

Conformity assessment of GNFCFS against the PEFC Council Requirements

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ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THIS DOCUMENT

AOP	Annual Operations Plan
CB	Certification Body
CFMA	Community Forest Management Agreement
CoP	Code of Practice
FCA	Forest Concession Agreement
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
EU FLEGT	EU Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade
FMD	Forest Management Division
FMP	Forest Management Plan
GFC	Guyana Forestry Commission
GLSC	Guyana Lands and Surveys Commission
GNFCS	Guyana National Forest Certification System
GSSFM	Guyana Standard for Sustainable Forest Management
MoAA	Ministry of Amerindian Affairs
NSSWG	National Standard Setting Working Group
PEFC	Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification
RIL	Reduced impact logging
SFA State	Forest Authorisation
SFEP	State Forest Exploratory Permit
SFP	State Forest Permission
TSA	Timber Sales Agreement
VC	Village Council
VPA	Voluntary Partnership Agreement

1. INTRODUCTION

METHODOLOGY

This report assesses the Applicant Scheme's rules governing the maintenance and encouragement of productive functions of forests; and whether the applicant scheme complies with these requirements in practice.

The consultant has reviewed the content of the Applicant System for technical competence and completeness. The consultant has assessed the Applicant System's conformity with the requirements of the PEFC Council, as stipulated in PEFC GD 1007 *Endorsement and Mutual Recognition of National Systems and their Revision*.

SCOPE OF ASSESSMENT


The following aspects of the Applicant Scheme have been assessed against the PEFC international standards and technical documents where relevant:

- 2.1. A general analysis of the structure of the Applicant System's technical documentation.
- 2.2. An assessment of the standard setting procedures and process against PEFC ST 1001:2017, Standard Setting – Requirements (for the sustainable forest management standard(s) and the chain of custody standard).
- 2.3. An assessment of the group certification requirements against PEFC ST 1002:2018, Group Forest Management Certification - Requirements.
- 2.4. An assessment of standard(s) applicable for forest management certification against PEFC ST 1003:2018, Sustainable Forest Management – Requirements including Appendix 1 and Appendix 2.
- 2.5. An assessment of the chain of custody requirements against PEFC ST 2002:2020, Chain of Custody of Forest and Tree Based Products - Requirements.
- 2.6. An assessment of certification and accreditation procedures, for forest management certification as defined in the PEFC Council Technical Document, Annex 6, and for chain of custody certification as defined by PEFC ST 2003:2020, Requirements for Certification Bodies operating Certification against the PEFC International Chain of Custody Standard.
- 2.7. A stakeholder survey to check the basic contents of the development report on the standard setting process.
- 2.8. Any other aspects that can affect functions, credibility and efficiency of the submitted system.

As the scheme is a new scheme, it will require a field trip to the applicant scheme's country.

The following normative references have been used for this assessment:

- PEFC ST 1001, Standard Setting - Requirements
- PEFC ST 1003, Sustainable Forest Management – Requirements.

- PEFC ST 1002, Group Forest Management Certification - Requirements
 - PEFC ST 2002, Chain of Custody of Forest Based Products – Requirements
 - PEFC ST 2003, Requirements for Certification Bodies operating Certification against the PEFC International Chain of Custody Standard
 - PEFC GD 1004, Administration of PEFC scheme, chapter 8
 - TD Annex 6 (Certification and Accreditation Procedures)
 - PEFC ST 2001, PEFC Logo usage rules - Requirements (hereinafter PEFC Logo usage rules)
 - PEFC GL7/2007, PEFC Council procedures for the investigation and resolution of complaints and Appeals
 - ISO/IEC 17021, Conformity assessment -- Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems
 - ISO/IEC 17065, Conformity assessment -- Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services
 - ISO 19011, Guidelines for auditing management systems
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2. RECOMMENDATION

The consultant recommends that the PEFC Board of Directors endorses the Guyana National Forest Certification System, conditional on non-conformities identified in the standards being rectified within a period of six (6) months.

This recommendation is based on this assessment as follows:

1. The non-conformities are minor non-conformities
2. The Guyana Forestry Commission will be able to address the non-conformities within the timeframe using existing mechanisms.

The following should be addressed:

1. Three (3) minor non-conformities in the GNFC standard-setting procedures against PEFC ST 1001:2017. These should be addressed through corrective action within six (6) months.
2. Two (2) minor non-conformities in the GNFC standard-setting process against PEFC ST 1001:2017. These should be addressed through corrective action within six (6) months.
3. Four (4) minor non-conformities in the Scheme's sustainable forest management requirements against the requirements of the PEFC ST 1003:2018. All non-conformities should be addressed through corrective action within six (6) months.

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3. SUMMARY OF THE DRAFT FINDINGS

The following is a summary of findings for the draft report:

STANDARD SETTING PROCEDURES

There are minor non-conformities in the standard setting procedures against requirements:

- 6.4.3: Although balanced representation appears has been achieved and this balance is described, there are not procedural requirements for targets.
- 6.4.8: Requirements for initiation of dispute resolution do not appear to be addressed;
- 8.5.4: This specification of editorial or normal revision is not part of the procedures. (See 7.2)

STANDARD SETTING PROCESS

The standard-setting processes have conformed to the PEFC requirements with the following non conformities:

- 7.2.1: The final versions of the standard are not the GFC website;
- 7.2.2: The official language is not noted in the standards.

FOREST MANAGEMENT STANDARD

There are non-conformities in the forest management standard against requirements:

- 4.1 (f): There is not a clear requirement 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.
- 8.1.4 (d): “High carbon stock” is not defined
- 8.1.5 (d): “High carbon stock” is not defined
- 8.4.12: The indicator cited (9.3.1) discusses increasing wildlife populations but does not have requirements around animal populations broadly. The requirement here is not just about protected/threatened/endangered but about animal populations in general and ‘pressure’ of populations.

The following observation is also made:

- There is a potential for crossover between the definitions of “Forest Plantation” and “Plantation Forests” in the SFM standard’s definitions.
 - o Forest Plantations is defined as “Forest of introduced species, and in some cases native species, established through planting or seeding, mainly for production of wood or non-wood goods and services. Note 1: Includes all stands of introduced species established for production of wood or non-wood goods and services. Note 2: May include areas of native species characterised by few species, intensive land preparation (e.g., cultivation), straight tree lines and/or even-aged stands.
 - o Plantation Forests is defined as “A forest area established by planting or sowing by using either alien or native species, often with one or few species, regular spacing

and even ages, and which lacks most of the principal characteristics and key elements of natural forests.”

- Although the current standard excludes certification of forest plantations, this potential overlap should be addressed.

GROUP CERTIFICATION MODEL

The group certification model conforms to the PEFC requirements.

CHAIN OF CUSTODY STANDARD

GNFCS has fully adopted PEFC ST 2002:2020 Chain of Custody of Forest Based Products.

CERTIFICATION AND ACCREDITATION ARRANGEMENTS

The certification and accreditation requirements conform to the PEFC requirements.

4. STRUCTURE OF THE SYSTEM OF THE PROPOSED APPLICANT SCHEME

FORESTS AND THE FOREST SECTOR IN GUYANA

Forest certification and legality verification in Guyana has been in place for some time. Voluntary certification systems have been in place since the 2000s. In addition, the Guyana Forestry Commission (GFC) introduced the Wood Tracking System (WTS) in 2000 as a means to enhance accountability and transparency within the forestry sector and to verify the legality of logging operations.

In addition, Guyana commenced negotiations with the European Union for a Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) in 2012. The agreement was initialed in 2018.

The Guyana Forestry Commission is the National Governing Body for Guyana, and became a member of PEFC in 2019. The standard development process for the GNFCFS commenced in 2021.

Guyana's forests cover approximately 18.39 million hectares, or 85% of the country's land area. Given the country's low population density, these forests provide direct employment to several thousand people, particularly in rural and Indigenous communities, and indirectly support many more livelihoods through associated industries and services.

As per the FAO's Global Forest Resources Assessment of 2020, Guyana's annual deforestation rate was relatively low at 0.02% in the 2010-2020 period. Much of this deforestation is driven by mining activities, with logging for timber and non-timber forest products also playing a role.

In terms of GDP, the forestry sector contributes about 3-4% annually, according to data from the World Bank up to 2021. However, this figure doesn't capture the full value of the sector, as it does not include non-monetary benefits such as carbon sequestration, biodiversity, and watershed protection, among others.

As of 2021, Guyana's annual removals of industrial roundwood were estimated to be around 1.3 million cubic meters, according to the FAO. This volume includes both logs for export and domestic processing.

The domestic processing industry in Guyana has traditionally been relatively small-scale, focusing on primary processing into products such as sawnwood and plywood. The National Log Export Policy of 2011, which aimed to increase domestic processing and add value to timber products, has spurred some growth in this sector.

Guyana's wood products are exported globally, with key markets traditionally being the Caribbean, North America, Europe, and more recently, Asia. As of 2021, sawnwood accounted for the majority of Guyana's timber exports, followed by roundwood and plywood.

THE SCHEME

The Guyana Forestry Commission (GFC) as the National Governing Body and the Standardising Body provides oversight for the development, implementation and administration of the GNFCFS.

Its main functions include:

- representing Guyana on the PEFC Council;
- managing and administering the GNFC;
- receiving and reviewing client applications for certification under the GNFC;
- revising and updating the standards comprised within the GNFC;
- liaising with the PEFC International Secretariat and certification bodies;
- handling of complaints and appeals;
- notification of certification bodies; and
- licensing of client organisations under the PEFC trademarks.

The NSSWG is the technical working group responsible for developing and updating the Standards within the GNFC, under the guidance of the GFC.

The scheme has developed a number of procedural documents for the Applicant Scheme. They are listed as follows:

Standards

- *The Guyana Standard for Sustainable Forest Management (GSSFM) (GY-ST-2023-01);*
- *The Group Certification Standard (GY-ST-2021-01)*
-
- *Requirements for Certification Bodies operating Certification against the GSSFM (GYST-2023-01)*
- *Standard Setting Procedures (GY-PROC-2023-01)*
- *Administration of the System by the GFC (GY-PROC-2023-01)*
- *Complaints and Appeals Handling Procedures (GY-PROC-2022-01)*
- *Notification of certification bodies for chain of custody and forest management certifications in Guyana against the requirements of the Guyana National Forest Certification System (GY-PROC-2023-01)*

The following standards have also been adopted:

- *Chain of Custody of Forest and Tree Based Products – Requirements (PEFC ST 2002:2020)*
- *Requirements for Certification Bodies operating Certification against the PEFC International Chain of Custody Standard (PEFC ST 2003:2020)*
- *PEFC Logo Usage Rules – Requirements (PEFC ST 2001:2008, Second Edition)*
- *PEFC Trademarks Rules – Requirements PEFC ST 2001:2020*

5. STANDARD SETTING PROCEDURES

This chapter presents a detailed assessment of the standard setting procedures against PEFC ST 1001:2017, Standard Setting, for the development of the forest management standard. It contains a detailed assessment of the standard setting procedures compliance or non-compliance with the PEFC Council requirements as set out in PEFC ST 1001:2017.

Requirement 5.1 The standardising body has written procedures for standard-setting activities describing:

(a) its legal status and organizational 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)

The standardizing body's written procedures for standard-setting activities are described in the document GY-PROC-2023-01.

The Guyana Forestry Commission (GFC) is the legal entity established by the Parliament of Guyana, as mandated by the Guyana Forestry Commission Act 2007. Its primary responsibility is to manage the national forest estate of Guyana. Legally, the GFC operates in accordance with laws that are consistent with the PEFC Council statutes.

Organizational Structure:

- **Governing Body:** GFC holds the responsibility as the Governing Body for Guyana's National Forest Certification System. In this capacity, its duties encompass:
 1. System governance and administration, which involves:
 - Notifying Certification Bodies.
 - Registering certificates and logo usages.
 - Handling complaints.
 - Undertaking promotional and training activities, as detailed in PEFC GD 1004, Administration of PEFC Scheme.
 2. Development of both implementation and administration procedures. This includes formulating requirements for Certification Bodies and accreditation, and also establishing and upkeeping complaints and appeals procedures.
- **Standardising Body:** As the Standardising Body, GFC is tasked with:
 1. Coordinating and overseeing the standard-setting process.
 2. Initiating a standard-setting working group, known as the National Standard Setting Working Group (NSSWG), which consists of a balanced representation of

stakeholders. This group is crucial for achieving consensus and formulating the Standard.

(b) procedures for keeping documented information,

These are described at GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 8.1 The Standardising Body, through the GNFC Secretariat at the GFC, maintains documented information pertinent to the standard-setting and review process. The documentation encompasses:

- Standard-setting procedures.
- Stakeholder identification and engagement details.
- Minutes from working group meetings.
- Feedback received and its resolution.
- Drafts and final versions of the Standard.
- Consensus evidence on the final Standard version.
- Details and outcomes of the review process.

This information is retained until the next review or revision of the Standard or for a minimum of five years post-publication of the Standard. All documented information is accessible to interested parties upon their request.

(c) procedures for balanced representation of stakeholders,

Procedures are at GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 6.2.2

The NSSWG ensures a balanced representation of stakeholder interests in its composition to prevent any single group from dominating its decision-making. The represented stakeholder groups include:

- Forest owners and managers of all sizes.
- Entire timber supply chain, from harvesting to end-users.
- Both local and international environmental organizations.
- Government agencies impacting Guyana's timber sector.
- Research and academia sectors.
- Workers' Union.
- Community interests, emphasizing youth and women.

To promote gender equality, stakeholders commit to gender balance within the membership. Every stakeholder entity considers gender when selecting their primary and alternate representatives. The

NSSWG frequently reviews its composition in alignment with the PEFC ST 1001:2017, focusing on gender balance and the equitable representation of various stakeholders.

Though stakeholders nominate participants to voice their interests, members are also recognized for their individual expertise, especially in sustainable forest management's environmental, social, and economic facets. NSSWG members must consult their respective constituencies, integrating their views into the decision-making process. Evidence of this consultation is requested by the NSSWG for all critical issues in the standard-setting process.

(d) the standard-setting process,

Procedures for the standard setting process are at GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 9. This can be summarized as follows:

1. **Standard Proposal:** The GFC, as the Standardising Body, formulates a proposal detailing the Standard's scope, necessity, outcomes, and potential risks. This also includes a timeline for the standard's development stages.
2. **Public Announcement:** At least four weeks prior to initiating the process, the GFC announces the start of the standard-setting, inviting stakeholders and the public to participate. The announcement provides an overview of the process, access to the proposal, and methods to participate.
3. **Public Consultation:** Before finalizing the standard, the GFC conducts a public consultation on the draft, lasting at least 60 days. All feedback is thoroughly assessed by a working group. For new standards, an additional 30-day consultation round is organized.
4. **Pilot Testing:** New standards undergo pilot testing to verify their clarity, auditability, and feasibility. Depending on results, revisions might be made. Existing standards with a history of usage may not require this step.

(e) the mechanism for reaching consensus, and

This is described at GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 7.2. It can be summarized as follows:

1. **Decision-making Authority:** The Standardising Body (GFC) holds the highest decision-making power, responsible for reaffirming or revising the Standard.
2. **Role of GFC:** In the NSSWG meetings, the GFC's representative chairs without a voting right, ensuring impartial moderation of the standard development process.
3. **Rotation:** Deputy Chair roles in the Working Group rotate among private sector groups every three months. Stakeholder groups with more than one representative also rotate positions on the same timeline.
4. **Consensus Procedure:** The NSSWG aims for consensus in decisions, including recommending the Standard's final draft. Consensus-seeking methods include:

- Face-to-face meetings (subject to COVID-19 restrictions) employing verbal votes, hand raises, statements from the Chair on consensus, or formal balloting.
 - Online meetings using verbal voting.
 - Email meetings where written responses act as votes.
 - Combinations of the above methods.
5. **When Unanimous Support is Unattainable:** If the NSSWG cannot achieve unanimous support, decisions will be based on support from four of the five sectoral interests: Private sector/Forest owners, Indigenous NGOs, Environmental NGOs, Government, and Civil society. Each interest group devises its consensus-building procedures. If a vote is needed, each group nominates a representative to present its stance. To resolve issues, a vote among the five representatives is taken, with consensus reached by the agreement of at least four representatives.
6. **GFC's Non-Voting Stance:** If voting is required, the GFC abstains to maintain its impartiality in overseeing the standard development.
7. **Resolving Deadlocks:** If consensus is elusive, the GFC arranges additional public consultations to address unresolved matters, deciding on the scope and duration of these consultations.

(f) review and revision of standard(s)/normative document(s).

The review and revision process is described at GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clauses 11 and 12. They can be summarized as follows:

1. **Frequency:** The Standard is reviewed at a maximum interval of every five years from its approval date.
2. **Basis for Review:** The review process considers feedback obtained during the Standard's implementation and performs a gap analysis. This analysis checks for new developments, such as scientific or technological updates, and changes in international benchmarks concerning forest legality and sustainability.
3. **Stakeholder Consultation:** The Standardising Body, in coordination with the NSSWG, determines if stakeholder consultations are required for additional feedback. The extent of this consultation for reviews occurring before the fifth year is also decided by them.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

Requirement 5.1.2 The standardizing body shall make its standard-setting procedures publicly available and shall review its standard-setting procedures regularly. The review shall consider feedback from stakeholders.

The requirement is met at GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 12.1 and 6.2.1. The Standardising Body commits to reviewing its standards and associated normative documents on a regular basis. As part of this review process, and as stipulated in Clause 6.2.1 of the provided text, the Standardising Body ensures that its standard-setting procedures are made publicly available. The Standardising Body actively seeks and receives feedback from both the public and affected stakeholders.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

Requirement 5.2.1 The standardizing body shall keep documented information relevant to the standard-setting and review process. Evidence of compliance with the requirements of this standard and the standardizing body's own procedures includes: a) Standard-setting procedures, b) Stakeholder identification mapping, c) Contacted and/or invited stakeholders, d) Stakeholders involved in standard-setting activities including participants in each working group meeting, e) Feedback received and a synopsis of how feedback was addressed, f) All drafts and final versions of the standard, g) Outcomes from working group considerations, h) Evidence of consensus on the final version of the standard(s), i) Evidence relating to the review process, and j) Final approval by the standardizing body.

The requirement are met at GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures 8.1. The Standardising Body, through the GNFC Secretariat at the GFC, maintains records pertinent to the standard-setting and review process. This documentation includes:

- The standard-setting procedures,
- Stakeholder identification and engagement records,
- Meeting minutes from working groups,
- Feedback received and how it was addressed,
- All drafts and the final versions of the Standard,
- Evidence of consensus and the review process,
- Final approval from the Standardising Body.

This information is retained either until the next review or revision of the Standard or for at least five years post-publication. Interested parties can access these records upon request, either in hard copy or digital format. Contact details for making such requests are provided on the GFC website.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

Requirement 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.

Requirement 5.2.3 Documented information shall be available to interested parties upon request

Both requirements are met at GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 8.1.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

Requirement 5.3.1 The standardizing 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 standardizing body shall: a) acknowledge receipt of the complaint or appeal to the complainant, 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, and c) formally communicate the decision on the complaint or appeal to the complainant and describe the handling process

Requirements are described at GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 8.2. The procedures for complaints are detailed in GY-PROC-2022-01.

A summary is as follows:

When the GFC or NSSWG receives a complaint, it shall:

- acknowledge receipt of the complaint to the complainant within five working days,
- gather and verify all necessary information to validate the complaint;
- impartially and objectively evaluate all information related to the complaint;
- decide on the complaint, and
- formally communicate the decision on the complaint and of the complaint handling process to the complainant.

All complaints are directed to the Chairperson of the NSSWG. All administrative processes related to dispute resolution shall be managed through the GNFC Secretariat within the GFC.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

Requirement 5.3.2 The standardizing body shall establish at least one contact point for enquiries, complaints and appeals relating to its standard-setting activities. The contact point shall be easy to access and readily available

The contact point is described at GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 8.2, where All complaints shall be directed to the Chairperson of the NSSWG.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

6. STANDARD SETTING PROCESS

BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY

The standard setting process has been documented in GNFC Development Report.

6.1.1 For the creation of a new standard, the standardizing body shall develop a proposal including: a) the scope of the standard, b) justification of the need for the standard, c) a clear description of the intended outcomes, 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, • unintended consequences of implementation, • actions to address the identified risks, and e) a description of the stages of standard development and their expected timetable.

The procedural requirements are met at GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures 2.

ASSESSMENT DECISION (PROCEDURES): CONFORMS

The standard development proposal is provided at GY-REP-2021-01_Standard Development Proposal. All processes for the requirement are met in the proposal document at Sections 3, 5, 6, 7.

ASSESSMENT DECISION (PROCESS): CONFORMS

6.1.2 For the revision of a standard the proposal shall cover at least (a) and (e) of clause 6.1.1.

The procedural requirements are met at GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures 12.1.

ASSESSMENT DECISION (PROCEDURES): CONFORMS

ASSESSMENT DECISION (PROCESS): NOT APPLICABLE

Requirement 6.2.1 The standardizing body shall identify stakeholders relevant to the objectives and scope of the standard-setting activities by means of a stakeholder identification mapping exercise. It shall define which stakeholder groups are relevant to the subject matter and why. For each stakeholder group the standardizing body shall identify the likely key issues, key stakeholders, and which means of communication would be best to reach them.

The requirements are met at GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures Clause 6.2. Although the procedures do not contain clear procedures for the identification of stakeholders relevant to the objectives, scope, etc via the stakeholder mapping exercise, the procedures have requirements for identifying key stakeholders and disadvantaged stakeholders, which implies the relevance of the objectives and scope.

ASSESSMENT DECISION (PROCEDURES): CONFORMS

The GFC undertook a stakeholder identification exercise as identified in the Stakeholder Mapping report. The standardizing body initially identified stakeholders utilizing previous processes that were part of the EU FLEGT/VPA processes. This was appropriate for the purposes of the standard development process. This is described in the development report, including identification of key issues and appropriate forms of communication.

ASSESSMENT DECISION (PROCESS): CONFORMS

6.2.2 Identification of stakeholder groups shall be based on nine major stakeholder groups as defined by Agenda 21 of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. At least the following groups shall be included in the stakeholder mapping: • forest owners, • business and industry, • indigenous people, • non-government organizations, • scientific and technological community, • workers and trade unions

The requirements are met at GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures Clause 6.2.

ASSESSMENT DECISION (PROCEDURES): CONFORMS

The development report indicates that the stakeholder mapping process meets the requirements of the PEFC standard; and meets the Agenda 21 categories. The categories are • forest owners, • business and industry, • indigenous people, • non-government organizations, • scientific and technological community, • workers and trade unions, with additional categories for government agencies and civil society organisations.

ASSESSMENT DECISION (PROCESS): CONFORMS

Requirement 6.2.3 The standardizing body shall identify disadvantaged stakeholders and key stakeholders and address any constraints to their participation in standard-setting activities.

The requirements are met at GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures Clause 6.2.

ASSESSMENT DECISION (PROCEDURES): CONFORMS

The stakeholder mapping exercise describes indigenous groups as being disadvantaged, as well as those living outside of urban centres. Means to reach these stakeholders were also described, as were any constraints to addressing participation. During the stakeholder consultations, stakeholders noted that communication (remoteness, communications infrastructure) was a key barrier to participation. GFC ensured participation took place through electronic means. Stakeholders also noted that internal institutional capacity constraints affected participation. GNFC did, however, ensure that stakeholders were able to access meetings, documentation and other processes.

ASSESSMENT DECISION (PROCESS): CONFORMS

Requirement 6.3.1 The standardizing 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 through suitable media, as appropriate, to give stakeholders an opportunity for meaningful contributions. The announcement and invitation shall include: a) overview of the standard-setting process, b) access to the proposal for the standard (refer to 6.1), c) information about opportunities for stakeholders to participate in the process, d) requests to stakeholders to nominate their representative(s) or 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, e) explicit invitation and clear instruction on how to submit feedback on the scope and standard-setting process, and f) access to the standard-setting procedures

The requirements are met at GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 9.2

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS (PROCEDURES)

An initial public announcement was made on the commencement of the process was made on the Guyana Forest Commission website on February 26 2021 (Appendix 26). This was followed by email invitations that were sent to stakeholders between March 4 and March 9 (Appendix 27, 29, 39), which were linked to basic information regarding the development of the scheme.

In both cases the announcement was for the full announcement of the scheme on March 12; which took place in hybrid form and contained information meeting requirements (b), (c), (d), (e) and (f). GFC determined that the most appropriate form for the full announcement, i.e. inclusion of access to the proposal and standard, nominations process, and feedback processes, was best undertaken in this 'immediate' format for local stakeholders, rather than via email or written forms (Appendix 24). This was also published in local newspapers on the same date.

It must be understood that within the cultural context of Guyana, feedback and consultations using immediate communications, rather than reliance on back-and-forth correspondence is appropriate.

This was followed up with emails from GFC to stakeholders regarding the nomination processes and feedback on the development (Appendix 25).

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS (PROCESS)

6.3.2 The standardising body shall review the standard-setting process based on feedback received in response to the public announcement

The procedures meet the requirements at GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 9.2.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS (PROCEDURES)

Feedback was solicited as noted above; written feedback was positive. In addition, feedback and review of feedback has been documented in Appendix 6, which documents Working Group meetings that took place between March 12 and June 29.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS (PROCESS)

Requirement 6.4.1 The standardizing body shall establish a permanent or temporary working group or adjust the composition of an already existing working group based on nominations it received. Acceptance and refusal of nominations shall be justified in relation to the requirements for balanced representation of the working group, considerations of an appropriate gender balance, relevance of the organization, an individual's competence, an individual's relevant experience and resources available for standard-setting.

