plan the development and/or maintenance of the forest infrastructure appropriate to the scale and intensity of the operations</p> <p>i 3.5.2 Forest manager shall assess the environmental impacts of forest infrastructure development and maintenance works (if such are planned/performed) and plan site-appropriate actions in order to mitigate the potential negative impact on the environment."</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.	YES	<p>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>"i 4.1.1 Forest manager shall set a measurable goal that ensures conservation, enhancement or increase of biological diversity</p>

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p>i 4.1.2 Forest manager, appropriate to the scale and intensity of the operations, shall plan measures to conserve biological diversity at the landscape, ecosystem, species and genetic level.”</p> <p>1. Appendix Guidance for the interpretation of requirements in the case of plantation forests</p> <p>“i 4.1.1(p) When establishing plantation forests, the forest manager shall conserve separate clumps of naturally grown trees and shrubs, insofar as this does not contradict the purpose of establishing plantation forests</p> <p>i 4.1.2(p) When the forest manager establishes a plantation forest of one species in a continuous forest area larger than 50 ha, at least 5% of the plantation forest area shall be left for natural regeneration, if it does not include forest land inclusions and clumps of shrubs.”</p> <p><i>i 4.1.1(p) does allow to remove clumps of naturally grown trees and shrubs when it does contradict the purpose of establishing plantation forests, which is not a desired outcome. However, this is sufficiently covered by the conversion requirements.</i></p>
<p>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.</p> <p>Note: This does not prohibit forest management activities that do not damage the important ecologic values of those biotopes.</p>	YES	<p>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>“3.14 Ecologically important forest and non-forest areas. National parks, strict nature reserves, nature reserves, nature parks, protected landscape areas, nature monuments, microreserves, as well as forests in protective belts along watercourses and swamps</p> <p>i 3.5.2 Forest manager shall assess the environmental impacts of forest infrastructure development and maintenance works (if such are planned/performed) and plan site-appropriate actions in order to mitigate the potential negative impact on the environment.</p> <p>i 4.2.1 Forest manager shall have information about the ecologically important forest and non-forest areas identified in the managed area</p> <p>i 4.2.2 When planning forest management, forest manager shall ensure the conservation of ecologically important forest and non-forest areas</p> <p>i 4.2.3 If in the certified area ecologically important forest and non-forest areas are not identified, then forest manager shall plan measures to promote in the long term development of such areas that could be deemed to be ecologically important (e.g. by retaining a forest stand which has significantly exceeded the final felling age).”</p> <p>1. Appendix Guidance for the interpretation of requirements in the case of plantation forests</p> <p>“i 4.2.1(p) The establishment of plantation forests shall be carried out in accordance with the laws and regulations, ensuring the conservation of ecologically important forest and non-forest areas</p>

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p>i 4.2.3 Not applicable.”</p> <p>Explanation provided by PEFC Latvia</p> <p>“In Latvia protected areas and areas with different restrictions on economic activities apply to 28,2% from total forest areas and is constantly increasing. In total 658 areas of especially protected areas have been established that are significant at regional and national levels. Many of these areas are included in NATURA 2000 network of protected territories (source: skaitlifakti_LV_2022 (zm.gov.lv) as well as many areas are located outside of Natura 2000 network. Additionally, to especially protected areas in Latvia key species, habitats are protected through micro-reserves. According to the Nature Agency, 48410 ha micro reserves and 72000 ha buffer zones established (source: https://www.daba.gov.lv/lv/aizsargajamo-teritoriju-platiba). According to the law, establishment of a micro-reserve may be submitted to the responsible institution by any person (https://likumi.lv/ta/en/en/id/253746-regulations-regarding-the-establishment-and-management-of-micro-reserves-their-conservation-as-well-as-determination-of-micro-reserves-and-their-buffer-zones). The micro-reserve establishment can be initiated in all kind of properties (including private, state, municipalities). The responsible institution after receiving a proposal for establishment of a micro-reserve, request an opinion from the certified expert in the relevant group of biotopes or species. The expert shall perform an on-site check and submit conclusion to the responsible institution. The responsible institutions, based on expert conclusion, decides whether establishment of micro-reserve required. In Latvia the total area of micro-reserves is constantly increasing as new values are identified. In year 2020 in whole Latvia (covering all ownership types), Nature Census/habitat mapping was completed. The goal of the project was to collect detailed information about the distribution and condition of habitats and species and other natural resources. Based on this information, presently Nature Conservation Agency is revising Natura 2000 area network and planning extension of the protected areas.”</p>
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.	YES	<p>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>“i 4.3.1 Commercial use of protected, threatened and endangered plant and animal species is prohibited, except when obtaining permission, in accordance with the CITES convention and requirements of the laws and regulations.</p> <p>i 4.3.2 Forest manager shall demonstrate compliance with CITES requirements, as well as have certificates for obtaining and trade of CITES species, if applicable.”</p>

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
Note: The requirement does not preclude trade according to CITES requirements.		
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	<p>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>“i 4.4.1 The final felling shall be carried out in areas of adequate size in order to ensure successful forest regeneration</p> <p>i 4.4.2 Natural forest regeneration can be used and facilitated in such forest types and sites where it ensures timely and qualitative forest regeneration</p> <p>i 4.4.3 Forest manager shall carry out measures for the successful regeneration of the forest stand, for example, soil preparation, facilitation of natural regeneration, planting, agrotechnical tending, protection against damage.”</p> <p>1. Appendix Guidance for the interpretation of requirements in the case of plantation forests</p> <p>“i 4.4.1(p) Management of plantation forests (including harvesting, regeneration) shall be carried out in accordance with the laws and regulations and the requirements of the Standard</p> <p>i 4.4.2 Not applicable</p> <p>i 4.4.3 Not applicable.”</p> <p>Regulations for reforestation, afforestation and plantation forest (https://likumi.lv/ta/id/247349-meza-atjaunosanas-meza-ieaudzesanas-un-plantaciju-meza-noteikumi, translated by google translate)</p> <p>“27. A planted forest is registered as a plantation forest if it meets the following criteria:</p> <p>27.1. the planted tree species or species correspond to the purpose of plantation forest cultivation;</p> <p>27.2. the minimum height of trees in the planted forest stands is 0.10 meters for conifers, 0.20 meters for deciduous trees;</p> <p>27.3. the minimum required total number of trees, depending on the dominant tree species, is:</p> <p>27.3.1. for pine – 1000 trees per hectare;</p> <p>27.3.2. for oak, aspen, larch, elm, maple, beech and hornbeam - 500 trees per hectare;</p> <p>27.3.3. for other tree species – 800 trees per hectare.”</p> <p>Explanation provided by PEFC Latvia</p> <p>“PEFC Latvia: Requirements for regeneration of forest plantations are described in the laws and regulations (https://likumi.lv/ta/id/247349-meza-atjaunosanas-meza-ieaudzesanas-un-plantaciju-meza-noteikumi; paragraph 27), that aims to ensure adequate quantity and quality of the forest resources.”</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
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. 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.	YES	PEFC FMS:2022 “i 4.5.1 Forest manager for forest regeneration or afforestation by sowing or planting shall use tree species suitable for the growing conditions, giving preference to native tree species i 4.5.2 Only those introduced tree species, provenances or varieties shall be used in forest regeneration and afforestation 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. i 4.5.3 Forest manager shall keep records of the areas of forest stands regenerated/afforested with introduced tree species.” 1. Appendix Guidance for the interpretation of requirements in the case of plantation forests “i4.5.1(p) When regenerating or establishing plantation forests, forest manager shall use tree species suitable for the growing conditions, giving preference to native tree species i 4.5.2(p) In cases where introduced tree species are used in regeneration and establishment of a plantation forests, their impact on the ecosystem, the genetic integrity of native tree species and provenances shall be scientifically evaluated and the negative impact shall be avoided or minimised i 4.5.3(p) Forest manager shall keep records of the areas of plantation forests regenerated/reforested with introduced tree 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	PEFC FMS:2022 “i 4.5.1 Forest manager for forest regeneration or afforestation by sowing or planting shall use tree species suitable for the growing conditions, giving preference to native tree species i 4.5.2 Only those introduced tree species, provenances or varieties shall be used in forest regeneration and afforestation 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.” Explanation provided by PEFC Latvia “In Latvia, the national legislation is designed to ensure the ecological connectivity (maximum area of clear cuts, age of cutting, rotation cycle, distance between clear-fells, preservation of natural forest structures, reforestation and other requirements. The average clear-cut area in Latvia is less than 2 ha. Thus, the scale and intensity of tree felling does not threaten connectivity and the reduction of forest ecosystem areas. In accordance with the legislation, maximum felling area defined:

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p>- up to 2 ha of regeneration or clear-cutting is allowed on wet soils, - up to 5 ha on dry soils</p> <p>The only exception to this is that a 10 ha cut is allowed if, in dry soils, a minimum of 20 pine seed trees per ha (seed-producing, viable trees with straight trunks and well-developed crowns) are left.</p> <p>In addition, the impact of harvesting is mitigated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - all harvested areas must be regenerated in a timely manner; - the biodiversity structural elements, e.g. ecological trees or tree groups, deadwood, are preserved in clearings, - adjacency (no new felling should take place until adjacent felling has reached a certain age), - site distribution and the minimum distance between harvesting sites. <p>in Latvia there are defined felling age (for example, Scots pine 101 year, Norway spruce 81 year) and specific target diameters which ensure that the harvesting cycle is longer than in other parts of the world and in neighbouring countries.</p>
<p>8.4.7 The standard requires that genetically-modified trees shall not be used.</p> <p>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.</p>	YES	<p>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>"i 4.5.4 Forest manager shall not use genetically modified forest reproductive material."</p>
<p>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.</p>	YES	<p>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>"i 4.6.1 According to the forest type and site conditions, forest manager shall promote formation of forest stands of different ages and different tree species at the landscape level</p> <p>i 4.6.2 When performing forest regeneration and pre-commercial thinning, forest manager shall promote an admixture that is appropriate to the forest type, site conditions and the species to be regenerated, as long as it does not interfere with the target species</p>

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p>i 4.6.3 When carrying out commercial thinning, forest manager in suitable places shall retain other tree species that are appropriate for the forest type and site conditions, as long as it does not interfere with the target species.”</p> <p>1. Appendix Guidance for the interpretation of requirements in the case of plantation forests</p> <p>“i 4.1.1(p) When establishing plantation forests, the forest manager shall conserve separate clumps of naturally grown trees and shrubs, insofar as this does not contradict the purpose of establishing plantation forests</p> <p>i 4.1.2(p) When the forest manager establishes a plantation forest of one species in a continuous forest area larger than 50 ha, at least 5% of the plantation forest area shall be left for natural regeneration, if it does not include forest land inclusions and clumps of shrubs.</p> <p>i 4.6.1(p) Management of plantation forests (including harvesting, regeneration) shall be carried out in accordance with the laws and regulations and the requirements of the Standard</p> <p>i 4.6.2 Not applicable</p> <p>i 4.6.3 Not applicable.”</p>
8.4.9 The standard requires that traditional management practices that create valuable ecosystems on appropriate sites shall be supported, where appropriate.	YES	<p>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>“6.1.3 Forest manager, where possible, shall support traditional forest management methods that create valuable ecosystems.”</p> <p>1. Appendix Guidance for the interpretation of requirements in the case of plantation forests</p> <p>“6.1.3 (p) Forest manager shall use management methods that are suitable to the local conditions.”</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>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>“i 2.1.2 Forest manager shall take the necessary measures to limit and/or prevent the risks of forest damage in the managed area.</p> <p>i 4.7.1 Watercourses (e.g. ditches, streams) shall be preserved during harvesting, however, if the water flow in the watercourse is disrupted after logging, necessary actions shall be performed in order to restore watercourses as close as possible to their natural state</p> <p>i 4.7.2. During the harvesting, forest manager shall retain wet patches with their typical vegetation and significantly increased level of humidity</p> <p>i 4.7.3. During the harvesting, forest manager shall maintain viable trees and shrubs in the undergrowth and understorey, considering technological possibilities of forest management works and health and safety requirements.</p>