The requirements are met at GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 6.2.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS (PROCEDURES)

The working group is known as the NSSWG (National Standard Setting Working Group). The group was established based on nominations received by GFC. This has been documented in GY-REP-2023-01_Development Report, Section 3

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS (PROCESS)

Requirement 6.4.2 The working group shall: a) have balanced representation and decision-making by stakeholder categories, relevant to the subject matter and geographical scope of the standard, where no single concerned stakeholder group can dominate, nor be dominated in the process, and b) include stakeholders with expertise relevant to the subject matter of the standard, those that affected by the standard, and those that can influence implementation of the standard. The affected stakeholders shall be represented in an appropriate proportion among participants.

The requirements are met at GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 6.2.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS (PROCEDURES)

The composition of NSSWG was as follows:

Type of stakeholder	Sectoral Interest	Stakeholder organisation
Affected	Private sector/Forest owners/	National Steering Committee for Community Forest Organization (NSCCFO)
		Guyana Manufacturing & Services Association (GMSA)
		Forest Products Association (FPA)
		National Tshaos' Council (NTC)
		Indigenous Peoples' Commission (IPC)
		Guyana Agriculture Workers' Union (representing workers/trade unions)
		Amerindian People's Association (APA)

Interested	Indigenous nongovernmental organisations	National Amerindian Development Foundation (NADF)
		Guyanese Organization of Indigenous Peoples (GOIP)
		The Amerindian Action Movement of Guyana (TAAMOG)
	Environmental nongovernmental organisations	Conservation International Guyana (CI-G)
		World Wildlife Fund Guyana (WWF-G)
		Iwokrama (International Centre for Rainforest Conservation and Development)
	Government	Ministry of Amerindian Affairs (MoAA)
		Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR)
		Forestry Training Centre Inc.(FTCI)
		Guyana Forestry Commission (GFC) (Chair, Standardising, and National Governing Body)
	Civil Society	Women and Gender Equality Commission (WGEC) (representing the interests of women)
		Children and Youth (Ministry of Human Services and Social Security (MoHSSS)) (representing the interests of youth)
		Guyana School of Agriculture (GSA) (representing academia) (as a stakeholder with potential to influence standards implementation)

The categories can be balanced and relevant. The group contains appropriate levels of expertise, affected stakeholders and those who can affect standard implementation.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS (PROCESS)

Requirement 6.4.3 In order to achieve balanced representation, the standardizing body shall strive to have all identified stakeholder groups (refer to 6.2) represented. The standardizing 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. Note: When a stakeholder group is not represented and key stakeholders cannot be encouraged to participate, the standardizing body may consider alternative options.

Although balanced representation has been achieved and this balance is described, there are not procedural requirements for targets; there are no targets for the participation of stakeholders, nor the active participation of stakeholders using outreach.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: MINOR NON-CONFORMITY (PROCEDURES)

The standardizing body actively sought and achieved the participation of identified stakeholder groups, and informally set targets to achieve balanced representation. This was confirmed within stakeholder consultations. In practice, therefore, the requirements were achieved.

The development report indicates that participation was actively sought, and this has been confirmed through stakeholder discussions.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS (PROCESS)

Requirement 6.4.4 Activities 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, 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 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.

The requirements are met at GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 7.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS (PROCEDURES)

The activities of the working group have been described in GY-REP-2023-01_Development Report, Section 4.3. Working group activities have been documented in the form of both meeting minutes and recordings (Documentation Folder 06). All drafts and alterations to the drafts have been documented and provided as previous versions.

During stakeholder consultations, working group members confirmed that drafts were available, opportunities for contributions and feedback were meaningful, and that the environment was open and robust. No working group members considered the process to be problematic.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS (PROCESS)

Requirement 6.4.5 The decision of the working group to recommend the final draft for formal approval shall be taken on the basis of consensus. In order to determine whether there is any sustained opposition, the working group can utilize 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., b) telephone conference meeting(s) where there is a verbal yes/no vote, c) e-mail request to the working group for agreement or objection where the members provide a formal (written) response (vote), or d) combinations of these methods.

The requirements are met at GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clauses 7.2 and 10.1.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS (PROCEDURES)

The consensus on the final draft was taken by the working group was taken on consensus. This was recorded via email in Appendices 42 to 44. Stakeholder consultations indicated that there were no objections.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS (PROCESS)

Requirement 6.4.6 Where a vote is used in decision-making, the standard-setting procedures shall determine and include decision-making thresholds that quantifies consensus. The threshold must be consistent with the consensus definition (refer to 3.1). However, a majority vote cannot override sustained opposition in order to achieve consensus.

The requirements are met at GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clauses 7.2 and 10.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS (PROCEDURES)

Stakeholders indicated that the draft standards were agreed upon without resorting to using voting for any decision-making.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS (PROCESS)

Requirement 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, b) finding a compromise through direct negotiation between the stakeholder(s) making the objection and other stakeholders with different views on the disputed issue, c) additional round(s) of public consultation (if necessary) where further stakeholder input can help to achieve consensus on unresolved issues. The standardizing body determines the scope and duration of any additional public consultation.

The requirements are met at GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clauses 7.2 and 10. The GFC processes require clear negotiation and compromise with sectoral (stakeholder) groups as well as within the working group.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS (PROCEDURES)

Stakeholder consultations confirmed that there was no sustained opposition.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS (PROCESS)

Requirement 6.4.8 When a substantial issue cannot be resolved and sustained opposition persists, the standardizing body shall initiate dispute resolution in accordance with its procedures for impartial and objective action.

This is not addressed in the requirements. Consultation with GFC has indicated that the standardizing body will alter the procedures accordingly.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: MINOR NON-CONFORMITY (PROCEDURES)

This requirement is not applicable to the process; as no substantial issues remained unresolved.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS (PROCESS)

Requirement 6.5.1 The standardizing body shall organize 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 through suitable media, Note: In a timely manner means (at the latest) the day before the start of public consultation. b) a direct invitation to comment on the enquiry draft is sent to each stakeholder identified by stakeholder identification mapping (refer to 6.2) aiming for a balanced participation of stakeholder groups, c) invitations are sent to disadvantaged and key stakeholders by methods that ensure they reach recipients and are easy to understand, d) the enquiry draft is made publicly available, e) public consultation is for at least 60 days, f) all feedback is considered by the working group in an objective manner, and g) a synopsis of feedback is compiled for each material 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/party that gave feedback.

The requirement is met at GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 9.3.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS (PROCEDURES)

The timeline for the public consultation was as follows:

- Approval for the enquiry draft by the NSSWG took place on June 2, 2022;
- The public consultation took place from June 15 to August 13, 2022 (a 60-day period);
- The announcement for the public consultation appears to have taken place on the day of the commencement of the consultation via newspapers, and on the GFC website on the day of the commencement of the consultation;
- The announcement contained a direct invitation to comment on the standard.

Records of invitations to stakeholders have not been provided. However, stakeholders consulted during the field visit indicated that stakeholders were reached directly via email, and in the case of remote communities, were reached via dropping of hard copies of the standard at forest stations. Pre-existing meetings concerning Guyana's GTLAS system were also utilized for outreach and feedback

Feedback was provided via email and was considered to be generally positive. Stakeholders indicated that they were able to provide feedback on the drafting process through the NSSWG; NSSWG representatives consulted with their communities during the drafting process, hence the minimal nature of feedback. None of the feedback issues could be considered material.

The public consultation process was adequate for the circumstances, despite technically not meeting PEFC's requirements, specifically because of providing an announcement in suitable media in a timely manner for all stakeholders, and, because email records have not been retained and provided. Stakeholder consultations have indicated that this has not negatively impacted the standard development process.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: MINOR NON-CONFORMITY (PROCESS)

Requirement 6.5.2 For new standards the standardizing body shall organize a second round of public consultation lasting at least 30 days.

The requirement is met at GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 11.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS (PROCEDURES)

The second round of public consultation ran from November 23 to December 23. An announcement in national newspapers was made on the day of the commencement of the consultation.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS (PROCESS)

6.6 The standardizing body shall organize pilot testing of new standard(s) 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.

The requirements are met at GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 9.4.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS (PROCEDURES)

The pilot testing and subsequent report were undertaken by CFSI (Appendix 36). The testing assessed the clarity, auditability and feasibility (applicability) of the standard requirements. Direct consultation was undertaken with the CFSI consultant to discuss the pilot testing report.

GFC responded to suggested changes to the standard proposed by CFSI (Appendix 37). Pilot testing was considered by the NSSWG on October 20, 2022 and November 4, 2022.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS (PROCESS)

Requirement 7.1 The standardizing body shall approve the standard(s)/normative document(s) formally when there is evidence of consensus among the working group.

The requirements are met at GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 10.1 and 10.2.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS (PROCEDURES)

The NSSWG gave approved the standards at the NSSWG meeting on April 13, 2023. The documents were approved by the GFC Board of Directors on April 24, 2023.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS (PROCESS)

Requirement 7.2.1 The formally approved standard(s)/normative document(s) shall be published and made publicly available at no cost within 14 days of approval, or as otherwise defined by the standardizing body.

The requirements are met at GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 10.2.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS (PROCEDURES)

The final formally approved standards have been made publicly available to stakeholders. However, they are still not available on the NGB website as final versions.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: MINOR NON-CONFORMITY (PROCESS)

Requirement 7.2.2 Standard(s) shall include: a) identification and contact information for the standardizing body, b) official language of the standard, 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. d) The approval date and the date of next periodic review
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.

The requirements are met at GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 10.2.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS (PROCEDURES)

The official language is not noted on documentation.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: MINOR NON-CONFORMITY (PROCESS)

Requirement 7.2.3 Printed copies shall be made available upon request at a price that covers no more than administrative costs (if any).

The requirements are met at GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 10.2.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS (PROCEDURES)

Consultations indicated that printed copies are available upon request via the GFC.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS (PROCESS)

Requirement 7.2.4 The standardizing body shall make the development report (refer to PEFC GD 1007) publicly available.

The requirements are met at GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 10.2.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS (PROCEDURES)

The development report is currently available on the GFC website at: <https://forestry.gov.gy/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Development-Report.pdf>

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS (PROCESS)

Requirement 8.1 General The standard(s)/normative document(s) shall be reviewed at intervals that do not exceed a five-year period. The review shall be based on consideration of feedback received during the standard's implementation and a gap analysis. If necessary, a stakeholder consultation shall be organized to obtain further feedback and input.

The requirements are met at GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 10.2.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS (PROCEDURES)

Not applicable.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: NOT APPLICABLE (PROCESS)

Requirement 8.2.1 The standardizing 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 standardizing body and/or PEFC National Governing Body with clear directions for providing feedback. Note: Feedback can be sent in various formats: comments, requests for clarification and/or interpretation, complaints, etc.

The requirements are met at GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 11.1.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS (PROCEDURES)

There are clear instructions for providing feedback on the website at <https://forestry.gov.gy/pefc-contact/>.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS (PROCESS)

Requirement 8.2.2 All feedback received through all channels, including meetings, training courses, etc. shall be recorded and considered.

The requirements are met at GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 11.1.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS (PROCEDURES)

No feedback has been received on the standards yet.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: NOT APPLICABLE (PROCESS)

Requirement 8.3.1 At the start of a review, the standardizing 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.

The requirements are met at GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 11.2.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS (PROCEDURES)

Not applicable.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: NOT APPLICABLE (PROCESS)

Requirement 8.3.2 The standardizing body shall consider the latest scientific knowledge, research and relevant emerging issues.

The requirements are met at GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 11.2.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS (PROCEDURES)

Not applicable.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: NOT APPLICABLE (PROCESS)

Requirement 8.4.1 Where the feedback and the gap analysis do not identify a need to revise the standard, the standardizing body shall organize stakeholder consultation to determine whether stakeholders see a need for revising the standard. The standardizing body shall include the gap analysis in the stakeholder consultation.

The requirements are met at GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 11.3.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS (PROCEDURES)

Not applicable.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: NOT APPLICABLE (PROCESS)

Requirement 8.4.2 At the start of a review, the standardizing body shall update the stakeholder identification mapping (refer to clause 6.2).

The requirements are met at GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 11.3.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS (PROCEDURES)

Not applicable.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: NOT APPLICABLE (PROCESS)

Requirement 8.4.3 The standardizing body shall organize: a) a public consultation period of at least 30 days (following the requirements of clause 6.5.1) and/or, b) stakeholder meetings.

The requirements are met at GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 11.3.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS (PROCEDURES)

Not applicable.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: NOT APPLICABLE (PROCESS)

Requirement 8.4.4 The standardizing body shall announce the review in a timely manner (refer to 6.3).

The requirements are met at GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 11.3.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS (PROCEDURES)

Not applicable.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: NOT APPLICABLE (PROCESS)

Requirement 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 standardizing body shall decide whether to reaffirm the standard or whether a revision of the standard is necessary.

Requirement 8.5.2 The decision shall be made at the highest decision-making level of the standardizing body

Requirement 8.5.3 Where the decision is to reaffirm a standard, the standardizing body shall provide a justification for the decision and make the justification publicly available.

The requirements are met at GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 11.4.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS (PROCEDURES)

Not applicable.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: NOT APPLICABLE (PROCESS)

Requirement 8.5.4 Where the decision is to revise the standard, the standardizing body shall specify the type of revision (normal or editorial revision).

At 11.4, the wording of the standard states that a decision relating to the revision "normal or editorial" shall be taken at the highest level of the Standardising Body. However, this does not address a clear requirement that the type of revision be specified.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: MINOR NON-CONFORMITY (PROCEDURES)

ASSESSMENT DECISION: NOT APPLICABLE (PROCESS)

Requirement 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.

The requirements are met at GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 12.1.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS (PROCEDURES)

Not applicable.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: NOT APPLICABLE (PROCESS)

Requirement 9.2 Editorial revisions can be made without triggering the normal revision process. The standardizing body shall approve the editorial changes formally and publish an amendment or a new edition of the standard.

Requirement 9.3.1 A time-critical revision is a revision between two periodic reviews using a fast-track process.

Requirement 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 b) Instruction by PEFC International to comply with specific or new PEFC requirements within a timescale that is too short for a normal revision.

Requirement 9.3.3 The time-critical revision shall follow these steps: a) The standardizing body shall draft the revised standard, b) The standardizing body may consult stakeholders, but it is not mandatory, c) The revised standard shall be approved formally at the highest appropriate decision-making level of the standardizing body, d) The standardizing body shall explain the justification for the urgent change(s) and make the justification publicly available.

The requirements are met at GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 12.2 and 12.3.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS (PROCEDURES)

Not applicable.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: NOT APPLICABLE (PROCESS)

Requirement 9.4.1 A revision shall define the application date and transition period of the revised standard(s)/ normative document(s).

The requirements are met at GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 12.4.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS (PROCEDURES)

Not applicable.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: NOT APPLICABLE (PROCESS)

Requirement 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.

The requirements are met at GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 12.4.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS (PROCEDURES)

Not applicable.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: NOT APPLICABLE (PROCESS)

Requirement 9.4.3 The transition period shall not exceed one year. The standardizing body may determine a longer period when justified by exceptional circumstances

The requirements are met at GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 12.4.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS (PROCEDURES)

Not applicable.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: NOT APPLICABLE (PROCESS)



7. FOREST MANAGEMENT STANDARD

This section assesses of the forest certification standard(s) against PEFC ST 1003, Sustainable Forest Management – Requirements. All references are to GY-ST-2023-01 unless specified.

REQUIREMENT 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;

The standard utilizes a “defined forest area” as “an area of forest (including land and water) to which the requirements of the Standard are applied” (Definitions, Section 5), and must be applied as indicated in Section 6, “General requirements of the standard.”

The standard contains 11 Principles, 50 criteria and 139 indicators that are applicable to the defined forest area and/or the forest operator that ensures the intent is achieved at the defined forest area, and in additional cases those of adjacent communities.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

b) be clear, performance based and auditable;

The 50 criteria and 139 indicators are clear, performance based and verifiable. The ‘verifiers’ provide implementation guidance for auditors in application that further reduce any ambiguity as to their clarity, performance basis and auditability. This has been confirmed by the pilot testing report undertaken as a part of the standard development process.

In addition, each indicator contains a number of verifiers. Many verifiers are based on Code of Practice for Forest Operations, No.1 of 2018, and the Guyana Guidelines for Forest Operations (Large Concessions) and (Small Concessions) and the country’s Wood Tracking System Requirements.

Compliance with the regulatory requirements in these documents are a legal requirement and, as such, are referenced in the Annex to GY-ST-2023-01.

The Code of Practice and Guidelines also effectively serve as the practical requirements for GY-ST-2023-01 and deliver clear and detailed compliance with against PEFC ST 1003.

The verifiers are highly specific, and forest managers will be required to assemble documentation for audit. However, for the benefit of auditors and the training of auditors going forward, it would be appropriate that a greater level of clarity is provided on these verifiers. As noted in the pilot testing report, the following documents are utilized as verifiers:

1. Monitoring Report (GFC/FMD). This document is the periodic report on concession monitoring (against the CoP and Guidelines) by the GFC. It applies for large and small concessions.
2. Guidelines for Forest Operations for State Forest Authorizations- Timber Sales Agreements, Wood Cutting License Holders, State Forest Exploratory Permits (SFA-TSAs, WCLs, SFEPs). This document which is mandatory according to the legislation, provides guidance in all aspects of forest management and operations for large concessions. Exhibit 7-2 provides a cross-reference table indicating relevant sections of the CoP against which to assess compliance by the FSO.
3. Guidelines for Forest Operations or State Forest Authorizations- State Forest Permission (SFAs-SFPs). This document which is mandatory according to the legislation, provides guidance in all aspects of forest management and operations for small concessions.
4. Code of Practice for Forest Operations for State Forest Authorizations. This document which is mandatory according to the legislation, provides an overarching Code in all aspects of forest management and operations for large and small concessions sections of the Guidelines against which to assess compliance by the FSO.
5. Tag Request Form/Tag Issuance Letter. These are official GFC documents that record issuance and receipt of log tags (for small and large concessions, respectively).
6. Forest Management Plan (FMP). A 5-year forest management plan required to be written according to the FMP Guidelines (1999) and submitted to and approved by GFC. Applies to large concessions only.
7. Annual Operations Plan (AOP). A 1-year forest management/operations plan required to be submitted to and approved by GFC. Applies to large concessions only.
8. Area Work Plan. This is a non-mandatory document that is required by the GSSF for small concessions, Amerindian Villages and Private Land. There currently is no formal agreed structure for the document but it is recommended to be a “mini” FMP appropriate to the size and scale of operations on small concessions.

In addition, there are clear points where the verifiers require specific information from regulatory documents or adherence to the regulatory requirements. These are cross referenced below, as taken from the pilot testing report.

ASSESSMENT OF THE GUYANA NATIONAL FOREST CERTIFICATION SCHEME AGAINST PEFC COUNCIL REQUIREMENTS
FINAL REPORT – JANUARY 2024

Topic	Indicator	CoP §	Large Guidelines §	Small Guidelines §
Labour	3.1.2/3.2.1/3.2.4/3.2.14	11.2	11.2	11.2
OHS	3.3.1/3.3.10	10	10	10
Harvesting	6.2.1	2.3.3/4.1/4.3/4.4	6	2.2
Silviculture	6.2.1	Not specifically referred in CoP/Guidelines		
Carbon	6.2.1	1.6	Not specifically referred in Guidelines	
Quotas	6.2.1	2.2.4	2.2.2/2.4	2.1
Conversion for infrastructure	6.3.1	3.2	3.3	3.3
Afforestation	6.3.2	Not specifically referred in CoP/Guidelines		
Ecosystem health	7.1.1/7.1.2	7/8	7/8	7/8
Genetic diversity/structure	7.2.1	4/7	4/7	4/7
Waste disposal	7.3.1-4	8/9/10	8/9/10	8/9/10
SFM	8.1.1	1.4/1.7/2.1/2.2	1.4/2	1.4
Financial costs	8.2.2	Not specifically referred in CoP/Guidelines		
RIL/regeneration	8.3.1/9.4.1	1.1/6.1/4.4.5/6.4	1.1/2.1/6.1	1.1/4.3.1/6.1/6.4
Roads/skid trails/bridges	8.5.1	4.5.1/4.7/5.1-3/5.6/6.3/7.2-4/App 2	4.5/4.7/5.2/5.4/5.7/6.3/6.5.2/7.2-4	5.1-3/6.3/7.1-2
Biodiversity	9.1.1	Not specifically referred in CoP		2.2.2/4.4.1
Canopy gaps	9.4.3	4.4.5	4.4.5	4.3.1/6.4
Special tree/areas marked	9.4.4/11.3.1	4.4.1/4.4.6	4.4/4.6	4.1/4.2.3/4.2.1/4.3.2/6.1.2/10.6.2
Management of Infrastructure	9.6.2	3.3/4.3.2/5.7-8	5.8-9	3.3/5.4
Protection forest	10.1.1-2	4.4.3/4.6	4.4.3	4.2-3
Steep slopes/erosion	10.2.1-3	4.4/5.4	5.4.2	4.2/4.4.1/5.2/5.3.6/5.4.4
Socio-economic functions	11.1.1/11.3.1	1.1/2.2.1/11.2	1.1/2.2.1/2.2.2/2.2.4/4.4.1/4.4.3/11.2	1.1/4.2.1/4.2.3/11.2
Public access	11.2.1	Not specifically referred in CoP/Guidelines		
Local economies	11.6.1	1.4	11.2	11.2

Although this does not impact the assessment against the PEFC benchmarks, it would provide additional clarity to the standard.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

OBSERVATION: The Code of Practice for Forest Operations, No.1 of 2018, and the Guyana Guidelines for Forest Operations (Large Concessions) and (Small Concessions) could be referenced as normative documents in the standard. The table above could be cross-referenced in the Annex to the standard.

c) apply to activities of all forest operators in the defined forest area who have an impact on achieving compliance with the requirements;

A ‘forest sector operator’ is defined at 5 “Terms and Definitions”: “A Forest Sector Operator is a natural person or body corporate registered with and approved by the Guyana Forestry Commission to conduct forestry operation(s)”.

Forest Sector Operators must be certified to the standard for the ‘defined forest area’, to which the standard applies.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

d) require record-keeping that provides evidence of compliance with the requirements of the forest management standards;

The standard meets the requirements at Section 6 “General Requirements of the Standard” and Indicator 4.1.1.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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;

The standard meets the requirements at Section 6 “General Requirements of the Standard”

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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;

The standard does not meet the requirements as it does not explicitly prevent a system-specific claim from being used, even if that claim is 0%. The risk of this taking place is low given that the standard meets the requirements at (e) and (g) and can be considered a minor non-conformity.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: MINOR NON-CONFORMITY

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;

The standard meets the requirements at Section 6 “General Requirements of the Standard”.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

h) specify requirements concerning the information which need to be provided to a PEFC chain of custody certified customer;

The standard meets the requirements at Section 6 “General Requirements of the Standard”.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

The overview of applicable legislation is included at Annex A Notes on the GSSF. Annex notes are linked to points in the standard that are addressed by national legislation and require elaboration from the requirements of the standard.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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; b) the relevant needs and expectations of these stakeholders.

The standard defines stakeholders in the general definitions (Section 5), and meets the requirements for identifying affected stakeholders and determining needs and expectations at Indicator 4.3.1. Indicators for engaging with stakeholders are elaborated at Indicators 4.3 to 4.6.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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

Determination of the boundaries and applicability and establishment of scope takes place first at Section 3.2, which used the term “defined forest area”, to which the requirements of the Standard are applied; this is used as the basis for verification at Criterion 1.1, which requires legal titles, gazettals and/or GIS shape documentation to determine the legal establishment of those areas.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

4.3.2 The standard requires that forest management shall comprise the cycle of inventory and planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and shall include an appropriate assessment of the social, environmental and economic impacts of forest management practices. This shall form a basis for a cycle of continuous improvement

Operators are required to undertake inventory and planning as part of the Wood Tracking System requirements (Indicator 1.2.4), comprising:

- *Pre-harvest inventory.*
- *Conduct of pre-harvest inventory for all blocks to be harvested in the operational year to establish the maximum AAC within a given harvesting cycle.*
- *Pre-harvest inventory report, including stock map.*
- *Affixing tags with a unique inventory number on each tree to be harvested.*
- *Forest Management Plan.*
- *Annual Operational Plan with pre-harvesting inventory information.*

For monitoring and evaluation, monitoring and evaluation requirements are stipulated under Criterion 5.1.

For an assessment of impacts and continual improvement, requirements are established in Indicator 5.2.1 (internal audit); indicator 5.2.2 (management review); indicator 5.3.1 (responding to non conformities)

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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; b) to continuously improve the sustainable forest management system.

The requirement is met at Indicator 1.4.1 (a) and (b).

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

5.2 The standard requires that this commitment shall be publicly available.

The requirement is met at Indicator 1.4.2, which requires the commitment from 1.4.1 is made available publicly.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

5.3 The standard requires that responsibilities for sustainable forest management shall be clearly defined and assigned.

The requirement is met at Indicator 1.4.1 (c).

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

The requirement is met at Indicator 4.1.1.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

6.1.2 The standard requires that inventory and mapping of forest resources shall be established and maintained, adequate to local and national conditions and in correspondence with the requirements described in this international benchmark standard.

Large operators are required to undertake a pre-harvest inventory as part of the Wood Tracking System (WTS) requirements. This is explicitly referred to at Indicator 1.2.4, where operators are required to comply with the WTS. The WTS also requires the submission of an annual operating plan (AOP), which requires annual documented updating (referenced in Annex 1 fn 5).

In the case of small operators, GFC establishes maintains mapping, as well as the inventory on an annual basis for Annual Operation Plans (AOP). AOPs must be signed off by the operators before activity can take place; maintenance of inventory takes place at the block level utilizing log tagging and tracking under the WTS. This is referred to in Indicator 1.2.4.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

6.2 Management plan

6.2.1 The standard requires that management plans shall be: a) elaborated and periodically updated or continually adjusted; b) appropriate to the size and use of the forest area; c) based on applicable local, national and international legislation as well as existing land-use or other official plans; and d) adequately covering forest resources.

The requirements are met at Indicators 4.2.3, 4.1.2, 4.1.3.

Indicator 4.1.2 requires the establishment and maintenance of a forest management system that incorporates a forest management plan (FMP) appropriate for the size and scale of operations.

Verifiers for the indicator are the mandated FMP and AOP under the national WTS mandatory requirements. FMPs are prepared at five year intervals by operators for large concessions and the GFC for small concessions; AOPs are provided on an annual basis by operators.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

6.2.2 The standard requires that management plans shall take into account the different uses or functions of the managed forest area.

Indicator 11.1.1 states that operators are required to ensure “forest management planning recognises the importance of all socio-economic functions of forests and has clearly defined strategies to respect and enhance these functions.”

Indicator 4.1.2 requires the establishment and maintenance of a forest management system that incorporates a forest management plan (FMP) appropriate for the size and scale of operations.

The FMP must adhere to GFC FMP guidelines. FMPs are “based upon a detailed social, economic and environmental appraisal, setting out the order and extent of all activities to be carried out in a concession” and must contain “the plan period: the area to be harvested during the period and projected volumes of produce to be extracted; major works to be carried out including length of main road(s), bridges, buildings, port facilities; major equipment to be purchased; training programmes; social infrastructure and programmes; and important forest protection and conservation activities.” At a more detailed level it also includes requirements for protection functions, conservation functions and social functions.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

Indicator 4.1.2 requires the establishment and maintenance of a forest management system that incorporates a forest management plan (FMP) appropriate for the size and scale of operations.

The FMP must adhere to GFC FMP guidelines. These require:

- A description of the FMU in written and map form (boundaries, topography, hydrology, vegetation maps, compartments and road systems, infrastructure, etc.);
- Overall objectives for timber production, NTFP, tourism, etc.
- Calculation of cutting cycle and AAC, based on a 60-year cutting cycle for each species to be marketed, as well as inventory and forest organisation.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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

Indicator 8.1.1 requires operators to demonstrate how “planned forest management operations maintain the capability of the forest to produce a range of timber and non-forest timber products and services on a sustainable basis.”

Indicator 4.1.2 requires the establishment and maintenance of a forest management system that incorporates a forest management plan (FMP) appropriate for the size and scale of operations.

The FMP must adhere to GFC FMP guidelines. Objectives for the FMP include “To sustain the supply of other forest products and services” and the plan states that “cutting cycles for other products must be based on the best available growth information.”

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

6.2.5 The standard requires that management plans specify ways and means to minimise the risk of degradation and damage to forest ecosystems.

The requirement is met at Indicator 7.1.1.

In addition, the verifiers include:

Adherence to Sections 7 and 8 of the Code of Practice and the Code of Practice more broadly, which includes as part of Reduced Impact Logging techniques:

- Pre-harvest inventory and planning to
 - Optimising primary and secondary road network to minimise damage
 - Planning of skid trail network to minimise soil disturbance
 - Identifying cornerstone species

The FMP (as per requirements (see above)), which has an objective to ensure ensure that the health of the forest ecosystem and its productive capacity are maintained.

This includes specified information on measures taken disruption to ecological processes and damage to surrounding trees and canopy gaps, including:

- specification of the silvicultural system to be applied, which includes description of harvesting procedures to be used, including (but not limited to tree selection, directional felling, winching);
- specification of chemical use to minimize disruption to forest ecosystems.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

6.2.6 The standard requires that management plans shall take into account the results of scientific research.

Indicator 4.1.2 requires the establishment and maintenance of a forest management system that incorporates a forest management plan (FMP) appropriate for the size and scale of operations.

The FMP must adhere to GFC FMP guidelines. These require taking into account previous and current research activities applicable to the area in forest management of planning, including an overview of applicability to the operations.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

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.

The requirements are met at Indicators 4.2.2 and 4.2.3.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

The requirement is met at Indicator 1.4.3.

Guyana and the European Union have signed a VPA. This was signed on 15 December 2022.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

There is no broad requirement in the standard for this requirement. However, FSO (forest sector operators) as defined by the standard on page 8 as those that have been approved for a State Forest Authorisation. These are captured under the same legal definition for FSOs under the Guyana-EU FLEGT VPA¹ (see Annex II of the agreement) under that agreement, FSOs must comply with the legality definition under the agreement, which defines legislation applicable in 6.3.1.1.

Although the compliance requirement is not explicitly stated within the agreement, the legality definition at PEFC 6.3.1.1 must be complied with.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

6.3.1.3 The standard requires that where no anti-corruption legislation exists, the organisation must take alternative anti-corruption measures appropriate to the risk of corruption.

The requirements are met at Indicator 1.4.4 and 1.4.5.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

The requirements are met at Indicator 1.5.1.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

¹ [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:22023A0505\(01\)](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:22023A0505(01))

The requirements are defined at Indicators 1.1.1, 1.1.2 and 1.1.3 under Criterion 1.1 for the legal right to harvest, which incorporates property rights, land tenure and tree ownership.

There are three types of State Forest Authorisations that operators can harvest under in Guyana, and these are defined within the standard: State Forest; Amerindian Villages; private lands. These are defined respectively in the indicators noted above for operators, establish rights accordingly, and require documentation as part of the verifiers. Each of these requires different definition, documentation and establishment as part of the standard.

- State Forest (1.1.1)
 - o Require a State Forest Authorisation, and these are only granted by the GFC when it is established there is no other existing legal ownership on the land, and this defines documents and establishes property rights, tenure, and tree ownership (right to harvest)
- Amerindian Villages (1.1.2)
 - o Require absolute grant or certificate of title, evidence of FPIC, and an agreement between a Village Council and operator (which provides harvesting rights).
- Private lands (1.1.3)
 - o Requires absolute title, absolute grant (for land) or transport authorization.

With regards to customary and traditional rights related to forest land, these are recognized, this is met at Indicators 2.1.1 and 2.1.2

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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

The requirement for recognizing the framework of legal, customary and traditional rights is met at Indicator 2.1.1.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

The requirement is met at Indicator 2.1.1.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

The requirement is met at Indicator 3.1.2.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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 informed about the risks involved with their work and about preventive measures.

The requirements are met for: identification of risks (Indicator 3.3.2); planning and organization (Indicator 3.3.4); performance (Indicator 3.3.3). Informing of workers is met at Indicator 3.3.5.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

The first part of the requirement (working conditions) is met at Indicator 3.3.8 and 3.3.4; for training, this is met at Indicator 3.3.8. For working hours and leave, these are met at 3.2.11, which requires that national laws be met as part of the Indicator; in addition, Indicator 3.2.9 requires other conditions (wages) meet legal minimum standards.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

The requirement is replicated at Indicator 3.2.9.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

Indicator 3.2.5 meets the requirement on discrimination, equal opportunity and gender equality; an indicator with a documented anti-discrimination policy is part of the indicator.

Indicator 3.2.6 promotes also gender equality in relation to wages and remuneration.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

The requirements are met at Indicator 4.1.3.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

The benchmark is principally met at Indicator 3.3.13, which requires that all workers are provided training to ensure competency for all forest management activities, as well as providing ongoing training. This includes contractors. Needs for training are identified at Indicator 3.3.12.

In addition, reduced impact logging (RIL) training is provided for workers at Indicator 8.3., and additional training is provided for forest-dependent communities at Indicator 11.6.2.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

7.3 Communication

7.3.1 The standard requires that effective communication and consultation with local communities, indigenous peoples and other stakeholders relating to sustainable forest management shall be provided.

The requirements are met at Indicators 4.3.2, 4.3.3 and 4.3.4. The requirements state that procedures must be established and implemented, must culturally appropriate and meaningful, and must be documented.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

The requirements are replicated at Indicators 4.3.5 and 4.3.6.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

The requirement is met at Indicator 4.1.2.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

7.5.2 The standard requires that the documented information is relevant, and updated as appropriate, to the activities of the organisation.

The requirement is met at Indicator 4.1.2.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

8. OPERATION

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

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

The standard meets the requirements at Indicators 6.1.1 and 6.1.2.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

The standard meets the requirements at Indicator 6.2.1. The indicator specifically requires management practices that enhance or maintain the forest's carbon sequestration capacities. This is achieved through adhering to allowable harvesting rates and post-harvest remedies.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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

The standard meets the requirements at Indicator 6.4.1.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

8.1.4 The standard requires that forest conversion shall not occur unless in justified circumstances where the conversion: a) is in compliance with national and regional policy and legislation applicable for land use and forest management and is a result of national or regional land-use planning governed by a governmental or other official authority including consultation with affected stakeholders; and b) entails a small proportion (no greater than 5 %) of forest type within the certified area; and c) does not have negative impacts on ecologically important forest areas, culturally and socially significant areas, or other protected areas; and d) does not destroy areas of significantly high carbon stock; and e) makes a contribution to long-term conservation, economic, and social benefits.

The standard replicates the requirements at Indicator 6.3.1. "Carbon stock" is defined within the standard. However, "significantly high carbon stock" is not defined. The Guyana Forest Commission and Guyana's government have undertaken significant work on stratifying carbon pools, through the country's Low Carbon Development Strategy² and its REDD programs. It is possible for a threshold or benchmark to be determined with reference to an aggregate or mean across forest operations that can be annexed to the standard.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: MINOR NON-CONFORMITY

8.1.5 The standard requires that afforestation of ecologically important non-forest ecosystems shall not occur unless in justified circumstances where the conversion:

a) is in compliance with national and regional policy and legislation applicable for land use and forest management and is a result of national or regional land-use planning governed by a governmental or other official authority; and b) is established based on a decision-

² <https://lcds.gov.gy/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Guyanas-Low-Carbon-Development-Strategy-2030.pdf>

making basis where affected stakeholders have opportunities to contribute to the decision-making on conversion through transparent and participatory consultation processes; and c) does not have negative impacts on threatened (including vulnerable, rare or endangered) nonforest ecosystems, culturally and socially significant areas, important habitats of threatened species or other protected areas; and d) entails a small proportion of the ecologically important non-forest ecosystem managed by an organisation; and e) does not destroy areas of significantly high carbon stock; and f) makes a contribution to long-term conservation, economic, and social benefits.

The standard meets the requirement at Indicator 6.3.2; as above, a definition of high carbon stock is not included.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: MINOR NON-CONFORMITY

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 b) is established based on a decision-making basis where affected stakeholders have opportunities to contribute to the decision-making on conversion through transparent and participatory consultation processes; and c) has a positive impact on long-term carbon sequestration capacity of forest vegetation; and d) does not have negative impacts on ecologically important forest areas, culturally and socially significant areas, or other protected areas; and e) safeguards protective functions of forests for society and other regulating or supporting ecosystem services; and f) safeguards socio-economic functions of forests, including the recreational function and aesthetic values of forests and other cultural services; and g) has a land history providing evidence that the degradation is not the consequence of deliberate poor forest management practices; and h) is based on credible evidence demonstrating that the area is neither recovered nor in the process of recovery.

This is not applicable to the standard. The standard notes that “plantations have been excluded from the standard” (Section 1) and that “This Standard applies to all tenures where commercial forestry operations are undertaken except State land in conversion” (Section 3.2).

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

The requirements are met at Indicators 7.1.2 and 7.1.3. In terms of application, this is delivered via compliance with Sections 7 and 8 of the Code of Practice, which covers Post-Harvest Activities and Operational Hygiene respectively. Among other things, it places clear limits that prevent over-harvesting beyond the AAC limits.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

The indicator is met at 7.2.1 in part, although does not address species and structural diversity. However, genetic diversity is addressed 9.1.1 at the planning level with regards to maintaining genetic diversity; structural diversity is also promoted at 9.1.2.

With regards to 9.1.1, this is implemented via the Guidelines for Forest Operations, stipulating requirements for biodiversity reserves for each concession.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

Use of fire is not permitted as a management tool within the standard, the guidelines or other operational documents. All references to fire within the legislative requirements are for suppression, prevention and control.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

The requirement is met at Indicator 6.3.2.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

The requirements are met at Indicators 7.3.1, 7.3.2, 7.3.3, 7.3.4

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

The requirements are met at Indicators 7.4.1.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

8.2.7 The standard requires that any use of pesticides is documented.

The requirement is met at Indicator 7.4.2.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

The requirement is met at Indicator 7.4.3.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

The requirement is met at Indicator 7.4.3.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

The requirement is met at Indicator 7.4.2.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

The requirement is met at Indicator 7.4.4.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

The requirement is met at Indicator 8.1.1. With regards to delivering compliance, the Guidelines for Forest Operations provide clear and prescriptive requirements for maintaining productivity at both the planning stage (2.1) and the operational stage (2.2).

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

The requirement is met at Indicators 8.2.1 and 8.2.2.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

The requirement is primarily met at Indicator 8.3.1. In terms of delivering compliance, this includes verifiers in the Guidelines, including clear felling restrictions (4.4.5), controlled felling (6.1) and skidding (6.4).

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

The requirements are met with Indicators 8.2.1, 8.4.1, 8.4.2, 8.4.3, 8.4.4. In terms of delivering compliance in planning for large concessions, this is determined laid out in the requirements for the FMP, specifically calculations of AAC in 10.1 of the AWP Guidelines.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

Indicators 8.5.1, 8.5.2, 9.6.2. In terms of specifics for compliance for: planning the AWP requirements are specific in terms of the informational requirements for the planning stage for all infrastructure; the annual operational plan (see Code of Practise) requires review of work carried out on an annual basis relating to all infrastructure.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

The requirement is met at Indicator 9.1.1. to 9.1.1, this is implemented via the Guidelines for Forest Operations, stipulating requirements for biodiversity reserves for each concession

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

8.4.2 The standard requires that inventory, mapping and planning of forest resources shall identify, protect, conserve or set aside ecologically important forest areas. Note: This does not prohibit forest management activities that do not damage the important ecologic values of those biotopes.

The requirement is met at Indicators 9.2.1, 9.2.2, 9.2.3.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

8.4.3 The standard requires that protected, threatened and endangered plant and animal species shall not be exploited for commercial purposes. Where necessary, measures shall be taken for their protection and, where relevant, to increase their population. Note: The requirement does not preclude trade according to CITES requirements.

The requirement is met at Indicators 9.3.1 and 9.3.2.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

The requirements are met at Indicators 9.4.1, 9.4.2, 9.4.3 and 9.4.4.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

The requirement is met at Indicator 6.3.2, specifically requirements (c) (does not have negative impacts) and (f) (involve tree species and provenances suited to the site conditions). Verifiers note that any afforestation must be approved by the regulatory body; afforestation must only be approved by the GFC and in accordance with the Forests Act (2009), which requires consultation with stakeholders for any afforestation agreement to be approved.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

Forest regeneration is addressed in relation to this requirement at 9.4.1, 9.4.3 and 9.4.4. In application, the successful regeneration of forests after harvesting is designed to ensure natural regeneration of forests ensuring, for example, that seed trees are demarcated prior to harvest and for skid trail demarcation. Similarly, the requirements for canopy gaps are oriented towards canopy gaps for the successful regeneration of forest areas. Similarly, the Guidelines promote connectivity (5.4.7 Canopy bridges and roadside banks).

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

8.4.7 The standard requires that genetically-modified trees shall not be used.

The requirement is met at Indicator 9.5.1.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

The requirement is met at Indicator 9.1.2.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

8.4.9 The standard requires that traditional management practices that create valuable ecosystems on appropriate sites shall be supported, where appropriate.

The requirement is met at Indicator 11.5.1.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

The requirement is met at Indicators 9.4.1, 9.4.2, 9.4.3 and 9.4.4, which outlines requirements for tending and harvesting operations.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

8.4.11 The standard requires that infrastructure shall be planned and constructed in a way that minimises 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.

The requirements are met at Indicators 8.5.2 and 9.6.2.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

Although the standard addresses exploitation and protection of animal populations, the standard does not address pressure of animal populations on forest regeneration, growth and biodiversity. The Guyana forest context, where there is little or no livestock agriculture, and a general absence of feral animals or pests means that have an impact on forest regeneration or biodiversity. Despite this, this should be addressed within the management standard.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: MINOR NON-CONFORMITY

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.

The requirement is met at Indicator 7.1.4.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

The requirement is primarily replicated in Indicator 10.1.1. However, there are additional requirements at 6.1.1, 6.1.2, 10.1.2, 10.2.1, 10.2.2, 10.2.3, 10.2.4, 10.2.5, 10.2.6 that also contribute to the requirement.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

The requirements are met at Indicators 10.1.2, 10.2.3.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

The requirements are met at Indicators 10.2.2, 10.2.3, 10.2.4, 10.2.5, 10.2.6.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

Avoiding general adverse effects on water quality and quantity is addressed at indicator 10.2.1.

Inappropriate use of chemicals/harmful substances and their potential impact on water quality is addressed under 8.4 of the Guidelines for Forest Operations; inappropriate use of silvicultural practices affecting water quality is addressed at 4.4 in the Guidelines for Forest Operations.

Guidelines for Forest Operations (4.4) addresses downstream water balance and quality by introducing strict requirements for riparian buffers; Post Harvest Activities (7) addresses downstream water values in relation to post-harvesting.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

The requirement is primarily met at 8.5.2. Compliance with the guidelines for the construction of the roads, bridges and infrastructure are a verifier for the Indicator, at 4.5.1, 4.7, 5.1.3, 5.6, 6.3, 7.2-4 a. These guidelines minimise bare soil exposure, avoids the introduction of soil into watercourses and preserves the natural level and function of water courses and river beds in a highly prescriptive manner. Drainage is addressed at 5 (Construction of Road Network) within the Guidelines.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

The requirement is met at Indicator 11.1.1

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

The requirement is met at Indicator 11.2.1.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

The requirement is met at Indicator 11.3.1

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

The requirement is met at Indicator 11.4.1

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

The requirement is met at Indicator 11.5.1

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

The requirement is met at Indicator 11.6.1 and 11.6.2.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

The requirement is met at Indicator 11.7.1 and 11.7.2.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

The requirements are met at Indicators 5.1.1 and 5.1.2.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

The requirements are met at Indicators 5.1.1 and 5.1.2.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

Requirements are met at Indicators 5.1.1 and 5.1.2 for monitoring. With regards to the regulation and control of the use of non-wood forest products, hunting and fishing, this is addressed at Indicator 9.3.2, where the FSO is required to actively discourage illegal hunting and trapping of species.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

9.1.4 The standard requires that working conditions shall be regularly monitored and adapted as necessary.

Working conditions are monitored as required under the Forest Operation Guidelines (10.1.2), the establishment of the Joint Workplace Health and Safety Committee, which has key functions to ensure that recommendations on monitoring and adapting workplace conditions, specifically . the identification of potential or existing hazards of materials, processes or equipment; and safety and health experience and work practices and standards in similar or other industries of which the employer has knowledge.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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 b) is effectively implemented and maintained.

The requirement is met at Indicator 5.2.2

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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; b) define the audit criteria and scope for each audit; c) select the auditors and conduct audits to ensure objectivity and the impartiality of the audit process; d) ensure that the results of the audits are reported to relevant management; e) retain documented information as evidence of the implementation of the audit programme and the audit results.

The requirement is replicated at Indicator 5.2.1.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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; 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; d) opportunities for continual improvement.

The requirement is replicated at Indicator 5.2.2.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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.

The requirement is met at Indicator 5.3.1 in the Verifiers, where a system for detecting and responding to nonconformities must be established.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

9.3.3 The standard requires that documented information as evidence of the results of management reviews shall be retained.

The requirement is met at Indicator 5.3.1 in the Verifiers, where Records of nonconformities identified, and corrective actions implemented

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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

The requirement is replicated at Indicator 5.3.1.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

10.1.2 The standard requires that corrective actions shall be appropriate to the effects of the nonconformities encountered.

The requirement is replicated at Indicator 5.3.1.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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; b) the results of any corrective action.

The requirement is replicated at Indicator 5.3.1.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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

The requirement is met at Indicator 5.2.2.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

8. GROUP CERTIFICATION MODEL

GENERAL

The following is a summary of the assessment against the requirements.

4.1 Understanding the group organisation and its context

The general framework is determined as follows at GY-ST-2023-01 2.5:

2.5 Group certification shall be available for individuals, existing community logging groups and/or entities which come together voluntarily for this purpose. As a condition for group certification, all applicants (individuals or group forest managers/owners) shall define and document: • their motivation and objectives for the certification; • any other specific circumstances which influence/impact the implementation of the group management system; and • the proposed certified area

Note: “The term “group organisation” is equivalent to the term “regional organisation” if the group is defined by in-country regional boundaries”

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

4.2 Understanding the needs and expectations of affected stakeholders

The general needs and expectations are required to be determined as follows at GY-ST-2023-01 2.5:

The Group Entity shall identify and document: • the affected stakeholders that are relevant for the group management system and the relevant expectations of these affected stakeholders;

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

4.3 Determining the scope of the group management system

Definitions that are in conformity with the benchmark standard are provided in 2.4 Terms and Definitions as follows:

Group organisation: *A group of participants represented by the Group Entity for the purposes of attaining and maintaining certification. A binding written agreement shall be established between a participant and the Group Entity. The term “group organisation” is equivalent to the term “regional organisation” if the group is defined by in-country regional boundaries*

Certified area: *The forest area covered by a sustainable forest management system according to the GSSFM and duly certified by a recognised Certification Body. In the group certification context, the certified area is the sum of forest areas of the participants and covered by a Group Certificate*

Group Certificate: *A document confirming that the group organisation complies with the requirements of the Guyana Standard for Sustainable Forest Management or the CoC Standard and other applicable requirements of the GNFCs*

Document confirming participation in group certification “Confirming participation” is defined under the broader definition of “Documented information”, which notes that “It is issued to a participant that refers to the group forest certificate and that confirms the participant as being covered by the scope of the group forest certification (both forest management certification)”.

The boundaries and applicability of the group management system are determined as follows:

Boundaries: *As a condition for group certification, all applicants (individuals or group forest managers/owners) shall define and document: ● the proposed certified area.*

Applicability *2.6. Applicability of Group Certification: Group certification shall be available for: ● forest managers/owners; ● processors and manufacturers; ● traders including exporters; ● timber-based forest products; and ● non-timber forest products (excluding fauna).*

The Group Entity shall identify and document: ● the group organisation and its elements (legal status and name of the Group Entity and names and details of each participant)

The requirements for the Group Forest Management standard are defined at 2.2 Scope. It is noted that the requirements for group entities are for conformity with the system’s Sustainable Forest Management standard in its entirety.

The definitions for ‘Documented Information’ require that the scope of the group certification is covered under Definitions.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

4.4 Group Management System

Requirements for internal audit for the Group Entity and Group Participants are stated at 2.13.1.

Requirements for a certified PEFC chain of custody system are in place at 2.5.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

5.1 Organisational roles, responsibilities and authorities

All PEFC Requirements for the functions and responsibilities of the group entity are replicated at 2.7.

PEFC requirements for the functions and responsibilities of participants are specified as follows:

A binding written agreement, including a commitment on conformity with the sustainable forest management standard and other applicable requirements of the forest certification system is required at 2.8.

12-month exclusion requirements on previously excluded participants are required at 2.16.

Requirements 5.1.2 (b) to (f) are replicated at 2.8.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

5.2 Commitment and policy

All group entity requirements for commitment and policy are replicated at 2.9.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

6. Planning

The requirement for any changes to group management systems being changed is met at 2.10, where group management must develop a group management plan that must be updated to reflect any changes to the group management system.

Under the standard at 2.10, all group entities must develop a group requirement to meet the requirements of the standard, so any decision to alter this is precluded.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

7. Support

The requirements for support are replicated at 2.11.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

8. Operations

The requirements for operation are replicated at 2.12.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

9.1 Monitoring, measurement, analysis and evaluation

The requirements for internal monitoring programs are replicated at 2.13.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

9.2 Internal Audit

The informational requirements for internal audit programs and their annual frequency are met at 2.13 – Performance and evaluation.

The coverage requirements of the internal audit programme are replicated at 2.13 – Internal audit.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

9.3 Selection of participants

Requirements for the selection of participants are established at 2.14 Selection of participants.
Requirements for requirements 9.3.1.1 a) to d) are established.

Additional sampling requirements in case of pre-existing organisations are established at 2.14.

Requirements for the determination of the sample size are met at 2.14.

There are additional provisions for the adapting of the sample size that align with the requirements at 9.3.2.3.

Sample categories are determined at 2.14 that replicate the requirements at 9.3.3.

The distribution of the sample is defined at 2.14, and replicates the requirements at 9.3.4.

The requirements for the selection of the participants are replicated at 2.14.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

9.4 Management Review

The requirements for 9.4.1 are replicated at 2.15 Management Review.

The requirements for 9.4.2 and 9.4.3 are met at 2.15 Management Review.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

10. Improvement

The requirements for the occurrence of non-conformities are replicated at 2.16 Improvement.

The requirements for the retention of documented information are replicated at 2.16 Improvement.