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p>6.2.6 The forest management plan includes measures for the mitigation of the risk of degradation and damage of forest ecosystems.”</p> <p>1. Appendix Guidance for the interpretation of requirements in the case of plantation forests</p> <p>i 4.7.2(p) When felling trees in plantation forests, the existing individual naturally grown trees, clumps of shrubs and growth around wet patches with their typical vegetation and significantly increased level of humidity shall be preserved</p> <p>i 4.7.3 Not applicable.”</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>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>“i 3.5.2 Forest manager shall assess the environmental impacts of forest infrastructure development and maintenance works (if such are planned/performed) and plan site-appropriate actions in order to mitigate the potential negative impact on the environment.</p> <p>i 4.8.1 When planning and constructing forest infrastructure objects, forest manager shall evaluate their impact on specially protected, endangered species and habitats and ecologically important forest and non-forest areas and plan operations to mitigate the potential negative impact on them.</p> <p>3.14 Ecologically important forest and non-forest areas. National parks, strict nature reserves, nature reserves, nature parks, protected landscape areas, nature monuments, microreserves, as well as forests in protective belts along watercourses and swamps.”</p> <p>Explanation provided by PEFC Latvia</p> <p>“During Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) damage to rare, sensitive ecosystems (specially protected species and habitats) and genetic reserves is assessed. Part of EIA process is to prepare recommendations how to mitigate/avoid identified potential negative impacts.</p> <p>In Latvia protected areas and areas with different restrictions on economic activities apply to 28,2% from total forest areas and is constantly increasing. In total 658 areas of especially protected areas have been established that are significant at regional and national levels. Many of these areas are included in NATURA 2000 network of protected territories (source: skaitlifakti_LV_2022 (zm.gov.lv) as well as many areas are located outside of Natura 2000 network. Additionally, to especially protected areas in Latvia key species, habitats are protected through micro-reserves. According to the Nature Agency, 48410 ha micro reserves and 72000 ha buffer zones established (source: https://www.daba.gov.lv/lv/aizsargajamo-teritoriju-platiba). According to the law, establishment of a micro-reserve may be submitted to the responsible institution by any person</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		(https://likumi.lv/ta/en/en/id/253746-regulations-regarding-the-establishment-and-management-of-micro-reserves-their-conservation-as-well-as-determination-of-micro-reserves-and-their-buffer-zones). The micro-reserve establishment can be initiated in all kind of properties (including private, state, municipalities). The responsible institution after receiving a proposal for establishment of a micro-reserve, request an opinion from the certified expert in the relevant group of biotopes or species. The expert shall perform an on-site check and submit conclusion to the responsible institution. The responsible institutions, based on expert conclusion, decides whether establishment of micro-reserve required. In Latvia the total area of micro-reserves is constantly increasing as new values are identified. In year 2020 in whole Latvia (covering all ownership types), Nature Census/habitat mapping was completed. The goal of the project was to collect detailed information about the distribution and condition of habitats and species and other natural resources. Based on this information, presently Nature Conservation Agency is revising Natura 2000 area network and planning extension of the protected areas.”
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.	YES	PEFC FMS:2022 “i 4.9.1 Forest manager shall consider a possibility of protecting forest stands against animal grazing, e.g. the use of repellents, sheep wool, fencing, spiral tree guards, plastic clips, top protection mesh, etc i 4.9.2 Forest manager shall consider a possibility to decrease the animal population by hunting or transferring hunting rights to other party in order to reduce damage to forest stands.”
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.	YES	PEFC FMS:2022 “i 4.10.1 When performing forest management works, forest manager shall preserve structural elements typical of a natural forest, including dead wood, retention trees, trees with large bird nests, hollow trees, vegetation around wet patches, animal burrows, etc., to maintain the site-specific biodiversity in the long term, and shall maintain and enhance the health and vitality of forest ecosystems, considering technological possibilities of forest management works and health and safety requirements i 4.10.2 While preserving the structural elements characterising of a natural forest, forest manager also evaluates their impact on the health, vitality and stability of the forest stand.” 1. Appendix Guidance for the interpretation of requirements in the case of plantation forests “i 4.10.1(p) When managing plantation forests, existing individual naturally grown trees, clumps of shrubs and vegetation around wet patches shall be preserved

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		i 4.10.2 Not applicable."
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	<p>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>"i 5.1.1 Forest manager shall demonstrate a commitment to maintain or enhance the forest's ability to protect water and soil, e.g. by taking into consideration buffer zones along water bodies, planning the harvesting in appropriate time, choosing suitable technologies for forest management activities</p> <p>i 5.1.2 Forest manager shall demonstrate a commitment to maintain or enhance other regulating and supporting functions of ecosystem services, e.g. by choosing an appropriate type of forest regeneration and a thinning regime, preserving the structural elements characterising of a natural forest."</p> <p>1. Appendix Guidance for the interpretation of requirements in the case of plantation forests</p> <p>"i 5.1.1 (p) Forest manager shall demonstrate a commitment to maintain or increase the capacity of a plantation forest to protect water and soil."</p>
8.5.2 The standard requires that areas that fulfil specific and recognised protective functions for society shall be mapped, and forest management plans and operations shall ensure the maintenance or enhancement of these functions.	YES	<p>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>"i 5.1.1 Forest manager shall demonstrate a commitment to maintain or enhance the forest's ability to protect water and soil, e.g. by taking into consideration buffer zones along water bodies, planning the harvesting in appropriate time, choosing suitable technologies for forest management activities</p> <p>i 5.1.2 Forest manager shall demonstrate a commitment to maintain or enhance other regulating and supporting functions of ecosystem services, e.g. by choosing an appropriate type of forest regeneration and a thinning regime, preserving the structural elements characterising of a natural forest."</p> <p>1. Appendix Guidance for the interpretation of requirements in the case of plantation forests</p> <p>"i 5.1.1 (p) Forest manager shall demonstrate a commitment to maintain or increase the capacity of a plantation forest to protect water and soil."</p>
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	<p>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>"i 5.3.1 When planning and carrying out forest management on soils with poor bearing capacity, forest manager shall choose appropriate technologies, methods and weather conditions in order to reduce damage to the topsoil and flowing of suspended particles of the soil into watercourses and water bodies</p> <p>i 5.3.2 When crossing watercourses during the management works, such technologies and methods shall be chosen as to reduce the flowing of suspended particles of the soil into watercourses and water bodies</p>

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p>i 5.3.3 Forest manager shall assess risks of soil erosion, where it may occur, and plan measures to reduce its impact”</p> <p>1. Appendix Guidance for the interpretation of requirements in the case of plantation forests</p> <p>“i 5.3.2(p) When carrying out management of plantation forests, such technologies and methods shall be chosen as to reduce the flowing of suspended particles of the soil into watercourses and water bodies.”</p> <p>Explanation provided by PEFC Latvia</p> <p>“The pressure of animal populations is not an issue in Latvia, because Latvia is very flat, with no mountains, erosion in the forest is not at problem therefore we did not include it in the national standard.”</p>
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 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.	YES	<p>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>“i 5.4.1 Forest manager shall ensure that in places where water runoff has been affected as a result of management operations, measures are planned to restore the water flow (e.g. temporary crossings are removed)</p> <p>i 5.4.2 Forest manager does not use silvicultural methods that can negatively affect water quality in areas, which provides protective functions of water resources</p> <p>i 5.4.3 When using chemicals, forest manager shall comply with the requirements of the laws and regulations in order not to negatively affect water quality.”</p> <p>1. Appendix Guidance for the interpretation of requirements in the case of plantation forests</p> <p>“i 5.4.1(p) Forest manager shall ensure that where plantation forest management has affected water runoff, measures are planned to restore water flow (e.g. removal of temporary crossings).”</p> <p><i>Observation: due to the wording of indicator 5.4.2 it is unclear whether “which provides protective functions of water resources” refers to “areas” or to the use of certain silvicultural methods.</i></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.	YES	<p>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>“i 5.5.1 When planning, maintaining and/or constructing forest infrastructure, forest manager shall plan measures to reduce soil flow into watercourses</p> <p>i 5.5.2 When maintaining or constructing forest drainage systems and roads, forest manager shall plan measures to reduce flow of soil particles into the water (e.g. by creating sediment ponds)</p> <p>i 5.5.3 Forest manager shall assess the need to construct and/or maintain roadside ditches along the forest roads.</p>