The requirements for the excluded groups, internal audits and a 12 month gap prior to the internal audit are met at 2.16.

The continual improvement requirements are met at 2.16.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

9. CHAIN OF CUSTODY STANDARD

GENERAL

GNFCS has fully adopted PEFC ST 2002:2020 Chain of Custody of Forest Based Products.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

10. CERTIFICATION AND ACCREDITATION ARRANGEMENTS

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?

The requirements are met at 4.3.1.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

2. Does the scheme documentation require that certification body for forest management certification shall fulfil requirements defined in ISO 17021?

The requirements are met at 4.1.1 with explicit compliance requirements with ISO 17021.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

3. Does the scheme documentation require that certification bodies carrying out forest certification shall have the technical competence in forest management on its economic, social and environmental impacts, and on the forest certification criteria?

The documentation requires technical competence in forest management at 6.1.1.2. The requirements require specialization and supplementation of education with forest and tree-based industries, and requirements for management certification audits.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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?

The documentation requires the certification bodies to ensure that auditors have received training on the GSSFM that is recognized by the GFC, as well as ongoing training on GSSFM at 6.1.1.2.3.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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?

The scheme documentation requires the certification body to have performed at least four auditor-in-training audits over the previous three years; and two of these must be PEFC forest management certification audits. These requirements are reduced for qualified for chain of custody standards, ISO 9001 or ISO 14001 in forest and/or tree related sectors. These are listed at 6.1.1.2.5.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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?

ISO 19011 requirements are stipulated at 6.1.1.4.4. and 6.1.1.4.6.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

7. Does the scheme documentation include additional qualification requirements for auditors carrying out forest management audits?

Additional qualification requirements are stipulated 6.1.1.4.5.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

8. Does the scheme documentation require that certification bodies shall have established internal procedures for forest management certification?

Internal procedures are specified at 7.1.1.1: Certification framework.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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?

Applied certification procedures fulfil the requirements of 17021 are required at 7.1.1.1: Certification framework.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

10. Does the scheme documentation require that applied auditing procedures shall fulfil or be compatible with the requirements of ISO 19011?

The documentation requires that all clauses of ISO 19011 apply for the audit at 7.4..

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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?

Requirements are met at 7.7.7.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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?

Controls for logo use are stipulated at 4.2.2.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

13. Does a maximum period for surveillance audits defined by the scheme documentation not exceed more than one year?

The maximum period for surveillance audits is defined at 7.1.1.12.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

14. Does a maximum period for assessment audit not exceed five years for forest management certifications?

The full certification cycle is defined at 7.1.1.12 and does not exceed five years.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

15. Does the scheme documentation include requirements for public availability of certification report summaries?

The requirement is stipulated at 7.1.1

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

16. Does the scheme documentation include requirements for usage of information from external parties as the audit evidence?

The requirement is stipulated at 7.1.1.4.2

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

17. Does the scheme documentation include additional requirements for certification procedures?

The requirement is stipulated at 7.1.1.4.2

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

18. Does the scheme documentation require that certification bodies carrying out forest management certification shall be accredited by a national accreditation body?

The requirement is stipulated in Appendix 2:

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

19. Does the scheme documentation require that an accredited certificate shall bear an accreditation symbol of the relevant accreditation body?

The requirement is stipulated in Appendix 2:

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

20. Does the scheme documentation require that the accreditation shall be issued by an accreditation body which is a part of the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) umbrella or a member of IAF's special recognition regional groups and which implement procedures described in ISO 17011 and other documents recognised by the above mentioned organisations?

The requirement is stipulated in Appendix 2:

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

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?

The requirement is stipulated in Appendix 2:

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

22. Does the scheme documentation include a mechanism for PEFC notification of certification bodies?

The requirement is stipulated in Appendix 1:

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

23. Are the procedures for PEFC notification of certification bodies non-discriminatory?

There are no discriminatory procedures within the procedures.

ASSESSMENT DECISION: CONFORMS

11. ANNEXES

ANNEX A: PEFC STANDARD AND SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS CHECKLIST

PART I: STANDARD AND SYSTEM REQUIREMENT CHECKLIST FOR STANDARD SETTING (PEFC ST 1001:2017)

Question	Assess. basis*	YES /NO *	Reference to application documents		
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	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard-setting procedures, Clause 6	6.1 The Governing Body and the Standardising Body The Guyana Forestry Commission (GFC) will be both the Governing Body and the Standardising Body to develop and implement Guyana's National Forest Certification System. The GFC is a legal entity established by the Parliament of Guyana through the Guyana Forestry Commission Act 2007 to manage the national forest estate of Guyana. The GFC operates under legislation that does not conflict with PEFC Council statutes. The GFC has been accepted as a member of the PEFC and confirmed its commitment to follow the PEFC Council rules and requirements. As the governing Body, the GFC's role will include the following: • System governance and administration. This will include: o notifying Certification Bodies, registering certificates and logo usages, handling complaints; and o undertaking promotions, and/or training activities (see PEFC GD 1004, Administration of PEFC Scheme). GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures • Development of implementation and administration procedures, including the development of requirements for Certification Bodies and accreditation and the establishment and maintenance of complaints and appeals procedures. As the Standardising Body, the GFC's role will include the following: • Coordination and	Y

				management of the standard-setting process. • Establishment of a standard-setting working group of balanced stakeholders to develop the Standard - the National Standard Setting Working Group (NSSWG).	
(b) procedures for keeping documented information,	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 8.1	8.1 Documented information Through the GNFCS Secretariat at the GFC, the Standardising Body shall keep documented information relevant to the standard-setting and review process. In addition, evidence of compliance with the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017 and these procedures shall be kept. Documented information to be kept shall include: • Standard-setting procedures (this document), • Stakeholder identification mapping, • Contacted and/or invited stakeholders, • Stakeholders involved in standard-setting activities, including participants in each working group meeting, • Minutes of the working group meetings, • Feedback received and a synopsis of how feedback was addressed, • All drafts and final versions of the Standard, • Outcomes from working group considerations, • Evidence of consensus on the final version of the Standard, • Evidence relating to the review process, and • Final approval by the Standardising Body. The Standardising Body shall keep the documented information until the completion of the following review or revision of the Standard to which they refer. Otherwise, the Standardising Body shall keep the documented information for a minimum of five years after the publication of the Standard. Documented information shall be available to interested parties upon request. Request for hardcopies or electronic version of documented information can be made either in-person or emails. All contact information is available on GFC's website: https://forestry.gov.gy/pefc-contact/ .	Y
(c) procedures for balanced representation of stakeholders,	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 6.2.2	6.2.2 Balanced representation of interests The NSSWG shall have a balanced representation of interest groups and has been structured to ensure that no single interest group can dominate the decision-making process. The stakeholder interest groups who expressed interest and are included in the Working Group are: • Forest owners and forest managers at all	

				<p>scales; • Supply chain from harvest to end-user; • Local environmental organisations; • International environmental organisations; • Government agencies whose statutory responsibilities influence the timber and timber products sector in Guyana; • Research and academia; • Workers' Union; and • Community interests, including youth and women. Stakeholders have agreed to ensure gender balance in its membership, and each stakeholder organisation has considered this in selecting primary and alternate representatives. The NSSWG will continually review its composition and membership to ensure it meets the standard setting requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017 (i.e., gender balance and balanced representation of affected and interested stakeholders and stakeholders able to influence the Standard's implementation). While the stakeholder groups have nominated participants to represent their interests, the NSSWG recognises that members are also involved in the Working Group as individuals with specific skills, experience and background, including qualifications relevant to the work of the Working Group, particularly the environmental, social, and economic aspects of sustainable forest management. Members of the NSSWG shall be required to consult with their relevant constituencies and bring forward their constituencies' views and comments, which shall inform the decisions the NSSWG shall make. The NSSWG shall ask for evidence of consultation with constituencies by members on all issues central to the Standard setting process.</p>	
(d) the standard-setting process,	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 9	<p>9. Standard-setting process</p> <p>9.1 Standard proposal</p> <p>9.2 Public announcement of the process</p> <p>9.3 Public consultation on the enquiry draft</p> <p>9.4 Pilot Testing of the Standard</p>	Y
(e) the mechanism for reaching consensus, and	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 7.2	<p>7.2 Decision making Stakeholders have agreed that the Standardising Body (GFC) shall be the highest decision-making Body. Where a decision to reaffirm the Standard is to be made, the Standardising Body shall provide a justification for the decision and make the justification</p>	Y

				<p>publicly available. Where the decision is to revise the Standard, the Standardising Body shall specify the type of revision (normal or editorial revision). Stakeholders have agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that the meetings of the NSSWG shall be chaired by the GFC's official representative or alternate; • as chair of the NSSWG, the GFC's role shall be an independent moderator to oversee the standard development process, and therefore, shall not have a vote where consensus on a matter/issue in dispute is to be achieved through voting; • the Working Group's Deputy Chair position shall be rotated among the private sector stakeholder groups (Guyana Manufacturing & Services Association (GMSA) and Forest Products Association (FPA) and Iwokrama) on a three -monthly basis; and • rotation of positions within groups with one voting right but more than one representative (i.e. environment or indigenous) shall be permitted, and this will be on a three-monthly basis. To the extent possible, decisions by the NSSWG shall be by consensus. This includes the decision of the Working Group to recommend the final draft of the Standard for formal approval by the Standardising Body initially and ultimately to the PEFC Council for endorsement. To reach consensus, the NSSWG has agreed to use the following alternative processes to establish whether there is opposition: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • face-to-face meeting (COVID-19 restrictions permitting) where there is a verbal yes/no vote, a show of hands for a yes/no vote, a statement on consensus from the Chair where there are no dissenting voices or hands (votes), a formal balloting process, • online conference meeting where there is a verbal yes/no vote, • an email meeting where a request for agreement or objection is provided to members with the members providing a written response (a proxy for a vote), or • a combination of the above options. <p>GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures</p> <p>If consensus of the NSSWG cannot be achieved through unanimous support on an issue, resolution will be based on four of the five sectoral interests supporting the issue. The five sectoral interests are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private sector/Forest owners; • Indigenous NGOs; • 	
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				<p>Environmental NGOs; • Government; and • Civil society. Stakeholder organisations within each sectoral interest groups will determine their procedures to build consensus at the sectoral interest level. If a vote is required to resolve an overall position of the NSSWG in situations where unanimous support at the membership level of the NSSWG could not be achieved, each sectoral group will be required to nominate a representative who is authorised on behalf of the sectoral group to present that sectoral group's position back to the NSSWG. Resolution of a position will then be based on a vote (through the mechanisms described above) among the five sectoral group representatives. Overwhelming majority (four out of the five sectoral interests) will be required for consensus on, or resolution of an issue/matter in dispute. Where a vote is required to settle an issue/matter in dispute, the GFC as the Standardising Body shall be excluded from voting, so as to ensure its continued independence in overseeing the standard development process. Where consensus cannot resolve any outstanding issue, the GFC as the Standardising Body, shall arrange additional round(s) of public consultation (if necessary) to help achieve consensus on any unresolved issues. The GFC shall determine the scope and duration of any additional public consultation.</p>	
(f) review and revision of standard(s)/normative document(s).	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clauses 11 and 12	<p>11. Periodic review of the Standard The Standard shall be reviewed and revised if required, at latest every five (5) years from the date of approval. The review shall be based on consideration of feedback received during the Standard's implementation, as well as a gap analysis to ascertain whether there have been any developments (new scientific, technological information and/or changes in international benchmarks for the legality and sustainable forest management). The Standardising Body, through the NSSWG, shall decide if stakeholder consultation shall be organised to obtain further feedback and input and the extent of the consultation for any reviews done prior to the fifth year..</p> <p>12. Revision of the Standards</p>	Y

5.1.2 The standardising body shall make its standard-setting procedures publicly available and shall review its standard-setting procedures regularly. The review shall consider feedback from stakeholders.	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 12.1 This procedure is publicly available on the GFC's website. It is reviewed regularly, taking into account input from stakeholders.	12.1 Normal revision The Standardising Body shall review its standard(s) and normative document(s) regularly. Any review of standard(s) and normative document(s), including this document, shall take into consideration Clause 6 of this document. The Standardising Body shall publish the report of its review, on the GFC's website www.forestry.gov.gy and receive feedback from the public, affected and interested stakeholders. The Standardising Body, together with the NSSWG, shall consider any feedback from stakeholders and the general public during the review of these standards and normative documents Reference at 6.2.1: The Standardising Body shall make its standard-setting procedures publicly available and review regularly its standard-setting procedures, including consideration of comments from stakeholder constituencies and the broader general public.	Y
	Process		GFC's website, page Standard-setting procedures and the Development Report. GFC's website link: https://forestry.gov.gy/content/uploads/2023/01/Final-GY-PR-01-Standard-Setting-Procedures-20210729.pdf	Sighted	Y
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		Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures	8.1 Documented information Through the GNFCS Secretariat at the GFC, the Standardising Body shall keep documented information relevant to the standard-setting and review process. In addition, evidence of compliance with the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017 and these procedures shall be kept. Documented information to be kept shall include: • Standard-setting procedures (this document), • Stakeholder identification mapping, • Contacted and/or invited stakeholders, • Stakeholders involved in standard-setting activities, including participants in each working group meeting, • Minutes of the working group meetings, • Feedback received and a synopsis of how	Y

				feedback was addressed, • All drafts and final versions of the Standard, • Outcomes from working group considerations, • Evidence of consensus on the final version of the Standard, • Evidence relating to the review process, and • Final approval by the Standardising Body. The Standardising Body shall keep the documented information until the completion of the following review or revision of the Standard to which they refer. Otherwise, the Standardising Body shall keep the documented information for a minimum of five years after the publication of the Standard. Documented information shall be available to interested parties upon request. Request for hardcopies or electronic version of documented information can be made either in-person or emails. All contact information is available on GFC's website: https://forestry.gov.gy/pefc-contact/ .	
	Process	Yes	The standard-setting process for the GNFCS started on March 11, 2019. The drafting of the Standard development process occurred between the periods of March 12 to July 8, 2021 with a final version: GY-PROC-2023-01. See folder 3. File GY-REP-2023-01- Development Report. GFC's website link: www.forestry.gov.gy	Records have been provided for the commencement of the process for the development of the standard's procedures. These include an initial announcement, stakeholder meeting and related minutes, and scoping documentation. (Appendix 31 and 32)	Y
(b) Stakeholder identification mapping,	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures Clause 6.2	See above (8.1)	Y
	Process	Yes	Folder 5. GY-REP-2021-01-Stakeholder Identification Mapping Report, Section 2	Records for the process for stakeholder identification and mapping are contained in GY-REP-2021-01	Y
(c) Contacted and/or invited stakeholders,	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures Clause 6.2	See above (8.1)	Y
	Process	Yes	Folder 5. GY-REP-2021-01-Stakeholder Identification Mapping Report, Section 2	List of contacted stakeholders is provided in the stakeholder mapping report.	Y
Y	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures	See above (8.1)	Y

(d) Stakeholders involved in standard setting activities including participants in each working group meeting,	Process	Yes	<p>Clause 7</p> <p>See folder 3. File GY-REP-2023-01- Development Report.</p> <p>Folder 6. Documents 1 to 21 contains the Minutes of the NSSWG meetings.</p> <p>Minutes of Meeting 1 described the First formal working group meeting of the National Standard Setting.</p> <p>Minutes of Meeting 17 described the approval of the first public consultation (60 days) and standard review.</p> <p>Minutes of Meeting 19 and 20 described the approval of the pilot testing of certification standards.</p> <p>Minutes of Meetings 19 and 20 described the approval of the second Public consultation (30 days) and standard review</p> <p>Minutes of Meeting 21 described the approval of the standard.</p>	Records have been provided for all standard setting activities, which includes participants in working group meetings.	Y
(e) Feedback received and a synopsis of how feedback was addressed,	Procedures	Yes	<p>Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures</p> <p>Clause 9.2, 9.3 & 11.1</p>	See above (8.1)	Y
	Process	Yes	<p>The public announcement for the consultation are at Appendices 5 and 6 in Folder 7. The documents were also uploaded to the GFC's website. The public announcement included information on obtaining either hard copies or electronic versions of both documents.</p> <p>There were no suggestions from the public consultation for changes and/or revisions to the GSSF and the Group Certification Standard, only letters of support from key stakeholders for the GSSF and the Group Certification Standard as shown in Folder 7.</p>	<p>Minutes for the working group meetings are contained in Appendix 6. They contain summaries of the meeting and annotations of feedback on the standard and how they were changed and addressed.</p> <p>Appendix 8 contains the different drafts of the standard and are a record of the alterations made to the draft throughout the process.</p>	Y

			<p>Appendices 1 to 4.</p> <p>The second enquiry draft underwent a second public consultation for thirty days (30) from November 23 to December 23, 2022 as shown in Folder 7. Appendix 6. At the conclusion of the second public consultation, there were no comments/suggestions or recommendations for amending the publicly available documents.</p>	A synopsis of how feedback was addressed is contained in the development report. GY-REP-2023-01 at section 4.	
(f) All drafts and final versions of the standard,	Procedures	Yes	Folder 8. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures Clause 4.3 & 4.4	See above (8.1)	Y
	Process	Yes	<p>All the different versions of the standard of follow the process and are available here in Folder 8 for: being the first draft version submitted to the 1st workshop in November 2019</p> <p>version validated after the first workshop submitted to the 1st public consultation</p> <p>version amended after the 1st public consultation</p> <p>version amended after the pilot test submitted to the Forum in version validated by the Working Group in and submitted to the 2nd public consultation</p>	Appendix 8 contains the different drafts of the standard and are a record of the alterations made to the draft throughout the process.	Y
(g) Outcomes from working group considerations,	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures Clause 7	See above (8.1)	Y
	Process	Yes	All minutes of the Working Group meetings where the members' consideration were recorded are found in Folder 6. Minutes of Meeting 1 to 21.	Minutes for the working group meetings are contained in Appendix 6. They contain summaries of the meeting and annotations of feedback on the standard and how they were changed and addressed	Y
(h) Evidence of consensus on the final version of the standard(s),	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures Clause 10	See above (8.1)	Y
	Process	Yes	Folder 6. Minutes of Meeting 21 contains the final minutes of the final meeting at which member of the Working Group approved the final version of the	Evidence is sighted.	Y

			Standard. The email to Member confirming the final version of the Standard is found in Folder 16 Appendices 42-44.		
(i) Evidence relating to the review process, and	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures Clause 11	See above (8.1)	Y
	Process	No	Not Applicable	Evidence of the review process is contained in the appendices 42 to 45; the standard was reviewed by the standardizing body.	Y
(j) Final approval by the standardising body.	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures Clause 10	See above (8.1)	Y
	Process	Yes	Folder 16. Appendix 45 contains the final approval by the standardising body.	Evidence sighted	Y
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	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures Clause 8.1	File GY-PROC-2023-01 8.1 The Standardising Body shall keep the documented information until the completion of the following review or revision of the Standard to which they refer. Otherwise, the Standardising Body shall keep the documented information for a minimum of five years after the publication of the Standard. Documented information shall be available to interested parties upon request. Request for hardcopies or electronic version of documented information can be made either in-person or emails. All contact information is available on GFC's website: https://forestry.gov.gy/pefc-contact/ .	Y
.	Process	Yes	The documents will be archived at the GFC's Headquarters at 1 Water Street, Kingston, Georgetown, Guyana, and will be available until a review/revision is required and for a minimum of five years after the publication of the Standard.	Evidence sighted	Y
5.2.3 Documented information shall be available to interested parties upon request.	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures Clause 4.6, 8.1, 10.2	File GY-PROC-2023-01 8.1 Documented information shall be available to interested parties upon request. Request for hardcopies or electronic version of documented information can be	Y

				made either in-person or emails. All contact information is available on GFC's website: https://forestry.gov.gy/pefc-contact/ .	
	Process	Yes	Request for hardcopies or electronic version of documented information can be made either in-person or emails. All contact information is available on GFC's website: https://forestry.gov.gy/pefccontact/ .	Website sighted	Y
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	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 8.2 Folder 9. File GY-PROC-202201_Complaints and Appeals Handling Procedure	GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures 8.2 The following is a summary of the procedure that has been agreed for dealing with any substantial and process complaints and appeals relating to the Standard-setting activities. When the GFC or NSSWG receives a complaint, it shall• acknowledge receipt of the complaint to the complainant within five working days,	Y
	Process		N/A		Y
(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	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 8.2 Folder 9. File GY-PROC-202201_Complaints and Appeals Handling Procedure	• gather and verify all necessary information to validate the complaint; • impartially and objectively evaluate all information related to the complaint; • decide on the complaint, and	Y
	Process	NA	No complaint was received during the process.		
(c) formally communicate the decision on the complaint or appeal to the complainant and describe the handling process.	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 8.2 Folder 9. File GY-PROC-202201_Complaints and Appeals Handling Procedure	• formally communicate the decision on the complaint and of the complaint handling process to the complainant	Y
	Process	Yes	No complaint was received during the process.		
5.3.2 The standardising body shall establish at least one contact point	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 8.2	All complaints shall be directed to the Chairperson of the NSSWG. All administrative processes related to	Y

for enquiries, complaints and appeals relating to its standard-setting activities. The contact point shall be easy to access and readily available.			Folder 9. File GY-PROC-202201_Complaints and Appeals Handling Procedure	dispute resolution shall be managed through the GNFCS Secretariat within the GFC.	
	Process	Yes	All contact information is available on GFC's website for enquiries, complaints and appeals relating to its standard-setting activities. https://forestry.gov.gy/pefc-contact/	Contact details sighted	
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	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures Clause 2	The GFC, in its capacity as the Standardising Body, shall develop a Standard Development proposal. The document (a copy which will be made available on the GFC's website) will describe: • the scope of the Standard, •	Y
	Process	Yes	Folder 1. File GY-REP-2021-01_Standard Development Proposal document	Section 3: The proposed Guyana National Forest Certification System will cover forest management on all land tenures where forest management for commercial purposes is permitted by law. It is intended that certification will be GY-REP-2021-01 Standard Development Proposal document 6 available to both individual forest management organisations and potential group schemes involving multiple forest management entities. It is also envisaged that certification will cover non-timber forest products as well as timber products. The Certification System will also facilitate chain of custody certification for entities purchasing, processing and/or trading in forest products	Y
(b) a justification of the need for the standard,	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures which highlighted of the need for the Standard in its Introduction section.	justification of the need for the Standard	Y
	Process	Yes	Folder 1. File GY- REP-2021-01_Standard Development Proposal document Section 2	Section 2: Rationale: Describes the justification of the need for a standard.	Y
(c) a clear description of the intended outcomes	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures Section 9	, • a clear description of the intended outcomes,	Y

	Process	Yes	Folder 1. File GY-REP-2021-01_Standard Development Proposal document Section 5	5. A clear description of the intended outcomes The initial intended outcomes are the development of: • a nationally agreed Forest Management Standard for Guyana, endorsed by the PEFC; • a national chain of custody certification scheme, also endorsed by the PEFC; and • a group forest management certification requirements document. The ultimate desired outcome is to have a globally recognised, accessible and cost-effective mechanism for Guyanese Forest Sector Operators (FSOs) to demonstrate the legality and sustainability of their forest management and timber production to world markets.	Y
<p>(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, and <p>(e) a description of the stages of standard development and their expected timetable.</p> <p>NOTE Guidance for development of a proposal and justification is given in ISO Directives, Part 1, Annex C and Annex SL (Appendix 1).</p>	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures Section 9.1	GY-REP-2021-01_Standard Development Proposal document • a risk assessment of potential negative impacts arising from implementing the Standard, such as; • factors that could affect the achievement of the outcomes negatively, • unintended consequences of implementation, • actions to address the identified risks, and • a description of the stages of standard development and their expected timetable.	Y
	Process	Yes	See Folder 1. File GY-PROC-202101_Standard Development Proposal document Section 6	The document contains the risk assessment and the proposed timetable at sSection 6 and Section 7 respectively.	Y
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	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures Clauses 4.7 &12	12.1 : Any review of standard(s) and normative document(s), including this document, shall take into consideration Clause 6 of this document.	Y

	Process	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures Clause 12	N/A	Y
6.2.1 The standardising body shall identify stakeholders relevant to the objectives and scope of the standard setting activities by means of a stakeholder identification mapping exercise. It shall define which stakeholder groups are relevant to the subject matter and why. For each stakeholder group the standardising body shall identify the likely key issues, key stakeholders, and which means of communication would be best to reach them.	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures Clause 6.2	Although the procedures do not contain clear procedures for the identification of stakeholders relevant to the objectives, scope, etc via stakeholder mapping exercise. The procedures have requirements for identifying key stakeholders and disadvantaged stakeholders.	Y
	Process	Yes	Folder 5. GY-REP-2021-01-Stakeholder Identification Mapping Report, Section 2	The standardizing body initially identified stakeholders utilizing previous processes that were part of the EU FLEGT/VPA processes. This was appropriate for the purposes of the standard.	Y
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: <input type="checkbox"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • forest owners, • business and industry, • indigenous people, • non-government organisations, • scientific and technological community, • workers and trade unions. 	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures Clause 6.2	The procedure meets the requirements. .	Y
	Process	Yes	Folder 5. GY-REP-2021-01-Stakeholder Identification Mapping Report, Section 2	The development report indicates that the stakeholder mapping process meets the requirements of the PEFC standard; and meets the Agenda 21 categories, with additional categories for government agencies and civil society organisations.	Y