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		i 5.5.4 Forest manager shall construct and reconstruct roads, bridges and other infrastructure objects in a manner that the natural level and functions of watercourses are preserved.”
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>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>“i 1.1.1 Forest manager shall identify the most significant ecosystem services in the certified area and determine management goals for maintaining or enhancing these services, balancing the social, environmental and economic functions of the forest.</p> <p>i 6.1.2 When planning forest management works in the urban territories of cities and/or villages or in their immediate vicinity, the possible impact on the directly affected inhabitants shall be assessed and the necessary measures to mitigate the possible negative impact shall be determined appropriate to the extent of the planned operation</p> <p>i 6.1.3 Education of general public in forest and environment matters is within possibilities carried out.”</p> <p>1. Appendix Guidance for the interpretation of requirements in the case of plantation forests</p> <p>“i 1.1.1(p) Forest manager shall identify the most significant ecosystem services in the certified area and determine the management objectives in the management plan</p> <p>i 4.10.1(p) When managing plantation forests, existing individual naturally grown trees, clumps of shrubs and vegetation around wet patches shall be preserved.”</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.	YES	<p>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>“i 1.1.1 Forest manager shall identify the most significant ecosystem services in the certified area and determine management goals for maintaining or enhancing these services, balancing the social, environmental and economic functions of the forest.</p> <p>i 6.2.1 In forest management, the rights of free access to the forest is respected and there are no restrictions to harvesting of non-wood forest products for personal use, while respecting ownership rights. There are no groundless restrictions on free access to the forest</p> <p>i 6.2.2 If free access to the forest is reasonably restricted, the public is properly notified of it, e.g. by placing informative signs</p> <p>i 6.2.3 When planning and implementing forest management, opportunities shall be considered for creating the managed area attractive for tourism and recreation, increasing the diversity of species and landscapes, creating and maintaining recreational infrastructure, while at the same time avoiding risks to the stability, health and vitality of the forest ecosystem</p>

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p>i 6.2.4 Forest manager shall consider possibilities of designing recreational areas suitable for a large number (more than 30) of people at the same time</p> <p>i 6.2.5 Forest manager shall consider possibilities of creating recreational areas that can provide accessible environment for people with reduced mobility.”</p> <p>1. Appendix Guidance for the interpretation of requirements in the case of plantation forests</p> <p>“i 1.1.1 (p) Forest manager shall identify the most significant ecosystem services in the certified area and determine the management objectives in the management plan</p> <p>i 6.2.3 (p) When planning and carrying out management of plantation forests, a possibility of creating tourism and recreation sites shall be considered, if applicable</p> <p>i 6.2.4 Not applicable</p> <p>i 6.2.5 Not applicable.”</p>
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	<p>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>“3.25 Cultural heritage object. Cultural and historical landscapes and objects (ancient burial sites, cemeteries, parks, places of historical events and the activities of famous persons), as well as individual graves, groups of buildings and individual buildings, works of art, facilities and articles with historical, scientific, artistic or other cultural value and the conservation of which for future generations is in conformity with the interests of the State and Latvian nation, as well as international interests</p> <p>i 6.3.1 Forest manager shall ensure the conservation of cultural heritage objects, if applicable</p> <p>i 6.3.2 In cooperation with local municipalities, places important for local inhabitants are identified and, to the extent possible, these places are improved and maintained</p> <p>i 6.3.3 A documented procedure for the management of cultural heritage objects is in place.”</p>
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	<p>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>“i 6.1.1 When planning and carrying out forest management, a possibility shall be considered to provide local people with employment opportunities and to promote socio-economic development.</p> <p>i 6.1.2 When planning forest management works in the urban territories of cities and/or villages or in their immediate vicinity, the possible impact on the directly affected inhabitants shall be assessed and the necessary measures to mitigate the possible negative impact shall be determined appropriate to the extent of the planned operation.</p> <p>i 6.1.3 Education of general public in forest and environment matters is within possibilities carried out.</p>

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p>i 6.2.1 In forest management, the rights of free access to the forest is respected and there are no restrictions to harvesting of non-wood forest products for personal use, while respecting ownership rights. There are no groundless restrictions on free access to the forest.</p> <p>i 6.2.2 If free access to the forest is reasonably restricted, the public is properly notified of it, e.g. by placing informative signs.</p> <p>i 6.2.3 When planning and implementing forest management, opportunities shall be considered for creating the managed area attractive for tourism and recreation, increasing the diversity of species and landscapes, creating and maintaining recreational infrastructure, while at the same time avoiding risks to the stability, health and vitality of the forest ecosystem.</p> <p>i 6.2.4 Forest manager shall consider possibilities of designing recreational areas suitable for a large number (more than 30) of people at the same time.</p> <p>i 6.2.5 Forest manager shall consider possibilities of creating recreational areas that can provide accessible environment for people with reduced mobility."</p>
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	<p>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>"i 6.4.1 The possibility of applying knowledge, innovations and practical methods related to forest management of forest owners, NGOs and others shall be considered and, to the extent possible, rewards shall be provided for the knowledge used, if applicable."</p> <p>1. Appendix Guidance for the interpretation of requirements in the case of plantation forests</p> <p>"i 6.4.1(p) The possibility of applying knowledge, innovations and practical methods related to the management of plantation forests of forest owners, NGOs and others shall be considered and, to the extent possible, the rewards shall be provided for the knowledge used, if applicable."</p>
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	<p>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>"i 6.1.1 When planning and carrying out forest management, a possibility shall be considered to provide local people with employment opportunities and to promote socio-economic development</p> <p>i 6.1.2 When planning forest management works in the urban territories of cities and/or villages or in their immediate vicinity, the possible impact on the directly affected inhabitants shall be assessed and the necessary measures to mitigate the possible negative impact shall be determined appropriate to the extent of the planned operation</p> <p>i 6.1.3 Education of general public in forest and environment matters is within possibilities carried out."</p> <p>1. Appendix Guidance for the interpretation of requirements in the case of plantation forests</p>

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p>"i 6.1.1 (p) When planning and carrying out management activities, appropriate to the scale and intensity of operations, a possibility to provide local people with employment opportunities and to promote socio-economic development shall be considered</p> <p>i 6.1.2(p) When planning management of plantation forests in the urban territories of cities and/or villages or in their immediate vicinity, the possible impact on the directly affected inhabitants shall be assessed and the necessary measures to mitigate the possible negative impact shall be determined according to the extent of the planned operation</p> <p>i 6.1.3 Not applicable."</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>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>"i 6.5.1 Forest manager allows scientific research to be carried out in the property, if it does not conflict with the planned economic activity and the requirements of the Standard."</p> <p>Explanation provided by PEFC Latvia</p> <p>"The requirement was elaborate to make this requirement relevant to both - smallholders as well as large forest owners. In Latvia are around 135 thousands private owners, around 80% are smallholders (less than 10 ha), therefore it would not be realistic to require all private owners actively contribute to research activities. In practise forest industry has very good cooperation with forest research institutions/organisations, both actively supporting and engaging with researchers."</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>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>"9.1.1 Forest manager shall regularly conduct monitoring of forest resources and evaluation of their management, including assessment of the ecological, social and economic impact, and monitoring results shall be reflected in the planning process."</p> <p>1. Appendix Guidance for the interpretation of requirements in the case of plantation forests</p> <p>"9.1.1(p) Forest manager shall regularly conduct monitoring and evaluation of plantation forests and their management, including assessment of ecological, social and economic impact, and the monitoring results shall be reflected in the planning process."</p> <p>Explanation provided by PEFC Latvia</p>

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p>"The clauses 9.1.1 and 9.1.1(p) was elaborated to consider differences between smallholders and large forest owners. It was agreed in the working group that word "regularly" would help forest owners, based on their scale and intensity, to define appropriate monitoring and evaluation system."</p> <p><i>Observation: the term "regularly" is multi-interpretable and leaves the interpretation to the organisation.</i></p>
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	<p>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>"9.1.2 Forest manager shall carry out regular monitoring of the health and vitality of the forest and/or shall take into account the results of monitoring carried out by other competent authorities, paying particular attention to the key biotic (e.g. pests, diseases, damage caused by game animals etc.) and abiotic factors (e.g. floods, storms, snowbreaks etc.) and damage caused by internal factors (i.e. forest management operations), which potentially may affect the health and vitality of forest ecosystems."</p> <p>1. Appendix Guidance for the interpretation of requirements in the case of plantation forests</p> <p>"9.1.2(p) Forest manager shall carry out regular monitoring of the health and vitality of the plantation forest and/or shall take into account the results of monitoring carried out by other competent authorities, paying particular attention to the key biotic (e.g. pests, diseases, damage caused by game animals etc.) and abiotic factors (e.g. floods, storms, snowbreaks etc.) and damage caused by internal factors (i.e. forest management operations), which potentially may affect the health and vitality of plantation forests."</p> <p><i>Observation: the term "regular" is multi-interpretable and leaves the interpretation to the organisation.</i></p>
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.	YES	<p>PEFC FMS:2022</p> <p>"i 6.2.1 In forest management, the rights of free access to the forest is respected and there are no restrictions to harvesting of non-wood forest products for personal use, while respecting ownership rights.</p> <p>6.2.5. Forest manager has information about the annually planned and actually performed amount of forest management activities regarding:</p> <p>f) sale of non-wood forest products (e.g. berries, mushrooms, herbs);</p> <p>Note 1: The State Forest Service performs the inventory of game hunted in Latvia, therefore this data may not be reflected in the volume of the sold non-wood forest products.</p> <p>Note 2: This requirement does not apply to non-wood forest products obtained for self-consumption in line with the procedure laid down in the laws and regulations of the Republic of Latvia.</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		Note 3: Forest manager who does not collect non-wood forest products for commercial purposes, including the sale of fishing licenses, does not need to keep the records and information collected by other competent authorities. 9.1.3 Forest manager shall conduct monitoring and control of non-wood forest products that are sold for commercial purposes. 3.34 Non-wood forest products. Products of biological origin, other than timber, obtained from forest lands, excluding mineral resources.”
9.1.4 The standard requires that working conditions shall be regularly monitored and adapted as necessary.	YES	PEFC FMS:2022 “9.1.4 Forest manager shall carry out regular monitoring of the working conditions (working environment) and, if necessary, plan measures to improve the conditions.”
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	PEFC FMS:2022 “9.2.1 Forest manager shall determine an internal audit programme, appropriate to the scale and intensity of operations, which shall be carried out at least once a year to ascertain whether the management system meets the set requirements and the requirements of the Standard (...) ”
b) is effectively implemented and maintained.	YES	PEFC FMS:2022 “9.2.1 Forest manager shall determine an internal audit programme (...) which shall be carried out at least once a year to ascertain whether the management system (...) is effectively implemented and maintained.”
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 importance of the processes concerned and the results of previous audits;	YES	PEFC FMS:2022 “9.2.2 Forest manager shall, appropriate to the scale and intensity of operations: a) plan, establish, implement and maintain an audit programme(s) defining the frequency, methods, responsibilities, planning requirements and reporting, which shall take into consideration the importance of the processes concerned and the results of previous audits”

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
b) define the audit criteria and scope for each audit;	YES	PEFC FMS:2022 "9.2.2 b) define the audit criteria and scope for each audit"
c) select the auditors and conduct audits to ensure objectivity and the impartiality of the audit process;	YES	PEFC FMS:2022 "9.2.2 c) select the auditors and conduct audits to ensure objectivity and the impartiality of the audit process"
d) ensure that the results of the audits are reported to relevant management;	YES	PEFC FMS:2022 "9.2.2 d) ensure that the results of the audits are reported to relevant management"
e) retain documented information as evidence of the implementation of the audit programme and the audit results.	YES	PEFC FMS:2022 "9.2.2 e) retain documented information as evidence of the implementation of the audit programme and the audit results"
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	PEFC FMS:2022 "9.3.1 The annual management system review shall include the following up-to-date information: a) the status of actions described in previous management system reviews."
b) changes in external and internal issues that are relevant to the management system;	YES	PEFC FMS:2022 "9.3.1 b) changes in external and internal issues that are relevant 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	PEFC FMS:2022 "9.3.1 c) performance results, including non-compliances and corrective actions, monitoring and evaluation results and audit results."
d) opportunities for continual improvement	YES	PEFC FMS:2022 "9.3.1 d) opportunities for continual improvement of the system, foreseeing the necessary improvements."

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
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	PEFC FMS:2022 “9.3.1 d) opportunities for continual improvement of the system, foreseeing the necessary improvements. 9.3.2 (...) The outputs of the management system review shall include decisions on improvements to be made”
9.3.3 The standard requires that documented information as evidence of the results of management reviews shall be retained.	YES	PEFC FMS:2022 “9.3.2 Forest manager shall retain documented information about the results of the management system reviews, in accordance with the laws and regulations.”
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: i. take action to control and correct it; ii. deal with the consequences;	YES	PEFC FMS:2022 “10.1.1 When a non-conformity occurs, the forest manager shall: a) act accordingly: - to plan actions to control and correct non-conformities; - to deal with the consequences caused by the non-conformities as far as possible.”
b) evaluate the need for action to eliminate the causes of the nonconformity, in order that it does not recur or occur elsewhere, by: i. reviewing the nonconformity; ii. determining the causes of the nonconformity; iii. determining if similar nonconformities exist, or could potentially occur;	YES	PEFC FMS:2022 “10.1.1 b) assess the need for corrective actions in order to eliminate the risks of recurrence of non-conformities elsewhere by: - reviewing the non-conformity; - determining the causes of the non-conformity; - determining if a similar non-conformity could reoccur or occur anywhere else.”
c) implement any action needed;	YES	PEFC FMS:2022 “10.1.1 c) plan and implement the necessary actions.”
d) review the effectiveness of any corrective action taken;	YES	PEFC FMS:2022 “10.1.1 d) review the effectiveness of the corrective actions taken.”
e) make changes to the management system, if necessary.	YES	PEFC FMS:2022 “10.1.1 e) make changes to the management system, if necessary.”