<p>Other groups shall be added if relevant to the scope of standardsetting activities.</p> <p>NOTE The full list of nine major stakeholder groups defined by Agenda 21 of the <i>United Nations Conference on Environment and Development</i> consists of: (i) business and industry, (ii) children and youth, (iii) forest owners, (iv) indigenous peoples, (v) local authorities, (vi) nongovernment organisations, (vii) scientific and technological community, (viii) women, and (ix) workers and trade unions.</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.</p> <p>NOTE A stakeholder can be both a disadvantaged and a key stakeholder at the same time.</p>	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 6.2	The procedure is described at 6.2	Y
	Process	Yes	Folder 5. GY-REP-2021-01-Stakeholder Identification Mapping Report	The stakeholder mapping exercise describes indigenous groups as being disadvantaged, as well as those living outside of urban centres. Means to reach these stakeholders were also described.	Y
<p>6.3.1 The standardising body shall make a public announcement of the start of the standard-setting process and include an invitation to stakeholders to participate in the process. The announcement shall be made in a timely manner through suitable media, as appropriate, to give stakeholders an opportunity for meaningful contributions.</p> <p>NOTE 1 <i>In a timely manner</i> means (at the latest) four weeks before the</p>	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 9.2	The GFC, in its capacity as the Standardising Body, shall make a public announcement of the start of the standard-setting process and include an invitation to stakeholders, including the general public, to participate in the process. The announcement shall be made in a timely manner (at least four weeks) through suitable media (for instance, GFC's website), as appropriate, to give stakeholders an opportunity for meaningful participation. Note 1: In a timely manner, in this case means (at the latest) four week before the first standardsetting activity is scheduled to occur. Note 2: Through suitable media means at least through the Standardising Body's website and by email and/or letter	Y

<p>first standardsetting activity is scheduled to occur.</p> <p>NOTE 2 <i>Through suitable media</i> 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.</p>				to identified stakeholders. Other media includes press releases, news articles, features in trade-press, information sent to branch organizations, social media, and digital media.	
	Process	Yes	Folder 3. File GY-REP-2023-01_Development Report, Section 3	The meeting appears took place on March 12 2021.	Y
6.3.1 The announcement and invitation shall include:					
(a) overview of the standard-setting process,	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 9.2	Information to be included in the announcement on GFC's website and invitation shall include: • overview of the standard-setting process; • access to the proposal for the Standard, GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures • information about opportunities for stakeholders to participate in the process (provided at the first stakeholder online workshop); • requests to stakeholders to nominate their representative(s) or themselves to the working group (done at the first stakeholder online workshop). 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 (this will be done using the stakeholder mapping process the GFC used to establish the National Technical Working Group for the Guyana/EU VPA negotiations); • explicit invitation and clear instruction on how to submit feedback on the scope and standard setting process; and • access to the standard-setting procedures.	Y
	Process	Yes	Folder 3. File GY-REP-2023-01_Development Report, Section 3	The details of the announcement process has been outlined above in the main report.	Y
(b) access to the proposal for the standard (refer to 6.1),	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 9.2	See above	Y

	Process	Yes	Folder 3. File GY-REP-2023-01_Development Report, Section 3	The details of the announcement process has been outlined above in the main report.	Y
(c) information about opportunities for stakeholders to participate in the process,	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2021-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 9.2	See above	Y
	Process	Yes	Folder 3. File GY-REP-2023-01_Development Report, Section 3	The details of the announcement process has been outlined above in the main report.	Y
(d) requests to stakeholders to nominate their representative(s) or 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,	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2021-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 9.2	See above	Y
	Process	Yes	Folder 3. File GY-REP-2023-01_Development Report, Section 3	The details of the announcement process has been outlined above in the main report.	Y
(e) explicit invitation and clear instruction on how to submit feedback on the scope and standard-setting process, and	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 9.2	See above	Y
	Process	Yes	Folder 3. File GY-REP-2023-01_Development Report, Sections 3 and 4	The details of the announcement process has been outlined above in the main report.	Y
(f) access to the standard-setting procedures.	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 9.2	See above	Y
	Process	Yes	Folder 3. File GY-REP-2023-01_Development Report, Section 3	The details of the announcement process has been outlined above in the main report.	Y
6.3.2 The standardising body shall review the standard-setting process based on feedback received in response to the public announcement.	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 9.2	“The Standardising Body shall continually review the standard-setting process based on any feedback received from stakeholders and the general public.” – although the standard does not address the “response to the public announcement”, the context of the requirement (i.e. it is in the clause on the public announcement) and it also must also be monitored “continually.”	Y

	Process	Yes	Folder 3. File GY-REP-2023-01_Development Report, Sections 3,5 and 7	The standardizing body solicited feedback on the standard setting process announcement via emails; no negative feedback was received..	Y
6.4.1 The standardising body shall establish a permanent or temporary working group or adjust the composition of an already existing working group based on nominations it received. Acceptance and refusal of nominations shall be justified in relation to the requirements for balanced representation of the working group, considerations of an appropriate gender balance, relevance of the organisation, an individual's competence, an individual's relevant experience and resources available for standard-setting.	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 6.2	<p>6.2 National Standard-Setting Working Group (NSSWG) The Standardising Body has established the National Standard Setting Working Group (NSSWG) to guide the development and revision of the Standard and associated documents, and be responsible for consensus building to ensure they are customised and suitable for Guyana and its local situations.</p> <p>"The NSSWG shall have a balanced representation of interest groups and has been structured to ensure that no single interest group can dominate the decision-making process"</p> <p>"The NSSWG will continually review its composition and membership to ensure it meets the standard setting requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017 (i.e., gender balance and balanced representation of affected and interested stakeholders and stakeholders able to influence the Standard's implementation). While the stakeholder groups have nominated participants to represent their interests, the NSSWG recognises that members are also involved in the Working Group as individuals with specific skills, experience and background, including qualifications relevant to the work of the Working Group, particularly the environmental, social, and economic aspects of sustainable forest management"</p> <p>Stakeholder organisations are responsible for selecting and approving the individuals they wish to nominate for membership of the NSSWG, including replacing retiring members. Each organisation has a primary representative and an alternate who will represent the organisation when the primary representative is unavailable.</p>	Y
	Process	Yes	Folder 3. File GY-REP-2023-01_Development Report, Section 3	"At the conclusion of this [First Scoping] Meeting, the GFC informed participants about the next steps, which included formation of the National Standard-Setting Working Group (NSSWG), to guide the development of	Y

				the Standards. The GFC invited each stakeholder group to nominate its representative for the NSSWG." The process for nominating and refusing nominations is outlined in 4.2	
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	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 6.2	The NSSWG shall have a balanced representation of interest groups and has been structured to ensure that no single interest group can dominate the decision-making process. The stakeholder interest groups who expressed interest and are included in the Working Group are: • Forest owners and forest managers at all scales; • Supply chain from harvest to end-user; • Local environmental organisations; • International environmental organisations; • Government agencies whose statutory responsibilities influence the timber and timber products sector in Guyana; • Research and academia; • Workers' Union; and • Community interests, including youth and women.	Y
	Process	Yes	Folder 3. File GY-REP-2023-01_Development Report, Sections 5 and 6 Folder 5. GY-REP-2021-01-Stakeholder Identification Mapping Report, Section 4	The composition of the working group is effectively balanced.	Y
(b) include stakeholders with expertise relevant to the subject matter of the standard, those that affected by the standard, and those that can influence implementation of the standard. The affected stakeholders shall be represented in an appropriate proportion among participants.	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 6.2	6.2.1 "inclusion of stakeholders with expertise relevant to the subject matter of the Standard, (including those who are materially affected by the Standard and those who can influence the implementation of the Standard). The materially affected stakeholders shall represent a meaningful segment of the participants". The representation of the groups noted above have expertise, are affected and can influence implementation.	Y
	Process	Yes	Folder 3. File GY-REP-2023-01_Development Report, Sections 5 and 6 Folder 5. GY-REP-2021-01-Stakeholder Identification Mapping Report, Section 4	The stakeholder groups are relevant, with a 50-50 split between affected and interested stakeholders.	Y

<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) represented. The standardising body shall set targets for the participation of key stakeholders and proactively seek their participation by using outreach such as (but not limited to) personal emails, phone calls, meeting invitations etc.</p> <p>NOTE When a stakeholder group is not represented and key stakeholders cannot be encouraged to participate, the standardising body may consider alternative options.</p>	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clauses 6.2.2 and 7.2.	<p>“The NSSWG consists of representatives of stakeholder groups associated with forestry in Guyana or interested in sustainable forest management through certification under Guyana’s National Forest Certification System. Identification of stakeholder groups, individual stakeholders within those groupings, and their representation has been informed and assisted by similar processes undertaken by the GFC for the Voluntary Partnership Agreement, and a series of online stakeholder workshops. This process is documented separately in the Stakeholder Mapping Report prepared by the Standardising Body. A fundamental principle behind the structure of the NSSWG is to include the broadest range of perspectives in the Working Group’s deliberations, at the same time achieving balanced representation and ensuring that no sectoral interest can dominate the process. Twenty stakeholder organisations are represented on the NSSWG, covering five sectoral interest areas, including affected and interested stakeholders. The composition of the NSSWG is shown below in Table 1.”</p> <p>There is no requirement to set targets for the participation of key stakeholders and proactively seek their participation.</p>	n/c
	Process	Yes	Folder 3. File GY-REP-2023-01_Development Report, Sections 5 and 6 Folder 5. GY-REP-2021-01-Stakeholder Identification Mapping Report, Section 5	<p>The development report notes that “Achieving these required incentives and appropriate and relevant support to garner the effective involvement, commitment and active participation of individuals from the different interest groups. While sometimes it was challenging to convince individuals to invest their time in the process, the GFC invested the necessary resources and provided the required incentives, to ensure effective engagement and participation by all stakeholders. The GFC established a secretariat to manage the standard setting process, the secretariat provided the stakeholders with the necessary administrative and financial support to participate in NSSWG meetings.” Stakeholders have confirmed that balance was achieved and participation was actively sought.</p>	Y

6.4.4 Activities of the working group shall be organised in an open and transparent manner where:					Y
(a) working drafts shall be available to all members of the working group,	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 7	Clause 7: "The work of the NSSWG shall be organised openly and transparently where: • working drafts shall be available to all members of the Working Group two weeks before a formal meeting"	Y
	Process	Yes	Folder 3. File GY-REP-2023-01_Development Report, Section 4.3	All drafts and minutes of working group meetings have been provided. Minutes from the working group meetings indicate that all drafts were provided to group members prior to the meetings.	Y
(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	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 7	Clause 7: "all members of the working group shall be provided with meaningful opportunities to contribute to the development or revision of the Standard and submit comments to the working drafts; and"	Y
	Process	Yes	Folder 3. File GY-REP-2023-01_Development Report, Section 4.3	All drafts and minutes of working group meetings have been provided. Minutes from the working group meetings indicate working group members were able to meaningfully contribute to the revision process.	Y
(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	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 7	Clause 7: "comments and views submitted by any working group/committee member shall be considered in an open and transparent way and their resolution and proposed changes shall be recorded"	Y
	Process	Yes	Folder 3. File GY-REP-2023-01_Development Report, Section 4.3	All drafts and minutes of working group meetings have been provided. Minutes from the working group meetings indicate working group members were able to discuss proposals in an open way, and considerations were recorded.	Y
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:					Y
(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	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clauses 7.2 and 10.1	To reach consensus, the NSSWG has agreed to use the following alternative processes to establish whether there is opposition: • face-to-face meeting (COVID-19 restrictions permitting) where there is a verbal yes/no vote, a show of hands for a yes/no vote, a statement on consensus from the Chair where there are no dissenting voices or hands (votes), a formal balloting process,	Y

	Process	Yes	Folder 3. File GY-REP-2023-01_Development Report, Section 8	<p>“The decision of the working group to recommend the final draft for formal approval was taken on the basis of consensus. A hybrid of the following methods were utilised: both face-to face and online meeting, telephone calls and an e-mail request to the working group for agreement or objection where the members provide a formal (written) response. See Folder 16, Appendices 42 to 44 of an email requesting members for agreement or objection and their responses”</p> <p>Documentation has been provided; this will be confirmed during consultations.</p>	Y
(b) telephone conference meeting(s) where there is a verbal yes/no vote,	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clauses 7.2 and 10.1	• online conference meeting where there is a verbal yes/no vote	Y
	Process	Yes	Folder 3. File GY-REP-2023-01_Development Report, Section 8	See above	Y
(c) e-mail request to the working group for agreement or objection where the members provide a formal (written) response (vote),	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clauses 7.2 and 10.1	, • an email meeting where a request for agreement or objection is provided to members with the members providing a written response (a proxy for a vote), o	Y
	Process	Yes	Folder 3. File GY-REP-2023-01_Development Report, Section 8	See above	Y
(d) combinations of these methods.	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clauses 7.2 and 10.1	• a combination of the above options	Y
	Process	Yes	Folder 3. File GY-REP-2023-01_Development Report, Section 8	See above	Y
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	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clauses 7.2 and 10	<p>“If a vote is required to resolve an overall position of the NSSWG in situations where unanimous support at the membership level of the NSSWG could not be achieved, each sectoral group will be required to nominate a representative who is authorised on behalf of the sectoral group to present that sectoral group's position back to the NSSWG. Resolution of a position will then be based on a vote (through the mechanisms described above) among the five sectoral group representatives. Overwhelming majority (four out of the five sectoral</p>	Y

override sustained opposition in order to achieve consensus.				interests) will be required for consensus on, or resolution of an issue/matter in dispute.” “Where consensus cannot resolve any outstanding issue, the GFC as the Standardising Body, shall arrange additional round(s) of public consultation (if necessary) to help achieve consensus on any unresolved issues. The GFC shall determine the scope and duration of any additional public consultation.”	
	Process	Yes	Folder 3. File GY-REP-2023-01_Development Report, Section 8	Not applicable; consensus was achieved.	Y
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	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 7.2	Stakeholder organisations within each sectoral interest groups will determine their procedures to build consensus at the sectoral interest level. If a vote is required to resolve an overall position of the NSSWG in situations where unanimous support at the membership level of the NSSWG could not be achieved, each sectoral group will be required to nominate a representative who is authorised on behalf of the sectoral group to present that sectoral group's position back to the NSSWG. Resolution of a position will then be based on a vote (through the mechanisms described above) among the five sectoral group representatives. Overwhelming majority (four out of the five sectoral interests) will be required for consensus on, or resolution of an issue/matter in dispute	Y
	Process	Yes	There were no opposition.		Y
(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	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 7.2	Stakeholder organisations within each sectoral interest groups will determine their procedures to build consensus at the sectoral interest level. If a vote is required to resolve an overall position of the NSSWG in situations where unanimous support at the membership level of the NSSWG could not be achieved, each sectoral group will be required to nominate a representative who is authorised on behalf of the sectoral group to present that sectoral group's position back to the NSSWG. Resolution of a position will then	Y

				<p>be based on a vote (through the mechanisms described above) among the five sectoral group representatives. Overwhelming majority (four out of the five sectoral interests) will be required for consensus on, or resolution of an issue/matter in dispute</p> <p>It is the consultant's view that this mechanism meets the requirements of both (a) and (b); the stakeholder group internal discussions will require the direct negotiation with the stakeholder.</p>	
	Process	Yes	There was no opposition.	There was no opposition.	Y
(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	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clauses 7.2 and 10.2	Where consensus cannot resolve any outstanding issue, the GFC as the Standardising Body, shall arrange additional round(s) of public consultation (if necessary) to help achieve consensus on any unresolved issues. The GFC shall determine the scope and duration of any additional public consultation	Y
	Process		<p>All differences of opinions relating to the development of the GNFCS were resolved through discussions at NSSWG meetings.</p> <p>Folder 6. Documents 1 to 21 contains minutes of the NSSWG meetings</p>		Y
6.4.8 When a substantial issue cannot be resolved and sustained opposition persists, the standardising body shall initiate dispute resolution in accordance with its procedures for impartial and objective action.	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 7.2	This is not addressed.	N/C
	Process	Yes	<p>All differences of opinions relating to the development of the GNFCS were resolved through discussions at NSSWG meetings.</p> <p>Folder 6. Documents 1 to 21 contains minutes of the NSSWG meetings</p>	Not applicable	Y
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 through suitable media, NOTE <i>In a timely manner</i> means (at the latest) the day before the start of public consultation.	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 9.3	The Standardising Body shall organise public consultation on the enquiry draft and ensure that the start and end dates of public consultation are announced timely (at least two weeks before and not later than the day before the start of public consultation) through suitable media.	Y

	Process	Yes	Folder 3. File GY-REP-2023-01_Development Report, Sections 5 and 7	The advertisement in suitable media has been provided.	
(b) a direct invitation to comment on the enquiry draft is sent to each stakeholder identified by stakeholder identification mapping (refer to 6.2) aiming for a balanced participation of stakeholder groups,	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 9.3	A direct invitation to comment on the enquiry draft shall be sent to each stakeholder group, and required to distribute them within their group	Y
	Process	Yes	All the steps in Clause 9.3 of the GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures were followed for details, please see Folder 3. File GY-REP-202301_Development Report, Sections 5 and 7	Evidence of the email being sent has been confirmed among stakeholders via consultations. .	Y
(c) invitations are sent to disadvantaged and key stakeholders by methods that ensure they reach recipients and are easy to understand,	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 9.3	• invitations shall be sent to disadvantaged and key stakeholders by methods that ensure they reach recipients and are easy to understand; • the Standardising Body shall facilitate the availability of both electronic/digital and hard copies of the final draft to disadvantaged stakeholders, including the general public; and • the Standardising Body shall promote widely the availability of the enquiry draft using GFC's existing stakeholder engagement measures.	Y
	Process	Yes	Folder 3. File GY-REP-2023-01_Development Report, Sections 5 and 7	Stakeholders (key and disadvantaged) confirmed they received invitations.	Y
(d) the enquiry draft is made publicly available,	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 9.3	the enquiry draft shall be made publicly available through the GFC's website and GFC's network of forest stations within the Country	Y
	Process	Yes	Folder 3. File GY-REP-2023-01_Development Report, Sections 5 and 7	The enquiry draft was made publicly available via the GFC website.	Y
(e) public consultation is for at least 60 days,	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 9.3	public consultation shall be for at least 60 days,	Y
	Process	Yes	Folder 3. File GY-REP-2023-01_Development Report Section 5	The consultation took place from June 15 to August 13.	Y
	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 9.3	all feedback received shall be objectively considered by the working group, and	Y

(f) all feedback is considered by the working group in an objective manner, and	Process	Yes	Folder 3. File GY-REP-2023-01_Development Report, Sections 5 and 7 There were no comments during the consultation period.	Very little feedback was received; it was positive.	Y
(g) a synopsis of feedback is compiled for each material 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/party that gave feedback. 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.	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 9.3, Sections 5 and 7	a synopsis of any feedback received shall be compiled for each material issue, including the outcome of considering the issue. The synopsis shall be made publicly available through GFC's website and sent to each stakeholder/party that gave feedback.	Y
	Process	Yes	Folder 3. File GY-REP-2023-01_Development Report, Sections 5 and 7	Not applicable	Y
6.5.2 For new standards the standardising body shall organise a second round of public consultation lasting at least 30 days.	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 11	For new standards, the Standardising Body shall organise a second round of public consultation lasting at least 30 days, respecting the same above mentioned procedure.	Y
	Process	Yes	Folder 3. File GY-REP-202301_Development Report	"The NSSWG approved the revised enquiry drafts of the GSSF and the Group Certification Standard at its meeting held on November 04, 2023 for the second public consultation for thirty days from November 23 to December 23, 2022." A copy of the announcement has been sighted.	Y
6.6 The standardising body shall organise pilot testing of new standard(s) to assess the clarity, auditability and feasibility of the requirements. The working group	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 9.4	The Standardising Body shall organise pilot testing of new standard(s) to assess the clarity, auditability, and feasibility of the requirements. The Standardising Body shall consider the outcome of pilot testing and determine if there is a need to revise the Standard to ensure clarity, auditability and feasibility of the	Y

shall consider the outcome of pilot testing.				requirements. Note: Pilot testing is not required to revise an existing standard when experience from its usage can substitute for 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	Yes	Folder 3. File GY-REP-2023-01_Development Report Folder 10. File GY-REP-2022_Pilot Test Report	Pilot testing was undertaken by CSFI; the pilot testing report has been provided. Feedback on the standard was provided in the report; this feedback was considered by the standardizing body with some changes made.	Y
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	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 10		Y
	Process	Yes	Folder 3. File GY-REP-2023-01_Development Report, Section 8		Y
7.2.1 The formally approved standard(s)/normative document(s) shall be published and made publicly available at no cost within 14 days of approval, or as otherwise defined by the standardising body.	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 10	<p>“The decision of the NSSWG to recommend the final draft of the Standard for formal approval by the Standardising Body shall be taken based on consensus within the NSSWG”</p> <p>“The Standardising Body shall approve publication of the formally approved Standard and make it publicly available at no cost within 14 days of approval</p>	Y
	Process	Yes	Folder 3. File GY-REP-2023-01_Development Report, Section 8	<p>“Additionally, the Board of Directors of the GFC, the Standardising Body and the National Governing Body for the GNFCS, at its meeting held on April 24, 2023, resolved to approve the suite of documents comprising the GNFCS for submission to the PEFC International Secretariat for assessment, endorsement, and mutual recognition of the GNFCS.”</p> <p>A letter documenting the approval has been provided.</p> <p>The final documentation has not been published on the GFC website.</p>	N/C
7.2.2 Standard(s) shall include:					

(a) identification and contact information for the standardising body,	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 10.2	The Standard shall include: • identification and contact information for the Standardising Body (the GNFCS Secretariat at the GFC);	Y
	Process	Yes	A note at the beginning of each document of the scheme indicates that it is the property of the Guyana Forestry Commission and a copyright notice which states “ <i>This standard is protected by copyright owned by the Guyana Forestry Commission. The document is freely available from the Guyana Forestry Commission website forestry.gov.gy or upon request.</i> ”	Contact information is on page 4	Y
(b) official language of the standard,	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 10.2	• official language of the Standard (English)	Y
	Process	Yes	English is the official language of the Standard.	The official language is not noted	N/C
(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	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 10.2	• when there is inconsistency between versions, the version of the Standard endorsed by the PEFC Council will be the reference.	Y
	Process	Yes	When there is inconsistency between versions, the version of the Standard endorsed by the PEFC Council will be the reference.	Not applicable	Y
(d) The approval date and the date of next periodic review 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.	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 10.2	• the approval date and an indicative date of the next periodic review;	Y
	Process	Yes	A foot page note indicates the approval date and next review of the documents. A theoretical example is: Document name: Standard setting Procedures Document no: GY-PROC—2023-01 Approved by: Standardising body – Guyana Forestry Commission Date: July 29 2023 Publication date: July 29 2023 Next periodic review: July 29 2026	Approval date and review date appear on page 2	Y
7.2.3 Printed copies shall be made available upon request at a price	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 10.2	Printed copies shall be made available upon request at a price that covers no more than administrative costs (if	Y

that covers no more than administrative costs (if any)				any). All contact information is available on GFC's website: https://forestry.gov.gy/pefc-contact/ to request for printed version of the Standard	
	Process	Yes	Printed copies shall be made available upon request at a price that covers no more than administrative costs (if any). All contact information is available on GFC's website to request printed version of the Standard. https://forestry.gov.gy/pefc-contact/	Contact information is published.	Y
7.2.4 The standardising body shall make the development report (refer to PEFC GD 1007) publicly available	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 10.2	The Standardising Body shall make the development report (refer to PEFC GD 1007) publicly available on GFC's website www. https://forestry.gov.gy/ under the PEFC's tab.	Y
	Process	Yes	GFC's website under the PEFC's tab. https://forestry.gov.gy/	The development report does not appear to be publicly available on the website.	Y
Periodic review of standards					
8.1 The standard(s)/normative document(s) shall be reviewed at intervals that do not exceed a five-year period. The review shall be based on consideration of feedback received during the standard's implementation and a gap analysis. If necessary, a stakeholder consultation shall be organised to obtain further feedback and input.	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 11 The Standard shall be reviewed at latest five (5) years from the date of approval, if there have been any developments (new scientific, technological information and/or changes in international benchmarks for the legality and sustainable forest management). The Standardising body, through the NSSWG, shall decide if stakeholder consultation shall be organised to obtain further feedback and input and the extent of the consultation for any reviews done prior to the fifth year.	The standard text meets the requirements	Y
	Process	Yes		Not applicable	Y
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.	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 11.1	11.1 Feedback mechanism The GNFCS Secretariat within the GFC shall, on behalf of the Standardising Body, be the permanent mechanism for receiving feedback through all channels, including meetings, training courses, etc. and recording feedback on the Standard, and this information shall be communicated on the GFC's website, https://forestry.gov.gy/pefc-contact/ , including clear directions for providing feedback. Once the Standard is published and available	Y