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	PEFC FMS:2022 "10.1.2 Corrective actions shall be appropriate so that to eliminate the effect of the identified non-conformities as far as possible."
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	PEFC FMS:2022 "10.1.3 Forest manager shall retain documented information about the non-conformity and the measures taken to eliminate the non-conformity."
b) the results of any corrective action.	YES	PEFC FMS:2022 "10.1.3 Forest manager shall retain documented information about (...) the results of any corrective actions."
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	PEFC FMS:2022 "10.2.1 Forest manager shall continuously improve the suitability, adequacy and effectiveness of the sustainable forest management system and the sustainable forest management practice."

Part IV: PEFC Checklist for Certification and Accreditation Procedures

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.

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	PEFC LV 02:2022 “4.3. PEFC forest management certification must be carried out by independent certification organisation that is not involved in the process of standard development as a decision-making body, is not involved in the forest management and is independent of the auditee.. 3.11. Certification organisation – an organisation independent of the manufacturer and the consumer, offering certification services in accredited certification areas, assessing and monitoring certificate holders.” PEFC LV 05:2020 “7.1. (..) The certification bodies cannot be involved in the standard setting process as governing or decision making body.”
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	PEFC LV 02:2022 “4.1. A certification body wishing to carry out PEFC forest management certification in Latvia (...) must meet the requirements of ISO/IEC 17021-1”
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	Annex 6, 3.1	YES	PEFC LV 02:2022 “6.1. The certification body must ensure that the staff involved in the assessment of forest management certification have adequate knowledge of forest management (including

No.	PEFC benchmark requirement		YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
	impacts, and on the forest certification criteria?			economic, social and environmental impacts), the certification process and forest management certification requirements.”
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	YES	PEFC LV 02:2022 “6.2. The staff involved in the assessment of forest management certification must be familiar with the Binding Documents of the PEFC International Council and the documentation of the national PEFC Forest Management Scheme.”
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	YES	PEFC LV 02:2022 “6.3. The certification body must have procedures in place for the competence of auditors and technical experts. The minimum requirements for auditors involved in the assessment of forest management certification, they: b) must have at least a second level higher professional education or a bachelor's degree in forestry, biology or environmental sciences; c) have professional experience of no less than 3 years in a field related to forest management; d) must be familiar with the binding documents developed by the certification organisation;”
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	PEFC LV 02:2022 “6.3 The certification body must have procedures in place for the competence of auditors and technical experts. The minimum requirements for auditors involved in the assessment of forest management certification, they: a) must meet the requirements of ISO 19011:2018;”
7.	Does the scheme documentation include additional qualification requirements for auditors carrying out forest management audits? [*1]	Annex 6, 3.2	YES	PEFC LV 02:2022 “6.3 The certification body must have procedures in place for the competence of auditors and technical experts. The minimum requirements for auditors involved in the assessment of forest management certification, they: (...) e) must have had no involvement with the audited entity in the last 2 years (ISO/IEC 17021-1).”
Certification procedures				

No.	PEFC benchmark requirement		YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
8.	Does the scheme documentation require that certification bodies shall have established internal procedures for forest management certification?	Annex 6, 4	YES	PEFC LV 02:2022 “7.1. The certification body must develop internal procedures for forest management certification that meet the requirements of ISO/IEC 17021-1 and ISO 19011:2018.”
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	PEFC LV 02:2022 “7.1. The certification body must develop internal procedures for forest management certification that meet the requirements of ISO/IEC 17021-1 and ISO 19011:2018.”
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	PEFC LV 02:2022 “7.1. The certification body must develop internal procedures for forest management certification that meet the requirements of ISO/IEC 17021-1 and ISO 19011:2018.”
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	PEFC LV 02:2022 “7.2 The certification body must: a) inform the association “PEFC Latvijas Padome” of all PEFC forest management certificates issues, as well as of any changes in the certification status and/or scope activities”
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	PEFC LV 02:2022 “7.2 The certification body must (...) b) undertake monitoring of the use of 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	PEFC LV 02:2022 “7.2 The certification body must (...) d) note that the maximum period between annual audits must not exceed one year;
14.	Does a maximum period for assessment audit not exceed five years for forest management certifications?	Annex 6, 4	YES	PEFC LV 02:2022

No.	PEFC benchmark requirement		YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
				"7.2 The certification body must (...) c) note that the certificate is issued for a period of 5 years;"
15.	Does the scheme documentation include requirements for public availability of certification report summaries?	Annex 6, 4	YES	PEFC LV 02:2022 "7.2. The certification body must: e) ensure that the summary of the audit report is made publicly available on the certification body's website. The public summary includes at least the following information: i. the scope of certification; ii. a description of the compliance of a certification applicant or certificate holder with the relevant standard, including any identified non-conformities (the indicator in the standard, the wording of the non-conformity, the timeframe for its rectification); iii. a validity period of the certificate; iv. comments received from the stakeholders and their assessment."
16.	Does the scheme documentation include requirements for usage of information from external parties as the audit evidence?	Annex 6, 4	YES	PEFC LV 02:2022 "8.3 Forest management audits (certification, surveillance and recertification) consist of: b) (...) During the audit, the auditor contacts a number of stakeholders to obtain information on the management practices in the audited forest."
17.	Does the scheme documentation include additional requirements for certification procedures? [*1]	Annex 6, 4	YES	PEFC LV 02:2022 "10.2 Numbering of certificates: the certificate number consists of the abbreviation of the name of the certification body, a dash, PEFC-FM, a dash, the number assigned to the certificate by the certification body (e.g. XXXX-PEFC-FM-00001)." <i>Quite some clauses are elaborated in more detail, with some more explanation and adds to readability and clarity of the requirements.</i>
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	PEFC LV 02:2022 "4.1. A certification body wishing to carry out PEFC forest management certification in Latvia must be accredited by the Latvian State Agency "Latvijas Nacionālais akreditācijas birojs" (the Latvian National Accreditation Bureau – LATAK) or by a member organisation of the European Accreditation (EA) or the International Accreditation Forum (IAF)."

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	PEFC LV 02:2022 "10.1 The certificate contains at least the following information: g) reference to accreditation."
20.	Does the scheme documentation require that the accreditation shall be issued by an accreditation body which is a part of the International Accreditation Working Group (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	PEFC LV 02:2022 "3.1. Accreditation – a third-party validation of a conformity assessment body that has demonstrated the competence required to carry out specific conformity assessment tasks (ISO/IEC 17011:2017). 3.2. Accreditation body – an authorized body that carries out accreditation (ISO/IEC 17011:2017). 4.1. A certification body wishing to carry out PEFC forest management certification in Latvia must be accredited by the Latvian State Agency "Latvijas Nacionālais akreditācijas birojs" (the Latvian National Accreditation Bureau – LATAK) or by a member organisation of the European Accreditation (EA) or the International Accreditation Forum (IAF), must meet the requirements of ISO/IEC 17021-1 and must include forest management certification in its scope of accreditation." <i>Although clause 4.1 does not specifically require that the accreditation body implements procedures described in ISO 17011, it is concluded that the definitions of accreditation and accreditation body provide sufficient evidence for this. It shall further be noted that LATAK is member of IAF.</i>
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	PEFC LV 02:2022 "4.1 A certification body wishing to carry out PEFC forest management certification in Latvia must be accredited (...) must meet the requirements of ISO/IEC 17021-1 and must include forest management certification in its scope of accreditation."
22.	Does the scheme documentation include a mechanism for PEFC notification of certification bodies?	Annex 6, 6	YES	PEFC LV 02:2022