NOTE Feedback can be sent in various formats: comments, requests for clarification and/or interpretation, complaints, etc.				for use for certification purposes, the GNFCS Secretariat within the GFC will begin to collect and store feedback (comments, requests for clarification and/or interpretation, or complaints) on an ongoing basis for consideration.	
	Process	Yes	<p>Feedback (comments, requests for clarification and/or interpretation, or complaints) can be provided via the contact information available on GFC's website. https://forestry.gov.gy/pefc-contact/</p> <p>Additionally, there is also a separate procedure for receiving and handling complaints and appeals. Folder 9. File GY-PROC-202201_Complaints and Appeals Handling Procedure https://forestry.gov.gy/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/PROCEDUREFOR-HANDLING-COMPLAINTS-ANDAPPEALS.pdf</p>	Clear instructions for providing feedback are on the website.	Y
8.2.2 All feedback received through all channels, including meetings, training courses, etc. shall be recorded and considered.	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 11.1	See text above.	Y
	Process	Yes	<p>All feedback received through all channels, including meetings, training courses, etc. shall be sent to the PEFC Secretariat within the GFC for recording and consideration.</p> <p>Additionally, the process in the Complaints and Appeals Handling Procedure will also be used recording and considering feedback. Folder 9. File GY-PROC-202201_Complaints and Appeals Handling Procedure https://forestry.gov.gy/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/PROCEDUREFOR-HANDLING-COMPLAINTS-ANDAPPEALS.pdf</p>	There does not appear to have been any feedback recorded at this stage.	Y

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	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 11	11.2 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 and the GFC's forest management and operational procedures to identify potential gaps in the Standard. The Standardising Body's review process shall also consider the latest scientific knowledge, research, and relevant emerging national and international issues	Y
	Process	NA	Not applicable	Not applicable	Y
8.3.2 The standardising body shall consider the latest scientific knowledge, research and relevant emerging issues.	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 11	11.2 The Standardising Body's review process shall also consider the latest scientific knowledge, research, and relevant emerging national and international issues	Y
	Process	NA	Not applicable		Y
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	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 11	11.3 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.	Y
	Process	NA	Not applicable		Y
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	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 11	11.3 ... review the composition of its membership (stakeholder mapping) to ascertain continued representation of affected and interested stakeholders, as well as stakeholders able to influence the Standard's implementation and make any changes if required.	Y
	Process	NA	Not applicable		
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	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 11.3	11.3 ... organise a public consultation period of at least 30 days and/or stakeholder meetings; and	Y
	Process	NA	Not applicable	N/A	Y

(b) stakeholder meetings.	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 11.3	11.3 ... organise a public consultation period of at least 30 days and/or stakeholder meetings; and	Y
	Process	NA	Not applicable	N/A	
8.4.4 The standardising body shall announce the review in a timely manner (refer to 6.3).	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 11.3	11.3 ... announce the review publicly in a timely manner (at least four weeks);	Y
	Process	NA	Not applicable	N/A	Y
8.5.1 Based on the feedback received during the period of a standard's implementation, the outcome of the gap analysis and the consultations, the standardising body shall decide whether to reaffirm the standard or whether a revision of the standard is necessary.	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 11.4	11.4 All decisions relating to revisions of the Standard (normal or editorial revision) shall be made at the highest decision-making level of the Standardising Body after reviewing: • the accumulated feedback received during the period of the Standard's implementation; and • the outcome of the gap analysis and stakeholder and public consultations. The Standardising Body shall publish its decision on whether to undertake a revision of the Standard on the GFC website, including the reason(s) for the decision	Y
	Process	NA	Not applicable	N/A	Y
8.5.2 The decision shall be made at the highest decision-making level of the standardising body	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clauses 11.4 and 12.3	See above	Y
	Process	NA	Not applicable	N/A	Y
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	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 11.4	See above.	Y
	Process	NA	Not applicable		Y
8.5.4 Where the decision is to revise the standard, the standardising body shall specify the type of revision (normal or editorial revision).	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 11.4	This is not specified	N/C
	Process	NA	Not applicable	N/A	Y
Revision of standards					
9.1 Procedures for revision of standard(s)/normative document(s)	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 12	12.1 Normal revision The Standardising Body shall review its standard(s) and normative document(s) regularly. Any review of standard(s) and normative	Y

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.				document(s), including this document, shall take into consideration Clause 6 of this document. The Standardising Body shall publish the report of its review, on the GFC's website www.forestry.gov.gy and receive feedback from the public, affected and interested stakeholders. The Standardising Body, together with the NSSWG, shall consider any feedback from stakeholders and the general public during the review of these standards and normative documents.	
	Process	NA	Not applicable		Y
9.2 Editorial revisions can be made without triggering the normal revision process. The standardising body shall approve the editorial changes formally and publish an amendment or a new edition of the standard.	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 12.2	12.2 Editorial revision Editorial revisions can be made to the Standard without triggering the normal revision process. Where editorial revisions are required, the Standardising Body, in consultation with the NSSWG, shall make the changes and then publish an amendment or a new edition of the Standard. 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.	Y
	Process	NA	Not applicable		Y
9.3.1 A time-critical revision is a revision between two periodic reviews using a fast-track process.	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 12.3	A time-critical revision is a revision between two periodic reviews using a fast-track process	Y
	Process			N/A	Y
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	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 12.3	The Standardising Body shall undertake a time-critical revision of the Standard, should any of the following situations arise: • change in national laws and regulations affecting compliance with PEFC International requirements; and	Y
	Process	Yes	Not applicable		Y

(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	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 12.3	instruction by PEFC International to comply with specific or new PEFC requirements within a timescale that is too short for a normal revision	Y
	Process	Yes	Not applicable		Y
9.3.3 The time-critical revision shall follow these steps:					
(a) The standardising body shall draft the revised standard	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 12.3	The time-critical revision shall follow these steps: a) The Standardising Body shall draft the revised Standard,	Y
	Process	Yes	Not applicable	N/A	Y
(b) The standardising body may consult stakeholders, but it is not mandatory,	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 12.3	b) The Standardising Body may consult stakeholders, but it is not mandatory,	Y
	Process	Yes	Not applicable		Y
(c) The revised standard shall be approved formally at the highest appropriate decision-making level of the standardising body,	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 12.3	c) The revised Standard shall be approved formally at the highest appropriate decision-making level of the Standardising Body (i.e. the GFC Board),	Y
	Process	Yes	Not applicable		Y
(d) The standardising body shall explain the justification for the urgent change(s) and make the justification publicly available.	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 12.3	d) The Standardising Body shall explain the justification for the urgent change(s) and make the justification publicly available.	Y
	Process	Yes	Not applicable		Y
9.4.1 A revision shall define the application date and transition period of the revised standard(s)/normative document(s).	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 12.4		Y
				The revision procedure shall indicate the application date and transition date of the revised Standard..	Y
	Process	Yes	Not applicable		Y
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	Procedures	Yes	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 12.4	The application date for the revised Standard shall be up to a period of one year from the publication of the revised Standard, to allow for the endorsement of the Standard, certified companies to revise their procedures in line with the new changes, dissemination of	Y

document(s), introduction of change(s), information dissemination and training.				information about any changes, and implementation of any training that may be required	
	Process			N/A	Y
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	Folder 2. File GY-PROC-2023-01_Standard Setting Procedures, Clause 12.4	The transition date for the revised Standard to come into effect shall not exceed one year, except in justified exceptional circumstances where the implementation of the revised Standard may take longer	Y
	Process	Yes	Not applicable		Y

PART II: STANDARD AND SYSTEM REQUIREMENT CHECKLIST FOR GROUP FOREST MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATION (PEFC ST 1002:2018)

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	Yes	2.6 Scope of the Group Forest Management-Requirements	2.5 Group certification shall be available for individuals, existing community logging groups and/or entities which come together voluntarily for this purpose. As a condition for group certification, all applicants (individuals or group forest managers/owners) shall define and document: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • their motivation and objectives for the certification; • any other specific circumstances which influence/impact the implementation of the group management system; and • the proposed certified area Note: "The term "group organisation" is equivalent to the term "regional organisation" if the group is defined by in-country regional boundaries"	Y
b) other groups and/or	Yes	2.6 Scope of the Group Forest Management-Requirements	See above	Y
c) whether there are any other specific circumstances which influence the implementation of the group management system.	Yes	2.5 Scope of the Group Forest Management-Requirements	See above	Y
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	2.5 Terms and definitions of the Group Forest Management Requirements	The Group Entity shall identify and document: the affected stakeholders that are relevant for the	Y

			group management system and the relevant expectations of these affected stakeholders;	
b) the relevant expectations of these affected stakeholders.	Yes	2.5 Context of the group organisation of the Group Forest Management-Requirements	See above	Y
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	2.4 Terms and definitions of the Group Forest ManagementRequirements	Group organisation: A group of participants represented by the Group Entity for the purposes of attaining and maintaining certification. A binding written agreement shall be established between a participant and the Group Entity. The term "group organisation" is equivalent to the term "regional organisation" if the group is defined by in-country regional boundaries	Y
b) the certified area,	Yes	2.4 Terms and definitions of the Group Forest ManagementRequirements	Certified area: The forest area covered by a sustainable forest management system according to the GSSF and duly certified by a recognised Certification Body. In the group certification context, the certified area is the sum of forest areas of the participants and covered by a Group Certificate	Y
c) the group certificate and			Group Certificate: A document confirming that the group organisation complies with the requirements of the Guyana Standard for Sustainable Forest Management or the CoC Standard and other applicable requirements of the GNFCS	Y
d) the document confirming participation in group certification.	Yes	2.5 Context of the group organisation of the Group Forest Management-Requirements	"Confirming participation" is defined under the broader definition of "Documented information", which notes that "It is issued to a participant that refers to the group forest certificate and that confirms the participant as being covered by the scope of the group forest certification (both forest management certification)".	Y

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	2.5 Context of the group organisation of the Group Forest Management-Requirements	2.6. Applicability of Group Certification: Group certification shall be available for: • forest managers/owners; • processors and manufacturers; • traders including exporters; • timber-based forest products; and • non-timber forest products (excluding fauna). Participating members within groups can opt for forest management certification under the GNFCS according to the appropriate standard.	Y
4.3.3 The standard shall define which requirements of the sustainable forest management standard may be fulfilled on group level.	Yes	2.2 Scope of the Group Forest Management-Requirements	2.2. Scope This Standard defines the requirements for group certification at the national level i.e. within Guyana or sub-national (Guyana's forests regions), and allows for the certification of a number of forest owners/managers under one certificate. Group forest management certification under this Standard requires establishing a specific management structure that includes the individual forest owners/managers. The requirements in this Standard are based on the PEFC's international benchmark for group forest certification (PEFC ST 1002-2018-Group Certification). This document is used with the GSSFM. The Group Entity (which manages the group acting on behalf of the Group Organisation comprising forest owners/managers and the Group Entity) represents the individual owners/managers in forest certification in order to ensure conformance with the GSSFM.	Y
4.3.4 The standard requires that the scope shall be made available as documented information.	Yes	2.7 Leadership of the Group Forest Management-Requirements	Documented information: Information required to be controlled and maintained by an organisation using any format and media, from any source. It is issued to a participant that refers to the group forest certificate and that confirms the participant as being covered by the scope of the group forest certification (both forest management certification). This document may be for instance a sub-certificate or a confirmation of participation.	Y
4.4 Group management system				
	Yes	2.13.1 Internal Audit		Y

4.4.1 The standard requires that all participants shall be subject to the internal monitoring and the internal audit programme.			2.13.1. Internal audit The group's annual internal audit programme shall cover the Group Entity and all group participants.	Y
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	2.5 Context of the group organisation of the Group Forest Management-Requirements	2.5 It is required 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.	Y
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	2.7 Leadership of the Group Forest Management-Requirements	All group entities shall: • implement and maintain an effective management system covering all participants of the group; •;	Y
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	2.7 Leadership of the Group Forest Management-Requirements	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;	Y
c) to establish written procedures for the management of the group organisation;	Yes	2.7 Leadership of the Group Forest Management-Requirements	develop written procedures for the management of the group organisation	Y
d) to establish written procedures for the acceptance of new participants of the group organisation. These 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)	Yes	2.7 Leadership of the Group Forest Management-Requirements	develop written procedures for the acceptance of new participants of the group organisation (these 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) ;	Y
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	2.7 Leadership of the Group Forest Management-Requirements	develop 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) ⁶	Y

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	2.7 Leadership of the Group Forest Management-Requirements	keep documented information on the group participants' conformity with the requirements of the Guyana Standard for Sustainable Forest Management, and other applicable requirements of the GNFCS; all participants, including their contact details, identification of their forest property and its/ their size(s); the certified area; and the implementation of an internal monitoring programme, its review and any preventive and/or corrective actions taken;	Y
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 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.	Yes	2.7 Leadership of the Group Forest Management-Requirements	establish connections with all participants based on a binding written agreement which shall include the participants' commitment to comply with the appropriate standards and the GNFCS; and 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 certification in the event of nonconformity with the GSSF	Y
h) to provide all participants with a document confirming participation in the group forest certification;	Yes	2.7 Leadership of the Group Forest Management-Requirements	The Group Entity shall further: • provide all participants with a document confirming their participation in the group forest certification;	Y
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	2.7 Leadership of the Group Forest Management-Requirements	provide all participants with information and guidance required for the effective implementation and maintenance of the appropriate standard and other applicable requirements of the GNFCS;	Y

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	2.7 Leadership of the Group Forest Management-Requirements	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;	Y
k) to operate an internal monitoring programme that provides for the evaluation of the participants' conformity with the certification requirements;	Yes	2.7 Leadership of the Group Forest Management-Requirements	operate an internal monitoring programme that provides for the evaluation of the participants' conformity with the certification requirements;	Y
l) to operate an annual internal audit programme covering both group members and group entity;	Yes	2.7 Leadership of the Group Forest Management-Requirements	implement an annual internal audit programme covering both group members and Group Entity;	Y
m) to operate a management review of the group forest certification and acting on the results from the review;	Yes	2.7 Leadership of the Group Forest Management-Requirements	undertake a management review of the group forest certification and act on the results from the review; and	Y
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	2.7 Leadership of the Group Forest Management-Requirements	and provide full co-operation and assistance in responding effectively to all requests from the certification body, accreditation body, PEFC International or the GFC as 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	Y
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 that it has a legal mandate to represent the	Yes	2.7 Leadership	2.8 Each participant in a group certification system shall provide the Group Entity with: • a binding written agreement, including a commitment to conform with the GSSF and other applicable requirements of the GNFCS; 2.16 Group entities shall conduct an internal audit on participants who have been excluded from the group certification before re-admitting it into the group certification. The internal audit shall not take place sooner than 12 months after the exclusion.	Y

participants and where its commitment and the terms and conditions of the contract are enforceable.				
b) To provide the group entity with information about previous group participation.	Yes	2.8 Function and responsibilities of participants	information about any previous participation in a group certification;	Y
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	2.8 Function and responsibilities of participants	a written commitment to comply with the GSSFM and other applicable requirements of the GNFCS as well as with the requirements of the group management system;	Y
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	2.8 Function and responsibilities of participants	a written commitment 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, and allow 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;	Y
e) to inform the group entity about nonconformities identified under other PEFC certifications than the particular group certification.	Yes	2.8 Function and responsibilities of participants	written commitment to inform the Group Entity about nonconformities identified under other PEFC certifications than the particular group certification; and	Y
f) to implement relevant corrective and preventive actions established by the group entity.	Yes	2.8 Function and responsibilities of participants	a written commitment to implement relevant corrective and preventive actions established by the Group Entity.	Y
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	2.9 Commitment and policy	All candidate entities applying for group certification under GNFCS shall commit in writing to: conform with the GSSFM and other GNFCS applicable requirements;	Y
b) to integrate the group certification requirements in the group management system	Yes	2.9 Commitment and policy	integrate the group certification requirements in the group management system;	Y
c) to continuously improve the group management system;	Yes	2.9 Commitment and policy	continuously improve the group management system;	Y
d) to continuously support the improvement of the	Yes	2.9 Commitment and policy		Y

sustainable management of the land/forests by the participants.			continuously support the improvement of the sustainable management of the land/forests by all the participants;	
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	2.9 Commitment and policy	document and make publicly available a copy of the entity's policy including its commitment and other documented information, upon request.	Y
5.2.3 The standard requires that the participants shall provide a commitment				
a) to follow the rules of the management system;	Yes	2.9 Commitment and policy	All participants in a group certification under GNFCS shall commit in writing to: follow the rules of the management system; an	Y
b) to implement the requirements of the sustainability standard in their operations in their area.	Yes	2.9 Commitment and policy	implement the requirements of the GSSF in their operations.	Y
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	2.10 Planning	All group entities shall develop a group management plan that meets the requirements of this Standard and the GSSF and which shall be updated periodically in line with any changes in the group's management system or feedback from monitoring.	Y
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	2.10 Planning	The requirements at 2.10 states that all group entities must develop a group requirement that meets the requirements of the standard; so this excludes the possibility of the decision itself.	Y
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	2.11 Support	All group entities shall determine and commit to provide the resources needed for the establishment, implementation, maintenance, and continual improvement of the group management system. In addition, group entities shall include, in their group management system documentation, recognition of the necessary skills and competences required for doing work in the group management system	Y
7.2 The standard shall define the necessary competence of persons doing work in the group management system.	Yes	2.11 Support	In addition, group entities shall include, in their group management system documentation, recognition of the necessary skills and	Y

			competences required for doing work in the group management system	
7.3 The standard requires that communication processes shall be in place to raise the awareness of participants concerning:	Yes	2.11 Support		
a) the group management policy;	Yes	2.11 Support	Group entities shall develop and implement communication processes/strategies to raise the awareness of the participants' concerning: • the group's management policy;	Y
b) the requirements of the sustainable forest management standard;	Yes	2.11 Support	• the requirements of the GNFCS;	Y
c) their contribution to the effectiveness of the group management system and the sustainable forest management, including the benefits of improved group performance;	Yes	2.11 Support	• their contribution to the effectiveness of the group management system and sustainable forest management, including the benefits of improved group performance; and	Y
d) the implications of not conforming with the group management system requirements.	Yes	2.11 Support	the implications of not conforming with the group's management system requirements.	Y
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	2.11 Support	The group's communication strategy shall include a description of: the issues/matter that the organisation shall communicate on	Y
b) when to communicate;	Yes	2.11 Support	when to undertake such communication	Y
c) with whom to communicate;	Yes	2.11 Support	• whom it will communicate with; and	Y
d) how to communicate.	Yes	2.11 Support	• how communication shall be done	Y
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	2.11 Support	Group entities shall develop and implement appropriate mechanisms for resolving complaints and disputes relating to group management and sustainable forest management operations	Y
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	2.11 Support	Group entities shall ensure that all documented information relevant to the group's management	Y

			system and the conformance with the requirements of the GSSFMS is kept up to date;	
b) available and suitable for use, where and when it is needed;	Yes	2.11 Support	available and suitable for use, where and when it is needed;	Y
c) adequately protected against loss of confidentiality, improper use, or loss of integrity.	Yes	2.11 Support	and adequately protected against loss of confidentiality, improper use, or loss of integrity.	Y
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	2.12 Operation	Group entities shall plan, implement, and control processes required to meet the requirements of the GSSFMS, and this group certification standard especially the actions determined in Section 2.10 of this Standard relative to Planning.	Y
b) to implement the actions determined in 6.	Yes	2.12 Operation	See above	Y
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	2.12 Operation	To ensure the Group Entity meets this objective, it shall define the necessary processes and establish criteria for their implementation and keep documented information to ensure and demonstrate that the processes have been carried out as planned.	Y
b) implementing control of the processes in accordance with the criteria;	Yes	2.12 Operation	See above	Y
c) keeping documented information to the extent necessary to have confidence that the processes have been carried out as planned.	Yes	2.12 Operation	See above	Y
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	2.13 Performance evaluation	Group entities shall continually monitor, measure, analyse and evaluate the group's certification system to ensure that it is conforming to the GNFCS and this Standard... In particular, group	Y

			entities shall define: what shall be monitored and measured;	
b) the methods for monitoring, measurement, analysis and evaluation, as applicable, to ensure valid results;	Yes	2.13 Performance evaluation	the methods for monitoring, measurement, analysis and evaluation, as applicable, to ensure valid results;	Y
c) when the monitoring and measuring shall be performed;	Yes	2.13 Performance evaluation	when the monitoring and measuring shall be performed	Y
d) when the results from monitoring and measurement shall be analysed and evaluated;	Yes	2.13 Performance evaluation	when the results from monitoring and measurement shall be analysed and evaluated;	Y
e) what documented information shall be available as evidence of the results.	Yes	2.13 Performance evaluation	what documented information shall be available as evidence of the results.	Y
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	2.13 Performance evaluation	The evaluation shall include the group's management performance and the effectiveness of the group's management system concerning the implementation of the Guyana National Forest Certification System	Y
9.2 Internal audit				
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	2.13 Performance evaluation	Group entities shall undertake annual internal audits to determine whether the group management system • conforms to the group organisation's own requirements for its group management system; • complies with the requirements of the GNFCS and this Standard, and	Y
b) ensures the implementation of the sustainable forest management standard on the participant level;	Yes	2.13 Performance evaluation	assess whether the implementation of the GNFCS and of the group management system at the participant level is effective and maintained.	Y
c) is effectively implemented and maintained.	Yes	2.13 Performance evaluation	assess whether the implementation of the GNFCS and of the group management system at the participant level is effective and maintained.	Y
9.2.1.2 The standard requires that the internal audit programme shall cover the group entity and all group	Yes	2.13 Performance evaluation	The group's annual internal audit programme shall cover the Group Entity and all group participants.	Y

participants. The group entity shall be audited annually. The participants may be selected on a sample basis.			The Group Entity shall be audited annually but the participants 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	2.13.1 Internal audit	At a minimum, the internal audit programme shall cover ... how the audit programme is planned, established, implemented, and maintained, 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;	Y
b) definition of the audit criteria and scope for each audit;	Yes	2.13.1 Internal audit	definition of the audit criteria and scope for each audit	Y
c) competence of internal auditor (forest knowledge, standard knowledge);	Yes	2.13.1 Internal audit	competence of the internal auditor (e.g., forest knowledge and knowledge of the GNFCS and its standards);	Y
d) selection of auditors and conducting of audits to ensure objectivity and the impartiality of the audit process;	Yes	2.13.1 Internal audit	criteria for the selection of auditors and the methods for conducting audits to ensure objectivity and the impartiality of the audit process (especially if the internal audit is to be conducted by someone outside of the Group Entity);	Y
e) ensuring that the results of the audits are reported to relevant group management;	Yes	2.13.1 Internal audit	ensuring that the results of the audits are reported to relevant group management; and	Y
f) retaining of the documented information as evidence of the implementation of the audit programme and the audit results.	Yes	2.13.1 Internal audit	retention of documented information as evidence of implementation of the audit programme and the audit results	Y
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:	Yes	2.14 Selection of participants in the internal audit programme (sampling)		
a) determination of the sample size (9.3.2);	Yes	2.14 Selection of participants in the internal audit programme (sampling)	The sample size for internal audits shall be calculated for the participants of the group organisation using the following formula: $(y=\sqrt{x})$	Y

			<p>Where y=Sample size; x= number of participants. The size of the sample generally should be the square root of the number of participants rounded to the upper whole number. If the results of internal audits or previous audits of certification bodies have not revealed any major nonconformities, the sample size for future audits may be further reduced by a factor of 0.8: ($y = 0.8 \sqrt{x}$), rounded to the upper whole number. The size of the sample may be adapted to take into considerations one or more of the following factors: • results of a risk assessment, where the sample sizes in case of low or high risk for individual categories can be defined; • results of internal audits or previous certification audits; • quality/level of confidence of the internal monitoring programme; and • use of appropriate and relevant technologies that allow the gathering of information concerning specified requirements and any other relevant information about the participants' activities gathered on the ground</p>	
b) determination of sample categories(9.3.3);	Yes	2.14 Selection of participants in the internal audit programme (sampling)	<p>Group entities shall establish sample categories based on the results of a risk assessment. The indicators to be used in the risk assessment shall reflect the geographical scope of the GSSFM, including at least the following: • ownership type (e.g., state forest, communal forest, private forest); • size of management units (different size classes); • biogeographic region (e.g., lowlands, low mountain range, high mountain range); • operations, processes, and products of potential group participants; • deforestation and forest conversion rates; • rotation period(s) • richness of biological diversity; • recreation and other socio-economic functions of the forest; • dependence of and interaction with local communities and indigenous people; • available resources for administration, operations, training, and research; and • the governance and law enforcement regime in Guyana.</p>	Y

c) distribution of the sample to the categories (9.3.4);	Yes	2.14 Selection of participants in the internal audit programme (sampling)	Group entities shall define the conditions which may constitute risk for each indicator based on low, medium, and high rating, and their respective consequences/impacts for the sampling. The sample shall be distributed to the categories according to the result of the risk assessment.	Y
d) selection of the participants (9.3.5).	Yes	2.14 Selection of participants in the internal audit programme (sampling)	Using a risk-based procedure, at least 25% of the sample shall be selected at random for the annual internal audit. For the remaining 75%, selection of participants in an annual internal audit can be based on the following categories: • 10% of participants falling in a low-risk category; • 25% of participants falling in a medium-risk category; and • 40% of participants falling in a high-risk category. Where participants fall in only two risk categories: • 25% of participants falling in a lower risk category; and • 50% of participants falling in a higher risk category. All selection of participants in each risk category for an internal audit sample shall be done randomly	Y
9.3.1.2 The standard may define additional requirements on the regional, national or sub-national level.	Yes	2.14 Selection of participants in the internal audit programme (sampling)	N/A	Y
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	2.14 Selection of participants in the internal audit programme (sampling)	The sampling shall also take into consideration cases where the 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.	Y
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	2.14 Selection of participants in the internal audit programme (sampling)	The sample size for internal audits shall be calculated for the participants of the group organisation using the following formula: $(y=\sqrt{x})$ Where y=Sample size; x= number of participants.	Y
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	2.14 Selection of participants in the internal audit programme (sampling)	The sample size for internal audits shall be calculated for the participants of the group organisation using the following formula: $(y=\sqrt{x})$ Where y=Sample size; x= number of participants.	Y

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	2.14 Selection of participants in the internal audit programme (sampling)	The size of the sample may be adapted to take into considerations one or more of the following factors: • results of a risk assessment, where the sample sizes in case of low or high risk for individual categories can be defined;	Y
b) results of internal audits or previous certification audits;	Yes	2.14 Selection of participants in the internal audit programme (sampling)	• results of internal audits or previous certification audits;	Y
c) quality / level of confidence of the internal monitoring programme;	Yes	2.14 Selection of participants in the internal audit programme (sampling)	• quality/level of confidence of the internal monitoring programme; and	Y
d) use of technologies allowing the gathering of information concerning specified requirements; 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.	Yes	2.14 Selection of participants in the internal audit programme (sampling)	• use of appropriate and relevant technologies that allow the gathering of information concerning specified requirements	Y
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	2.14 Selection of participants in the internal audit programme (sampling)	and any other relevant information about the participants' activities gathered on the ground	Y
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	2.14 Selection of participants in the internal audit programme (sampling)	Group entities shall establish sample categories based on the results of a risk assessment. The indicators to be used in the risk assessment shall reflect the geographical scope of the GSSF, including at least the following: • ownership type (e.g., state forest, communal forest, private forest); and	Y
b) size of management units (different size classes);	Yes	2.14 Selection of participants in the internal audit programme (sampling)	• size of management units (different size classes);	Y

c) biogeographic region (e.g. lowlands, low mountain range, high mountain range);	Yes	2.14 Selection of participants in the internal audit programme (sampling)	• biogeographic region (e.g., lowlands, low mountain range, high mountain range)	Y
d) operations, processes and products of potential group participants;	Yes	2.14 Selection of participants in the internal audit programme (sampling)	• operations, processes, and products of potential group participants;	Y
e) deforestation and forest conversion;	Yes	2.14 Selection of participants in the internal audit programme (sampling)	• deforestation and forest conversion rates;	Y
f) rotation period(s);	Yes	2.14 Selection of participants in the internal audit programme (sampling)	• rotation period(s)	Y
g) richness of biological diversity;	Yes	2.14 Selection of participants in the internal audit programme (sampling)	• richness of biological diversity;	Y
h) recreation and other socio-economic functions of the forest;	Yes	2.14 Selection of participants in the internal audit programme (sampling)	• recreation and other socio-economic functions of the forest;	Y
i) dependence of and interaction with local communities and indigenous people;	Yes	2.14 Selection of participants in the internal audit programme (sampling)	• dependence of and interaction with local communities and indigenous people;	Y
j) available resources for administration, operations, training and research;	Yes	2.14 Selection of participants in the internal audit programme (sampling)	• available resources for administration, operations, training, and research;	Y
k) governance and law enforcement.	Yes	2.14 Selection of participants in the internal audit programme (sampling)	• the governance and law enforcement regime in Guyana	Y
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	2.14 Selection of participants in the internal audit programme (sampling)	Group entities shall define the conditions which may constitute risk for each indicator based on low, medium, and high rating, and their respective consequences/impacts for the sampling.	Y
9.3.4 Distribution of the sample The sample shall be distributed to the categories according to the result of the risk assessment.	Yes	2.14 Selection of participants in the internal audit programme (sampling)	The sample shall be distributed to the categories according to the result of the risk assessment.	Y
9.3.5 Selection of the participants				
9.3.5.1 At least 25% of the sample should be selected at random.	Yes	2.14 Selection of participants in the internal audit programme (sampling)	Using a risk-based procedure, at least 25% of the sample shall be selected at random for the annual internal audit.	Y
9.3.5.2 A risk-based procedure for the selection of the participants shall be specified.	Yes	2.14 Selection of participants in the internal audit programme (sampling)	For the remaining 75%, selection of participants in an annual internal audit can be based on the following categories: • 10% of participants falling in a low-risk category; • 25% of participants falling in a medium-risk category; and • 40% of	Y

			participants falling in a high-risk category. Where participants fall in only two risk categories: • 25% of participants falling in a lower risk category; and • 50% of participants falling in a higher risk category. All selection of participants in each risk category for an internal audit sample shall be done randomly	
9.4 Management review				
9.4.1 The standard requires that an annual management review shall at least include:				
a) the status of actions from previous management reviews;	Yes	2.15 Management review	Group entities shall undertake annual management reviews, which shall, at a minimum include: • the status of actions from previous management reviews	Y
b) changes in external and internal issues that are relevant to the group management system;	Yes	2.15 Management review	changes in external and internal issues that are relevant to the group's management system;	Y
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	2.15 Management review	the status of conformity with the GSSF, that includes reviewing the results of the internal monitoring programme, the internal audit and the certification body's evaluations and surveillance reports;	Y
d) information on the group performance, including trends in: i. nonconformities and corrective actions; ii. monitoring and measurement results; iii. audit results;	Yes	2.15 Management review	information on the group's performance, including trends in nonconformities and corrective actions and, monitoring and measurement results and, audit results; an	Y
e) opportunities for continual improvement.	Yes	2.15 Management review	opportunities for continual improvement	Y
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	2.15 Management review	Group entities shall discuss with group participants the results of annual internal audits including any decision taken on improvements and any changes to the group management system and document such information as evidence of the results of the management reviews.	Y
9.4.3 The standard requires that the group organisation shall retain documented information as evidence of the results of management reviews.	Yes	2.15 Management review	Group entities shall discuss with group participants the results of annual internal audits including any decision taken on improvements and any changes to the group management system and document such information as evidence of the results of the management reviews.	Y

10. Improvement				
10.1 Nonconformity 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	2.16 Improvement	Where a nonconformity occurs, group entities shall: take action to control and correct it; deal with the consequences	Y
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	2.16 Improvement	evaluate the need for action to eliminate the causes of the nonconformity, in order that it does not recur or occur elsewhere, by reviewing the nonconformity; determining the causes of the nonconformity; and determining if similar nonconformities exist, or could potentially occur	Y
c) implement any action needed;	Yes	2.16 Improvement	• implement any action needed;	Y
d) review the effectiveness of any corrective action taken;	Yes	2.16 Improvement	periodically review the effectiveness of any corrective action taken; and	Y
e) make changes to the group management system, if necessary.	Yes	2.16 Improvement	make changes to the group's management system, if necessary.	Y
10.1.2 The standard requires that the group organisation shall retain documented information as evidence of:				
a) the nature of the nonconformities and any subsequent actions taken;	Yes	2.16 Improvement	Group entities shall retain documented information as evidence of the nature of the nonconformities and any subsequent actions taken and the results/impacts of any corrective action.	Y
b) the results of any corrective action.	Yes	2.16 Improvement	Group entities shall retain documented information as evidence of the nature of the nonconformities and any subsequent actions taken and the results/impacts of any corrective action.	Y
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	2.16 Improvement	Group entities shall conduct an internal audit on participants who have been excluded from the group certification before re-admitting it into the group certification. The internal audit shall not take place sooner than 12 months after the exclusion.	Y
10.2 Continual improvement The standard requires that the suitability, adequacy and effectiveness of the group management system and the	Yes	2.16 Improvement	Group entities and participants shall commit to continuously improve the suitability, adequacy and effectiveness of the group's management system	Y

sustainable management of the forest shall be continuously improved.			and the sustainable management of the certified forests	
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PART III: STANDARD AND SYSTEM REQUIREMENT CHECKLIST FOR SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT (PEFC ST 1003:2018)

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	Section 3.2 Use of the Standard The Guyana Standard For Sustainable Forest Management (GSSFM) contains performance requirements for forest management activities in concessions (FMUs) where the forest operator has been granted a legal right to undertake commercial forestry operations on a sustainable long-term basis. In Guyana the Forest Management Unit level is equivalent to a concession. The field of application of the GSSFM must include, at a minimum: an FMU (concession) or a coherent set of FMUs (concessions), industrial sites adjacent to or within the FMU(s), mechanical workshops, any temporary forest living bases and camps, the affected indigenous peoples and local communities, and the road and forest	The standard utilizes a “defined forest area” as “an area of forest (including land and water) to which the requirements of the Standard are applied” (Definitions, Section 5), and must be applied as indicated in Section 6, “General requirements of the standard.” The standard contains 11 Principles, 50 criteria and 139 indicators that are applicable to the defined forest area and/or the forest operator that ensures the intent is achieved at the defined forest area, and in additional cases those of adjacent communities	Y

		<p>infrastructures (except if public) close to and within the FMU(s).</p> <p>Section 6: General requirements of the standard</p> <p>Sustainable forest management performance requirements in the Standard are applicable at the Defined Forest Area level, except monitoring of forest health, which could be done at regional level but with the monitoring results communicated at the Defined Forest Area level;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ where forest health is monitored at the regional level, it will not be necessary to carry out individual monitoring of each Defined Forest Area. 		
b) be clear, performance based and auditable;	Yes	<p>Section 3.3 Verifiers</p> <p>The GSSFm contains eleven key forest management principles. Each principle has a set of criteria and indicators linked to each criterion. The indicators have clear performance based verifiers for evaluating a forest sector operator's compliance with the sustainable forest management performance requirements of the GSSFm.</p> <p>The verifiers may be different depending upon the size and scale of operation.</p> <p>The auditable verifiers take into consideration requirements already assessed and verified by</p>	The 50 criteria and 139 indicators are clear, performance based and verifiable. The 'verifiers' provide implementation guidance for auditors in application that further reduce any ambiguity as to their clarity, performance basis and auditability.	Y

		<p>the GFC prior to approving harvesting operations, post-harvesting checks and monitoring. Additional auditable verifiers are included only for PEFC Benchmark Standard requirements not already covered by the GFC's statutory approval processes.</p> <p>Section 6: General requirements of the standard</p> <p>All the requirements have been developed so they are clear, performance based and auditable.</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>1. Preface</p> <p>The Standard applies to any of Guyana's natural forests being managed for the commercial production of wood and non- timber forest products and forest services</p> <p>3.2 Use of the Standard</p> <p>This Standard is applicable to all tenures where commercial forestry operations are undertaken except State land in conversion.</p> <p>The indicators apply to all situations unless specifically indicated otherwise.</p> <p>Some indicators apply specifically to some tenures/and or size and scale of operations and these are specified in the Standard.</p> <p>Unless indicated, the use of the term forest sector operator applies</p>	<p>A 'forest sector operator' is defined at 5 "Terms and Definitions": "A Forest Sector Operator is a natural person or body corporate registered with and approved by the Guyana Forestry Commission to conduct forestry operation(s)".</p> <p>Forest Sector Operators must be certified to the standard for the 'defined forest area', to which the standard applies.</p>	Y

		<p>to all tenures and scales of operation. Similarly, the term "Indigenous" applies to the first nation's people of Guyana. Indigenous forests therefore refer to forest lands belonging to the first nation's people of Guyana.</p> <p>.</p> <p>To help the use of the Standard including consistent interpretation of indicators and the suggested verifiers, a guidance document has also been developed. Application and implementation of the Standard must always take into consideration differences in the size and scales of operation, as well as ownership structures.</p> <p>A defined forest area can only be classified as certified under the Standard and provided with the necessary documentation to prove this, after the defined forest area has been audited by an independent third-party auditor who is accredited by a PEFC accredited certification body and verified that the forest sector operator has met all the performance requirements of the Standard</p>		
		.		
d) require record-keeping that provides evidence of compliance with the requirements of the forest management standards;	Yes	<p>Section 6: General requirements of the standard</p> <p>Relevant and appropriate records must be kept, to provide evidence of compliance with the Standard's</p>	The standard meets the requirements.	Y

		<p>forest management requirements.</p> <p>Indicator 4.1.1 The Forest sector operator establishes and maintains a forest management system appropriate for the size and scale of operations, that includes the documented information required by the Standard and determined by the Forest sector operator as being necessary for the effectiveness of the sustainable forest management system.</p> <p>Note</p> <p>Applicable to all tenures based on scale and intensity of operations.</p>		
<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;</p> <p>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.</p>	Yes	<p>Section 6: General Requirements of the standard</p> <p>Documents related to wood and non-wood forest products from forests certified under this Standard, and passed on to entities with PEFC-endorsed Chain of Custody certification, must specify “x% PEFC certified”</p>	The standard meets the PEFC requirements	Y
<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;</p>	Yes	Section 6: General Requirements of the standard	The standard does not meet the requirements as it does not explicitly prevent a system-specific claim from being used, even if that claim is 0%.	N
<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;</p>	Yes	Section 6: General Requirements of the standard	All products are required to specify their percentage of PEFC material; certification can only be achieved by forest operators operating defined forest areas for certification.	Y
<p>h) specify requirements concerning the information which need to be provided to a PEFC chain of custody certified</p>	Yes	Section 6: General Requirements of the standard	These are defined at Section 6: “Documents related to timber and non-timber forest products from forests	Y

customer;			certified under this Standard and passed on to entities with PEFC-endorsed Chain of Custody certification, must specify "x% PEFC certified."	
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	Section 2: Background Indicator 6.3.1 (a)	The verifiers in the standard are – for the most part – independent of regulation and legislative requirements. Exceptions to this are provided in Annex A, Notes on the GSSF, where there is any ambiguity relating to the standard's application.	Y
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	Section 5: Terms and definitions Indicators 2.1.1, 4.3.1, 4.3.2, 4.3.3, 4.3.5, 4.3.6, 6.3.1, 6.3.2	The standard defines affected stakeholders as: A stakeholder who might experience a direct change in living and/or working conditions caused by implementation of a standard, or a stakeholder who might be a user of a standard and therefore is subject to the requirements of the standard. Note 1: Affected stakeholders include neighbouring communities, Indigenous Peoples, workers, etc. However, having an interest in the subject matter of the standard (e.g., NGOs, scientific community, and civil society) is not equal to being affected. Note 2: A stakeholder who might be a user of the standard is likely to become a certified entity, e.g., a forest sector operator in the case of a forest management standard, or a wood processing enterprise in the case of a chain of custody standard. The following are examples of affected stakeholders, and may include - Local communities, forest dwellers and indigenous communities. Workers, Forest dwellers, Neighbours, Downstream landowners, Local processors, Local businesses, Tenure and use rights holders, including landowners, Organizations authorized or known to act on behalf of affected stakeholders, for example social and environmental NGOs, labour unions. b) Interested stakeholder It is an individual, group of individuals or an organisation; that has shown an interest or is known to have an interest in the activities of the organisation."	Y

			Indicator 4.3.1 requires that "The FSO identifies and keeps up to date: a) the affected stakeholders that are relevant to sustainable forest management; and b) the relevant needs and expectations of these stakeholders."	
b) the relevant needs and expectations of these stakeholders.	Yes	Indicators 4.3.1, 4.3.2, 4.3.3, 4.3.5, 4.3.6, 6.3.1, 6.3.2	Indicator 4.3.1 requires that "The FSO identifies and keeps up to date: a) the affected stakeholders that are relevant to sustainable forest management; and b) the relevant needs and expectations of these stakeholders." Indicators 4.3 to 4.6 lay out procedures for engaging with and consulting affected stakeholders.	Y
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	Section 3.2: Use of the standard	Boundaries for a defined forest area are established through definitions: "It is an area of forest (including land and water) to which the requirements of the Standard are applied. It includes productive and non-productive forest areas, streamside reserves, conservation areas, and roads, etc. The defined forest area is described either by survey plans, legal title(s), gazettal notices or GIS shape files whether as private land, Amerindian Villages and State Forest Authorisation." To comply with the establishment of these boundaries, verifiers are established at Criterion 1.1, where the 'legal right to harvest' requires documentation legally establishing these areas.	Y
4.3.2 The standard requires that forest management shall comprise the cycle of inventory and planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and shall include an appropriate assessment of the social, environmental and economic impacts of forest management practices. This shall form a basis for a cycle of continuous improvement.	Yes	Section 2: Background Indicators: 1.2.4, 1.2.5, 4.2.1, 5.1.1, 5.1.2	Inventory and planning: Operators are required to undertake inventory and planning as part of the Wood Tracking System requirements (Indicator 1.2.4), comprising: • <i>Pre-harvest inventory.</i> • <i>Conduct of pre-harvest</i>	Y

			<p><i>inventory for all blocks to be harvested in the operational year to establish the maximum AAC within a given harvesting cycle. • Pre-harvest inventory report, including stock map. • Affixing tags with a unique inventory number on each tree to be harvested. • Forest Management Plan. • Annual Operational Plan with pre-harvesting inventory information. (See Annex)</i></p> <p>For monitoring and evaluation, monitoring and evaluation requirements are stipulated under Criterion 5.1.</p> <p>For an assessment of impacts and continual improvement, requirements are established in Indicator 5.2.1 (internal audit); indicator 5.2.2 (management review); indicator 5.3.1 (responding to non conformities)</p>	
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	Indicator 1.4.1 (a)	Indicator 1.4.1 The FSO has a documented policy commitment to: a) comply with the requirements of the GSSF and other applicable requirements of the certification system; forest management	Y
b) to continuously improve the sustainable forest management system.	Yes	Indicator 1.4.1 (b)	b) continuously improve the Organisation's sustainable forest management system; and	Y
5.2 The standard requires that this commitment shall be publicly available.	Yes	Indicator 1.4.2	Indicator 1.4.2 The FSO makes the policy commitment referred to in 1.4.1 publicly available.	Y
5.3 The standard requires that responsibilities for sustainable forest management shall be clearly defined and assigned.	Yes	Indicator 1.4.1 (c)	Indicator 1.4.1 The FSO has a documented policy commitment to: c) clearly define and assign responsibilities required for sustainable forest management	
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	Yes	Indicator 4.1.1	Indicator 4.1.1 The FSO assesses the risks and opportunities of complying with the requirements of the GSSF and has plans and strategies to mitigate	Y

and scale of the operations of the organisation shall be considered.			the identified risks.	
6.1.2 The standard requires that inventory and mapping of forest resources shall be established and maintained, adequate to local and national conditions and in correspondence with the requirements described in this international benchmark standard.	Yes	Indicator 1.2.3, 1.2.4	<p>Large operators are required to undertake a pre-harvest inventory as part of the Wood Tracking System (WTS) requirements. This is explicitly referred to at Indicator 1.2.4, where operators are required to comply with the WTS. The WTS also requires the submission of an annual operating plan (AOP), which requires annual documented updating (referenced in Annex 1 fn 5).</p> <p>In the case of small operators, GFC establishes maintains mapping, as well as the inventory on an annual basis for Annual Operation Plans (AOP). AOPs must be signed off by the operators before activity can take place; maintenance of inventory takes place at the block level utilizing log tagging and tracking under the WTS. This is referred to in Indicator 1.2.4.</p>	Y
6.2 Management plan				
6.2.1 The standard requires that management plans shall be:				
a) elaborated and periodically updated or continually adjusted;	Yes	Indicators 4.2.3, 4.1.2, 4.2.1	<p>Indicator 4.1.2 The FSO establishes and maintains a forest management system appropriate for the size and scale of operations, that includes the documented information required by the Standard and determined by the FSO as being necessary for the effectiveness of the sustainable forest management system. The FSO also ensures the documented information is relevant, and updated as appropriate, to the activities of the operation. (See explanatory note 19 in Annex 1)</p> <p>Forest management system documentation includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies. • FMP and AOP (large concessions) • Area Work Plan (small concessions, private lands, and Amerindian Villages). • Records (operational, monitoring and training) <p>Indicator 4.1.3 The FSO determines and provides the resources needed for the establishment, implementation, maintenance, and wherever possible, continual improvement of the sustainable forest management system appropriate for the size</p>	Y

			and scale of operations. (See explanatory note 19 & 20 in Annex 1) Indicator 4.2.3 – The FSO periodically updates the summary management plan to ensure it continues to accurately reflect the forest management objectives and activities being undertaken. (See explanatory note 21 in Annex 1)	
b) appropriate to the size and use of the forest area;	Yes	Indicators 4.1.1, 4.2.1	Indicator 4.1.2 The FSO establishes and maintains a forest management system appropriate for the size and scale of operations	Y
c) based on applicable local, national and international legislation as well as existing land-use or other official plans; and	Yes	Section 2: Background Indicators 4.1.2, 4.2.1	Indicator 4.2.1 Where applicable, the FSO prepares, implements and maintains management plans to include the elements described in GFC/FPA: Forest Management Plan Guidelines, April 1999. For small scale operations, the FSO prepares, implements and maintains an Area Work Plan (AWP). An AWP shall be for either the life of the Agreement between the FSO and the GFC or for five years.	Y
d) adequately covering forest resources.	Yes	Section 2: Background Indicators 4.2.1, , 4.1.1	See indicators for 4.1.1. in terms of scope.	
6.2.2 The standard requires that management plans shall take into account the different uses or functions of the managed forest area.	Yes	Section 2: Background Indicators 6.1.1, 6.1.2, 7.1.1, 7.2.1, 8.2.1	Indicator 11.1.1 The FSO ensures that forest management planning recognises the importance of all socio-economic functions of forests and has clearly defined strategies to respect and enhance these functions. In addition, the FMP as defined in the FMP guidelines (1999) Indicator 4.1.2 requires the establishment and maintenance of a forest management system that incorporates a forest management plan (FMP) appropriate for the size and scale of operations.	Y

			<p>The FMP must adhere to GFC FMP guidelines. FMPs are “based upon a detailed social, economic and environmental appraisal, setting out the order and extent of all activities to be carried out in a concession” and must contain “the plan period: the area to be harvested during the period and projected volumes of produce to be extracted; major works to be carried out including length of main road(s), bridges, buildings, port facilities; major equipment to be purchased; training programmes; social infrastructure and programmes; and important forest protection and conservation activities.” At a more detailed level it also includes requirements for protection functions, conservation functions and social functions.</p>	
<p>6.2.3 The standard requires that management plans shall include at least a description of the current forest management unit, long-term objectives, and the average annual allowable cut, including its justification.</p>	Yes	<p>Section 2: Background</p> <p>Indicators 1.2.3, 1.2.4, 8.4.1, 8.4.2, 8.4.3, 8.4.4</p>	<p>However, the requirements of the WTS planning requirements are partially stated at Annex A Note 4:</p> <p><i>Pre-harvest inventory. • Conduct of pre-harvest inventory for all blocks to be harvested in the operational year to establish the maximum AAC within a given harvesting cycle. • Pre-harvest inventory report, including stock map. • Affixing tags with a unique inventory number on each tree to be harvested. • Forest Management Plan. • Annual Operational Plan with pre-harvesting inventory information</i></p> <p>FMP Guidelines contain prescriptive requirements requiring descriptions of to geographic location, topography, geology. soil , hydrology, vegetation, forest types.</p> <p>It includes requirements for long-term objectives, calculation and justification of AAC.</p> <p>Indicator 4.1.2 requires the establishment and maintenance of a forest management system that incorporates a forest management plan (FMP)</p>	Y

			<p>appropriate for the size and scale of operations.</p> <p>The FMP must adhere to GFC FMP guidelines. These require:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A description of the FMU in written and map form (boundaries, topography, hydrology, vegetation maps, compartments and road systems, infrastructure, etc.); - Overall objectives for timber production, NTFP, tourism, etc. - Calculation of cutting cycle and AAC, based on a 60-year cutting cycle for each species to be marketed, as well as inventory and forest organisation. 	
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	Indicators 1.2.3, 1.2.4, 8.1.1, 8.4.1	<p>Indicator 8.1.1 The FSO demonstrates how planned forest management operations maintain the capability of the forest to produce a range of timber and non-forest timber products and services on a sustainable basis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The FSO's documented statement of commitment to ensuring sustainable management and use of forest resources including policies and procedures. • FMP (large concessions). • Area Work Plan (small concessions/private lands/Amerindian Villages). • Evidence of compliance with Sections 1.4, 1.7, 2.1 and 2.2 of the Code of Practice and Guidelines. • Monitoring Report (GFC/FMD). 	Y
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	Indicators 6.1.1, 6.1.2, 7.1.1, 7.1.2, 7.1.3, 8.3.1	<p>The requirement is met at Indicator 7.1.1.</p> <p>In addition, the verifiers include:</p> <p>Adherence to Sections 7 and 8 of the Code of Practice and the Code of Practice more broadly, which includes as part of Reduced Impact Logging techniques:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Pre-harvest inventory and planning to <input type="checkbox"/> Optimising primary and secondary road network to minimise damage <input type="checkbox"/> Planning of skid trail network to minimise soil disturbance 	Y

			<input type="checkbox"/> Identifying cornerstone species The FMP (as per requirements (see above)), which has an objective to ensure ensure that the health of the forest ecosystem and its productive capacity are maintained. This includes specified information on measures taken disruption to ecological processes and damage to surrounding trees and canopy gaps, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o specification of the silvicultural system to be applies, which includes description of harvesting procedures to be used, including (but not limited to tree selection, directional felling, winching); o specification of chemical use to minimize disruption to forest ecosystems., 	
6.2.6 The standard requires that management plans shall take into account the results of scientific research.		Indicators 11.7.1, 11.7.2	The FMP Guidelines contain requirements for previous and current research activities and taken those into account within the plan.	Y
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	Indicator 4.2.2	Indicator 4.2.2 – The FSO makes the summary Forest Management Plan/Area Work Plan publicly available	Y
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	Indicator 4.2.3	See Annex 1 Note 21: 21. The publicly available summary of the Management Plan (large concessions)/Area Work Plan (small concessions, Private lands, Amerindian Villages) 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.	Y
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.	Yes	Indicator 1.4.3	This is defined by the VPA, signed in December 2022.	Y