No.	PEFC benchmark requirement		YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
				<p>" 4.2 An accredited certification organisation carrying out PEFC forest management certification in Latvia must have a recognition agreement concluded with the association "PEFC Latvijas Padome".</p> <p>5.1. So that a certification body which is accredited in accordance with the requirements set out in Paragraph 4 of this document can carry out PEFC forest management certification in Latvia, it must conclude an agreement on PEFC certification with the association "PEFC Latvijas Padome". The agreement between the certification body and "PEFC Latvijas Padome" includes at least the following sections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - administrative arrangements (e.g. information exchange and communication between the certification body and "PEFC Latvijas Padome"); - financial arrangements (a recognition fee of a certification body and fees for certified forest areas); - conditions for ensuring the accreditation requirements of certification bodies. <p>5.2 Before concluding the agreement, the certification organisation must provide "PEFC Latvijas Padome" with evidence that it has a valid accreditation with the Latvian National Accreditation Bureau or accreditation with a member organisation of the European Accreditation (EA) or the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) to carry out PEFC forest management certification in Latvia."</p> <p><i>Procedure for the notification of the Certification Bodies are further elaborated in PEFC LV 03:2022.</i></p>
23.	Are the procedures for PEFC notification of certification bodies non-discriminatory?	Annex 6, 6	YES	<i>No discriminatory procedures for PEFC notification are found in the system documentation (PEFC LV 02 and PEFC LV 03).</i>

[*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 8 to 25 June 2023. Form International sent out questionnaires to all stakeholders that were members of the Working Group (WG) for the Forest Management Standard, members of the WG for the Group Forest Management Certification Standard and additional stakeholders that were invited and/or participated in public consultation meetings during the system development process.

General

In total 3 stakeholders responded to the request to fill-out the questionnaire:

- 2 respondents from the forest business and industry
- 1 respondent from an environmental NGO

The response rate was 3 out of 77 (4%).

Participation in the process

In total 2 respondents participated as a member of the WG for the Forest Management Standard while one did as a consultant on the first public consultation.

Participants had mostly similar interests which caused them to participate in the process:

- 2 respondents wanted to contribute to a balanced and clear Forest Management Standard for Latvia. One of them pointed out their interest in simplifying the requirements of the system to allow small forest owners to join the certification process;
- 1 respondent wanted to be informed about the changes to the Forest Management Standard.

Respondents only reported a few concerns about the SFM standard:

- 1 respondent was concerned about balancing environmental, social and economic interests;
- 1 respondent was concerned that the standard would be as clearly understood and applicable as the previous.

2 respondents belonging to the WG stated that there had been the opportunity to address their concerns either during the WG meetings or by writing and also found that they were provided with relevant documents to participate in the system development, as those were sent in advanced and regularly.

Balanced representation of the Working Group

All of the respondents that participated in the process stated that all relevant stakeholders were actively identified and invited to the process. Also, all respondents affirm that disadvantaged stakeholders and key stakeholders were proactively invited to the standard development process.



3 respondents found that the WG had a balanced representation of the various stakeholder groups, meaning no under or overrepresented stakeholder categories. However, 1 of the 3 respondents indicated that he was not sure that the WG contained representatives from all regions of Latvia.

Complaints

2 of 3 respondents indicated they were not aware if any complaint or appeal was submitted to PEFC Latvia relating to the standard revision process. The other one respondent indicating there had not been any. In the same way, all respondents expressed they were not sure if the complaints were validated, objectively evaluated and communicated.

(Sensitive) issues indicated by respondents

All of the respondents indicated that there had been no sensitive issues in the assessment.

The Working Group

All of the 2 respondents part of the WG answered positively to the questions whether:

- The WG stakeholders had relevant expertise for the subject matter of the standard;
- They received invitations for meetings and documents in a timely manner;
- All working draft documents (draft versions of the standard) had been available to all members of the WG;
- They were given meaningful opportunities to contribute to the development of the standard and submit comments to the working drafts;
- Feedback and views submitted by any member of the WG had been considered in an open and transparent way;
- Feedback received during the public consultation had been considered in an objective manner by the WG;
- The decision of the WG to recommend the final draft for formal approval was taken based on consensus.
- Resolution was achieved in case of no consensus.

Regarding if resolution was achieved in case of no consensus, the 2 respondents that were part of the WG affirm that the issues were resolved. For the way it was resolved, one of the WG respondent indicated that resolution was achieved by organising additional discussions, additional analysis of the nature of the issue or the risks. The other WG respondent said the issues were repeatedly discussed until a consensus was reached.

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

There were no remarks about sensitive issues.



Questionnaire on the standard revision process of the sustainable forest management standard under the PEFC Latvia Certification System for Sustainable Forest Certification (PEFC Latvia System)

Question to stakeholder	Answer	Explanation / Remark
1. What stakeholder category do you represent?	<input type="checkbox"/> Forest owners <input type="checkbox"/> Business and industry <input type="checkbox"/> Non-government organisations (NGO); please specify: <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental <input type="checkbox"/> Social <input type="checkbox"/> Other: Click here to enter your comments <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific and technological community <input type="checkbox"/> Workers and trade unions <input type="checkbox"/> Other; please specify: Click here to enter your comments	Click here to enter your comments
2. Did you actively participate in the standard revision process of the sustainable forest management standard of the PEFC Latvia System? (more than 1 answer possible) ► If no, why not?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, as a member of the Working Group for the Forest Management Standard <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, I participated in the public consultation (February 2022 – April 2022) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, namely: Click here to enter your comments <input type="checkbox"/> No, because: Click here to enter your comments	Click here to enter your comments
3. What was your main interest to participate in the standard revision process of the PEFC Latvia System?	Interest: Click here to enter your comments	Click here to enter your comments
4. What, if any, was your main concern(s) regarding the Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) standard of the PEFC Latvia System?	Concern: Click here to enter your comments	Click here to enter your comments

Question to stakeholder	Answer	Explanation / Remark
5. Were you provided with an opportunity to address these concerns?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, please indicate how: Click here to enter your comments <input type="checkbox"/> No, please elaborate: Click here to enter your comments	Click here to enter your comments
6. Did the organisers provide you with relevant documents to participate in the standard revision process?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, because: Click here to enter your comments <input type="checkbox"/> No, because: Click here to enter your comments <input type="checkbox"/> I don't know: Click here to enter your comments	Click here to enter your comments
7. In your opinion, have all stakeholders that are relevant to the objectives and scope of the standard revision process been proactively identified and invited ?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No, other stakeholders that should have been involved: Click here to enter your comments <input type="checkbox"/> I don't know	Click here to enter your comments
8. In your opinion, have disadvantaged stakeholders and key stakeholders been proactively identified and invited to the standard-revision activities and were any constraints to their participation addressed?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No, other stakeholders that should have been involved: Click here to enter your comments <input type="checkbox"/> No, there were constraints to their participation: Click here to enter your comments <input type="checkbox"/> I don't know	Click here to enter your comments
9. In your opinion, did the Working Group have a balanced representation of various stakeholder categories? (meaning no single concerned stakeholder group was dominant nor dominated)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No, underrepresented stakeholder categories are: Click here to enter your comments <input type="checkbox"/> No, overrepresented/dominant stakeholder categories are: Click here to enter your comments <input type="checkbox"/> I don't know	Click here to enter your comments
10. Did the stakeholder representatives in the Working Group come from all relevant regions from your country? ► 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	Click here to enter your comments



Question to stakeholder	Answer	Explanation / Remark
11. a) Are you aware if any substantive and/or process complaints and appeals relating to the standard revision process were formally submitted to PEFC Latvia, by you or any other stakeholder?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, there was a formal complaint / appeal about Click here to enter your comments <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> I don't know	Click here to enter your comments
b) In case of any complaints, have these complaints and appeals been validated , impartially and objectively evaluated , and is the decision communicated to the complainant?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> I don't know	Click here to enter your comments
12. Should we be aware of certain (sensitive) issues in our assessment of the PEFC Latvia System?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes (please specify) Click here to enter your comments <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> I don't know	Click here to enter your comments

Questions 13-19 are for Working Group members only.

If you did participate in the Working Group for the revision of the Forest Management standard, please continue with **question 13**.

Question to stakeholder	Answer	Explanation / Remark
13. Did the Working Group include stakeholders 1) with expertise relevant to the subject matter of the standard, 2) those affected by the standard, and 3) those that can influence implementation of the standard ?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No, please provide an explanation: Click here to enter your comments <input type="checkbox"/> I don't know	Click here to enter your comments
14. Did you receive invitations and documents for Working Group meetings in a timely manner ?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> I don't know	Click here to enter your comments
15. Have all working draft documents (draft versions of the standard) been available to all members of the Working Group?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> I don't know	Click here to enter your comments

Question to stakeholder	Answer	Explanation / Remark
16. Have you been provided with meaningful opportunities to contribute to the development or revision of the standard and to provide feedback on the working drafts?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> I don't know	Click here to enter your comments
17. Have feedback and views submitted by any member of the Working Group been considered in an open and transparent way where the outcome of these considerations is recorded?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> I don't know	Click here to enter your comments
18. Has all feedback received during the public consultation been considered in an objective manner by the Working Group?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> I don't know	Click here to enter your comments
19. Was the decision of the Working Group to recommend the final draft for formal approval taken on the basis of consensus ? Consensus does not necessarily mean unanimity, as long as there was no sustained opposition to a substantial issue.	<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	Click here to enter your comments
20. In case no consensus was reached by the Working Group on certain issues, were these issues resolved and in which way?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, the issue(s) was resolved in the following way: Click here to enter your comments <input type="checkbox"/> No (please explain): Click here to enter your comments	Click here to enter your comments

Please return the answers latest by 25th of June 2023. 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

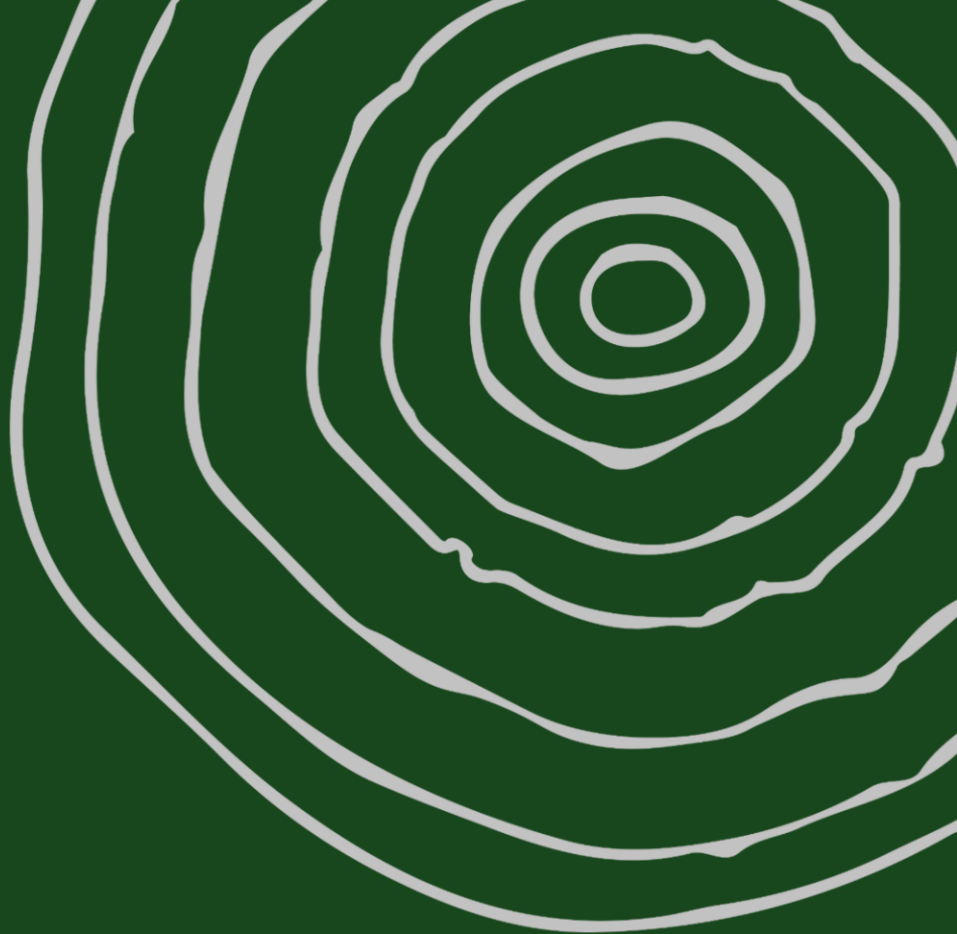
No comments were received during the International Consultation.

Annex 4 Report on the field assessment

Not applicable as no field visit was conducted.

Annex 5 Internal review

Report chapter / Page	Assessor's report statement	PEFCC's Internal Review comment	Assessor's response
1.4	The compliance of the PEFC Latvia system with PEFC ST 2002:2020 – Chain of Custody of Forest and Tree Based Products - Requirements was assessed based on the PEFC Checklist.	Was there a checklist for CoC?	No, there was no checklist for CoC. The assessment was based on provided documentation. Report adjusted accordingly.
1.4	The compliance of the PEFC Latvia system with PEFCC TD Annex 6 (Certification and accreditation procedures) and PEFC ST 2003:2020 was assessed based on the PEFC Checklist.	Was there a checklist for 2003:2020?	There was a checklist for PEFCC TD Annex 6, this however does not include a checklist for PEFC ST 2003:2020. This was assessed based on provided documentation. Report adjusted to make this more clear.



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