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.				
6.3.1.2 The standard requires that the organisation shall comply with applicable local, national and international legislation on forest management, including but not limited to forest management practices; nature and environmental protection; protected and endangered species; property, tenure and land-use rights for indigenous peoples, local communities or other affected stakeholders; health, labour and safety issues; anti- corruption and the payment of applicable royalties and taxes.	Yes	<p>The development of the Standard takes into consideration Guyana's existing forestry laws and regulation including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guyana's forest laws and regulations; • Code of Practice for Forest Operations; • Guidelines for large and small concessions; • The Wood Tracking System Guidelines; and • the key requirements of the PEFC Benchmark Standard. <p>Principles 1 and 2.</p>	<p>There is no broad requirement in the standard for this requirement. However, FSO (forest sector operators) as defined by the standard on page 8 as those that have been approved for a State Forest Authorisation. These are captured under the same legal definition for FSOs under the Guyana-EU FLEGT VPA (see Annex II of the agreement) under that agreement, FSOs must comply with the legality definition under the agreement, which defines legislation applicable in 6.3.1.1.</p> <p>Although the compliance requirement is not explicitly stated within the agreement, the legality definition at PEFC 6.3.1.1 must be complied with.</p>	Y
6.3.1.3 The standard requires that where no anti- corruption legislation exists, the organisation must take alternative anti-corruption measures appropriate to the risk of corruption.	Yes	Indicators 1.4.4, 1.4.5	<p>Indicator 1.4.4 The FSO shall: a) have a documented policy commitment not to offer or receive bribes or condone/ participate in any other form of corruption; and b) make the policy commitment publicly available</p> <p>Indicator 1.4.5 The FSO shall comply with anti-corruption legislation, where it exists.</p>	Y
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	Indicators 1.2.4, 1.2.5, 1.5.1, 1.5.2, 1.5.3	Indicator 1.5.1 The FSO shall have strategies for, and implement measures to contribute to, protecting the forest from unauthorised activities such as illegal logging, illegal land use, illegally initiated fires, and other illegal activities.	Y

6.3.2 Legal, customary and traditional rights related to the forest land				
<p>6.3.2.1 The standard requires that property rights, tree ownership and land tenure arrangements shall be clearly defined, documented and established for the relevant management unit. Likewise, legal, customary and traditional rights related to the forest land shall be clarified, recognised and respected.</p> <p>Note: Guidance for the handling of tenure arrangements can be obtained from the FAO Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security.</p>	Yes	<p>Indicators 1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3, 1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.2.4, 1.2.5</p> <p>Principle 2 – Legal, customary and traditional rights</p>	<p>The requirements are defined at Indicators 1.1.1, 1.1.2 and 1.1.3 under Criterion 1.1 for the legal right to harvest, which incorporates property rights, land tenure and tree ownership.</p> <p>There are three types of State Forest Authorisations that operators can harvest under in Guyana, and these are defined within the standard: State Forest; Amerindian Villages; private lands. These are defined respectively in the indicators noted above for operators, establish rights accordingly, and require documentation as part of the verifiers. Each of these requires different definition, documentation and establishment as part of the standard.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - State Forest (1.1.1) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Require a State Forest Authorisation, and these are only granted by the GFC when it is established there is no other existing legal ownership on the land, and this defines documents and establishes property rights, tenure, and tree ownership (right to harvest) - Amerindian Villages (1.1.2) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Require absolute grant or certificate of title, evidence of FPIC, and an agreement between a Village Council and operator (which provides harvesting rights). - Private lands (1.1.3) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Requires absolute title, absolute grant (for land) or transport authorization. <p>With regards to customary and traditional rights related to forest land, these are recognized, this is met at Indicators 2.1.1 and 2.1.2</p>	Y
<p>6.3.2.2 The standard requires that forest practices and operations shall be conducted in recognition of the established framework of legal, customary and traditional rights such as outlined in ILO 169 and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which shall not be</p>	Yes	<p>Principle 2– Legal, customary and traditional rights</p>	<p>Principle 2 meets the requirements for customary and traditional rights are met in the indicators under Principle 2, specifically:</p> <p>Indicator 2.1.1 The FSO establishes and implements a policy commitment to ensure that his or her forest</p>	Y

infringed upon without the free, prior and informed consent of the holders of the rights, including the provision of compensation where applicable. Where the extent of rights is not yet resolved, or is in dispute, there are processes for just and fair resolution. In such cases forest managers shall, in the interim, provide meaningful opportunities for parties to be engaged in forest management decisions whilst respecting the processes and roles and responsibilities laid out in the policies and laws where the certification takes place.			<p>practices and operations are conducted in a manner that recognises the established framework of legal, customary, and traditional rights such as outlined in ILO 169, the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the Universal Declaration on Human Rights.</p> <p>Indicator 2.2.1 The FSO shall ensure that any contractual arrangements for timber harvesting on Amerindian lands are made with free and informed consent of the community</p> <p>Indicator 2.3.1 The FSO shall ensure that any conflicts are first resolved through consultation before exploring legal options</p> <p>Indicator 2.3.2 The FSO shall ensure that conflicts are resolved through consultations through a neutral third party.</p>	
6.3.2.3 The standard requires that forest practices and operations shall respect human rights as defined by the Universal Declaration on Human Rights.	Yes	Indicators 2.1.1, 2.1.2	<p>Indicator 2.1.1 The FSO establishes and implements a policy commitment to ensure that his or her forest practices and operations are conducted in a manner that recognises the established framework of legal, customary, and traditional rights such as outlined in ILO 169, the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the Universal Declaration on Human Rights.</p> <p>Indicator 2.1.2 The FSO does not prevent traditional rights of Amerindian/Indigenous peoples. (See explanatory note 8 in Annex 1)</p>	Y
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	Yes	Principle 3 – Workers Rights	Indicator 3.1.2 The FSO shall ensure that the forest practices and operations comply with fundamental ILO conventions (ILO Conventions 29, 87, 98, 100, 105, 111, 138 and 182 and related legislation. (See explanatory note 11 in Annex 1).	Y

ratified and its content is not covered by applicable legislation, specific requirements shall be included in the forest management standard.				
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 informed about the risks involved with their work and about preventive measures.	Yes	Indicator 3.2.12, Criterion 3.3	<p>Indicator 3.3.2 The FSO identifies and documents the accident risks associated with planned forest operations.</p> <p>Indicator 3.3.3 The FSO specifies the measures to be applied to protect workers from work-related risks</p> <p>Indicator 3.3.4 The FSO plans and organises forest operations to ensure all reasonable measures are taken to protect workers (including contractors) when undertaking forest operations</p> <p>Indicator 3.3.5 The FSO informs workers (including contractors) of the risks involved with their work and the preventive measures adopted to mitigate those risks.</p> <p>Indicator 3.3.6 The FSO reviews safety risk assessments and mitigation measures at least annually, in consultation with workers or their selected representatives</p>	Y
<p>6.3.4.2 The standard requires that working conditions shall be safe, and guidance and training in safe working practices shall be provided to all those assigned to a task in forest operations. Working hours and leave shall comply with national laws or applicable collective agreements.</p> <p>Note: Guidance for specifying national standards can be obtained from the ILO Code of Good Practice: Safety and Health in Forestry Work.</p>	Yes	Indicator 3.2.12, Criterion 3.3	<p>Indicator 3.3.8 – The FSO ensures that working conditions are safe, and guidance and training in safe working practices is provided to all those assigned to a task in forest operations.</p> <p>Indicator 3.3.9 – The FSO ensures that workers (including contractors) are provided with and use personal protective equipment appropriate to their work tasks in accordance with the ILO Code of Good Practice: Safety and Health in Forestry Work.</p> <p>Indicator 3.3.11 The FSO has an emergency escape and rescue plan, appropriate to the size and scope of the operation, for the quick evacuation of a person in the event of an injury or illness which requires medical assistance</p> <p>Indicator 3.3.12 – The FSO identifies the competency</p>	Y

			<p>and training needs associated with the implementation of sustainable forest management activities.</p> <p>Indicator 3.3.13 – The FSO: a) establishes and implements a training plan to ensure that all workers (including contractors) are sufficiently competent to undertake assigned forest management activities; and b) undertakes refresher training and provides task-specific information to workers (including contractors) to ensure that competencies remain upto-date and appropriate to the tasks being undertaken</p> <p>Indicator 3.3.15 The FSO has a plan, appropriate to the size and scale of the operation that provides: a) a range of educational and skills training programmes for the purpose of enhancing workers' job performance and promotion within the workplace; b) educational and vocational skills programmes to communities within or adjacent to the forest management operation; and c) wherever possible, that certification for educational and skills training programmes for employees is issued by a recognized national institution or body.</p> <p>Indicator 3.3.16 The FSO demonstrates that it provides ongoing training to its employees in the safe handling of hazardous agents at its workplace.</p> <p>Indicator 3.2.9 The FSO ensures that wages of local and migrant forest workers as well as of contractors and other operators operating in PEFCcertified areas meet or exceed at least legal, industry minimum standards or, where applicable, collective bargaining agreements. (See explanatory note 17 in Annex 1).</p> <p>17. Where wages are below the legal wage of Guyana, steps should be taken to attain increased wages towards the minimum wage level (note that FSOs should aim to pay a realistic "living wage" above the legal minimum).</p>	
6.3.4.3 The standard requires that wages of local and migrant forest workers as well as of contractors and other operators operating in PEFC-certified areas shall meet or	Yes	Indicators 3.2.8, 3.2.9, 3.2.10, 3.2.13 3.2.14	Indicator 3.2.9 The FSO ensures that wages of local and migrant forest workers as well as of contractors and other operators operating in PEFC certified areas	Y

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.			meet or exceed at least legal, industry minimum standards or, where applicable, collective bargaining agreements. (See explanatory note 17 in Annex 1). 17. Where wages are below the legal wage of Guyana, steps should be taken to attain increased wages towards the minimum wage level (note that FSOs should aim to pay a realistic “living wage” above the legal minimum).	
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	Indicators 3.2.4, 3.2.5, 3.2.6, 3.2.7	Indicator 3.2.4 The FSO complies with Guyana's Non-Discrimination Legislation. (See explanatory note 15 in Annex 1). Indicator 3.2.5 The FSO does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, religion, colour, ethnic origin, and sexual orientation in relation to appointment, advancement, and training opportunities Indicator 3.2.6 The FSO ensures women and men are paid equal remuneration for the same work or work of equal value. Indicator 3.2.7 The FSO, wherever possible, provides opportunities for employment and training to local and forest dependent communities within or adjacent to the forestry operation. (See explanatory note 16 in Annex 1).	Y
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	Indicator 4.1.3	Indicator 4.1.3 The FSO determines and provides the resources needed for the establishment, implementation, maintenance, and wherever possible, continual improvement of the sustainable forest management system appropriate for the size and scale of operations. (See explanatory note 19 & 20 in Annex 1)	Y
7.2 Competence				
7.2.1 The standard requires that forest managers, contractors, employees and forest owners shall be provided	Yes	Indicators 3.2.5, 3.2.7, 3.3.8,	Indicator 3.3.12 – The FSO identifies the competency and training needs associated with the implementation	Y

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.		3.3.12, 3.3.13, 3.3.14, 3.3.16, 8.3.2, 11.6.2	<p>of sustainable forest management activities.</p> <p>Indicator 3.3.13 – The FSO: a) establishes and implements a training plan to ensure that all workers (including contractors) are sufficiently competent to undertake assigned forest management activities; and b) undertakes refresher training and provides task-specific information to workers (including contractors) to ensure that competencies remain up-to-date and appropriate to the tasks being undertaken</p> <p>Indicator 3.3.14 – The FSO establishes and maintains records of competencies held by, and training provided to, all workers (including contractors)</p> <p>Indicator 8.3.2 The FSO provides regular training for his or her workers on reduced-impact logging techniques and other procedures described in 8.3.1</p> <p>Indicator 11.6.2 Where the FSO employs forest-dependent communities including Indigenous peoples within the concession, the FSO provides regular, appropriate and relevant training, to ensure continual socio-economic benefits</p>	
7.3 Communication				
7.3.1 The standard requires that effective communication and consultation with local communities, indigenous peoples and other stakeholders relating to sustainable forest management shall be provided.	Yes	Indicators 2.2.1, 4.3.2, 4.3.3, 4.3.4, 11.4.2	<p>Indicator 4.3.2 – The FSO establishes and implements procedures for effective communication and consultation with local communities, Indigenous peoples and other stakeholders relating to sustainable forest management.</p> <p>Indicator 4.3.3 – The FSO ensures that mechanisms for communication and consultation are culturally appropriate and facilitate meaningful engagement.</p> <p>Indicator 4.3.4 – The FSO keeps records of communications and consultation sufficient to demonstrate implementation of its procedures and meaningful engagement with local communities, Indigenous peoples and other stakeholders in relation to the FSO's forest management activities</p>	Y

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	Indicator 3.3.17 Criterion 4.3	Indicator 4.3.5 – The FSO establishes and implements appropriate mechanisms for resolving complaints and disputes relating to forest management operations, land use rights and work conditions Indicator 4.3.6 – The FSO keeps records of all complaints and disputes relating to forest management operations, land use rights and work conditions. Indicator 3.3.17 The FSO ensures that in the event of an industrial dispute, the relevant parties first explore the option to resolve the dispute through discussions with management/workers' representatives, and only seek to utilise mechanisms involving other parties such as conciliation and arbitration if the discussions fail.	Y
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	Indicator 4.1.2	Indicator 4.1.2 The FSO establishes and maintains a forest management system appropriate for the size and scale of operations, that includes the documented information required by the Standard and determined by the FSO as being necessary for the effectiveness of the sustainable forest management system. The FSO also ensures the documented information is relevant, and updated as appropriate, to the activities of the operation. (See explanatory note 19 in Annex 1).	Y
7.5.2 The standard requires that the documented information is relevant, and updated as appropriate, to the activities of the organisation.	Yes	Indicator 4.1.2	Indicator 4.1.2 The FSO establishes and maintains a forest management system appropriate for the size and scale of operations, that includes the documented information required by the Standard and determined by the FSO as being necessary for the effectiveness of the sustainable forest management system. The FSO also ensures the documented information is relevant, and updated as appropriate, to the activities of the operation. (See explanatory note 19 in Annex 1).	Y

8. Operation				
8.1 Criterion 1: Maintenance or appropriate enhancement of forest resources and their contribution to the global carbon cycle				
8.1.1 The standard requires that management shall aim to maintain or increase forests and their ecosystem services and maintain or enhance the economic, ecological, cultural and social values of forest resources.	Yes	Indicators 6.1.1, 6.1.2	<p>Indicator 6.1.1 Appropriate to the scale and size of the operation, the FSO establishes and implements a policy to maintain or increase forests and their ecosystem services, and maintains or enhances the economic, ecological, cultural and social values of forest resources.</p> <p>Indicator 6.1.2 Appropriate to the scale and size of the operation, the FSO establishes and implements procedures to ensure the area of forest and the associated ecosystem services are maintained or increased; and the economic, ecological, cultural and social values of forest resources are maintained or enhanced.</p>	Y
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	Indicator 6.2.1	Indicator 6.2.1 The FSO adopts management practices (for example silvicultural practices) appropriate to the scale and size of the operations that enhance or maintain the forest's carbon sequestration capacities. a) For operations on State forest, the FSO adheres to the approved allowable harvesting rates in order to balance harvesting and the natural growth rates of the forest. b) For operations on private or Amerindian lands, the FSO demonstrates that harvesting rates are balanced by the natural growth rates of the forest (or follows the GFC guidelines governing harvesting). c) The FSO implements post-harvest remedies in line with the national Code of Practice for Forest Operations, including silvicultural measures appropriate to the scale and size of the operation impacts on forest resources.	Y
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	Indicators 6.1.1, 6.1.2, 6.4.1, 7.3.1, 7.3.2, 7.3.3, 7.3.4	Indicator 6.4.1 The Forest sector operator's forest management practices support/encourage greenhouse gas emission reductions and efficient use of resources.	Y
8.1.4 The standard requires that forest conversion shall not occur unless in justified circumstances where				Y

the conversion:				
a) is in compliance with national and regional policy and legislation applicable for land use and forest management and is a result of national or regional land- use planning governed by a governmental or other official authority including consultation with affected stakeholders; and	Yes	Indicator 6.3.1	Indicator 6.3.1 The FSO does not undertake forest conversion other than 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 landuse planning governed by a governmental or other official authority including consultation with affected stakeholders; and;; and	Y
b) entails a small proportion (no greater than 5 %) of forest type within the certified area; and	Yes	Indicator 6.3.1	b) entails a small proportion (no greater than 5 %) of forest type within the certified area; and	Y
c) does not have negative impacts on ecologically important forest areas, culturally and socially significant areas, or other protected areas; and	Yes	Indicator 6.3.1	c) does not have negative impacts on ecologically important forest areas, culturally and socially significant areas, or other protected areas	Y
d) does not destroy areas of significantly high carbon stock; and	Yes	Indicator 6.3.1	d) does not destroy areas of significantly high carbon stocks – <i>high carbon stock is not defined</i>	N/C
e) makes a contribution to long-term conservation, economic, and social benefits.	Yes	Indicator 6.3.1	e) makes a contribution to long-term conservation, economic and social benefits. (See explanatory note 25 in Annex 1).	Y
8.1.5 The standard requires that afforestation of ecologically important non-forest ecosystems shall not occur unless in justified circumstances where the conversion:				
a) is in compliance with national and regional policy and legislation applicable for land use and forest management and is a result of national or regional land- use planning governed by a governmental or other official authority; and	Yes	Indicator 6.3.2	Indicator 6.3.2 The FSO does not undertake afforestation of ecologically important non-forest ecosystems, or afforestation and reforestation of forest ecosystems except in justified circumstances where the conversion or afforestation and reforestation meet the following: 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 landuse planning governed by a governmental or other official authority;	Y
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	Indicator 6.3.2	and b) is established based on a decision-making basis where affected stakeholders have opportunities to contribute to the decision-making on conversion through transparent and participatory consultation	Y

			processes; and	
c) does not have negative impacts on threatened (including vulnerable, rare or endangered) non-forest ecosystems, culturally and socially significant areas, important habitats of threatened species or other protected areas; and	Yes	Indicators 6.3.2, 9.3.1, 9.3.2	c) does not have negative impacts on threatened (including vulnerable, rare, or endangered) non-forest ecosystems, culturally and socially significant areas, important habitats of threatened species or other protected areas;	Y
d) entails a small proportion of the ecologically important non-forest ecosystem managed by an organisation; and	Yes	Indicator 6.3.2	and d) entails a small proportion of the ecologically important non-forest ecosystem and forest ecosystem managed by the FSO;	Y
e) does not destroy areas of significantly high carbon stock; and	Yes	Indicator 6.3.2	e) does not destroy areas of significantly high carbon stocks; -- <i>high carbon stock is not defined</i>	n/c
f) makes a contribution to long-term conservation, economic, and social benefits.	Yes	Indicator 6.3.2	f) makes a contribution to long-term conservation, economic, and social benefits; and	Y
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		Not applicable	This is not applicable to the standard. The standard notes that "plantations have been excluded from the standard" (Section 1) and that "This Standard applies to all tenures where commercial forestry operations are undertaken except State land in conversion" (Section 3.2).	Y
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		Not applicable	See above	Y
c) has a positive impact on long-term carbon sequestration capacity of forest vegetation; and		Not applicable	See above	Y
d) does not have negative impacts on ecologically important forest areas, culturally and socially significant areas, or other protected areas; and		Not applicable	See above	Y
e) safeguards protective functions of forests for society and other regulating or supporting ecosystem services; and		Not applicable	See above	Y
f) safeguards socio-economic functions of forests, including the recreational function and aesthetic values of forests and		Not applicable	See above	Y

other cultural services; and				
g) has a land history providing evidence that the degradation is not the consequence of deliberate poor forest management practices; and		Not applicable	See above	Y
h) is based on credible evidence demonstrating that the area is neither recovered nor in the process of recovery.		Not applicable	See above	Y
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	Criterion 7.1	<p>Indicator 7.1.2 The FSO maintains or enhances the health and vitality of ecosystems within the forest management area</p> <p><i>Evidence of compliance with Sections 7 and 8 of the Code of Practice and Guidelines.</i></p> <p>Indicator 7.1.3 Where economically feasible, the FSO rehabilitates degraded forest ecosystems, by making best use of natural structures and processes and using preventive biological measures</p>	Y
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	Indicator 7.2.1	<p>Indicator 7.2.1 The FSO demonstrates that forest management practices: (a) encourage and/or support adequate structural diversity; (b) enhance stability, vitality, and resilience of the forest to adverse environmental factors; and (c) strengthen natural regulation mechanisms.</p> <p><i>The indicator is met at 7.2.1 in part, although does not address species and structural diversity. However, genetic diversity is addressed 9.1.1 at the planning level with regards to maintaining genetic diversity; structural diversity is also promoted at 9.1.2.</i></p> <p><i>With regards to 9.1.1, this is implemented via the Guidelines for Forest Operations, stipulating requirements for biodiversity reserves for each concession.</i></p>	Y
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	Yes	Indicators 1.5.1, 2.1.2, 5.1.2	Indicator 1.5.1 The FSO shall have strategies for, and implement measures to contribute to, protecting the forest from unauthorised activities such as illegal logging, illegal land use, illegally initiated fires, and other illegal activities.	Y

taken.			Indicator 2.1.2 The FSO does not prevent traditional rights of Amerindian/Indigenous peoples. (See explanatory note 8 in Annex 1) <i>Use of fire is not permitted as a management tool within the standard, the guidelines or other operational documents. All references to fire within the legislative requirements are for suppression, prevention and control.</i>	
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	Indicator 6.3.2	Indicator 6.3.2 The FSO does not undertake afforestation of ecologically important non-forest ecosystems, or afforestation and reforestation of forest ecosystems except in justified circumstances where the conversion or afforestation and reforestation meet the following: g) involve 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 damage	Y
8.2.5 The standard requires that the indiscriminate disposal of waste on forest land shall be strictly avoided. Non-organic waste and litter shall be collected, stored in designated areas and removed in an environmentally-responsible manner. The spillage of oil or fuel during forest management operations shall be prevented. Emergency procedures for the minimisation of risk of environmental harm arising from the accidental spillage shall be in place.	Yes	Indicators 1.2.5, 7.3.1, 7.3.2, 7.3.3, 7.3.4	Indicator 7.3.1 The FSO establishes and implements waste management procedures to ensure that the indiscriminate disposal of waste within the forest management area is strictly avoided. Indicator 7.3.2 The FSO ensures that non-organic waste and litter is collected and stored in designated areas and removed in an environmentally responsible manner. Indicator 7.3.3 The FSO ensures that spillage of oil or fuel during forest management operations is prevented. Indicator 7.3.4 The FSO establishes and implements emergency procedures for minimising the risk of environmental harm arising from the accidental spillage.	Y
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	Indicator 7.4.1	Indicator 7.4.1 Where the management of pests is necessary as part of forest management, to the extent possible, the FSO uses integrated pest management, other appropriate silviculture alternatives and biological measures in order to minimise the use of	Y

			pesticides. (See explanatory note 26 in Annex 1).	
8.2.7 The standard requires that any use of pesticides is documented.	Yes	Indicator 7.4.2	Indicator 7.4.2 Where the use of pesticides or other chemicals is required as part of forest management, the FSO: (a) documents the use of such pesticides and chemicals; and (b) ensures that the use of the pesticides follows the instructions given by the pesticide producer and is undertaken with proper equipment by trained personnel.	Y
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	Indicator 7.4.3	Indicator 7.4.3 The FSO ensures that within the forest management area: a) the use of WHO Class 1A and 1B pesticides and other highly toxic pesticides are prohibited, except where no other viable alternative is available; and b) 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. (See explanatory note 26 in Annex 1)	Y
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	Indicator 7.4.3	Indicator 7.4.3 The FSO ensures that within the forest management area: a) the use of WHO Class 1A and 1B pesticides and other highly toxic pesticides are prohibited, except where no other viable alternative is available; and b) 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. (See explanatory note 26 in Annex 1)	Y
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	Indicator 7.4.2	Indicator 7.4.2 Where the use of pesticides or other chemicals is required as part of forest management, the FSO: (a) documents the use of such pesticides and chemicals; and (b) ensures that the use of the pesticides follows the instructions given by the pesticide producer and is undertaken with proper equipment by trained personnel	Y
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	Yes	Indicator 7.4.4	Indicator 7.4.4 Where fertilisers are used as part of forest management, the FSO establishes and implements procedures to ensure that: a) fertilisers	Y

an alternative to appropriate soil nutrient management.			are applied in a controlled manner that minimises the potential for adverse environmental impacts; and b) fertilisers are not used as an alternative to appropriate soil nutrient management. (See explanatory note 27 in Annex 1)	
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	Indicator 8.1.1	Indicator 8.1.1 The FSO demonstrates how planned forest management operations maintain the capability of the forest to produce a range of timber and non-forest timber products and services on a sustainable basis.	Y
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	Indicators 8.2.1, 8.2.2	Indicator 8.2.1 The FSO's systems and procedures are designed to encourage the optimal use of forest resources. (See explanatory note 28 in Annex 1). Indicator 8.2.2 The FSO has evaluated the financial costs and benefits from forest management and has incorporated this information into management planning decisions aimed at delivering sound economic performance.	Y
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	Indicators 8.3.1, 9.4.1, 9.4.2, 9.4.3, 9.4.4	Indicator 8.3.1 The FSO establishes and implements management, harvesting and regeneration procedures, consistent with applicable Codes of Practice and Guidelines, to protect the productive capacity of the forest, including: a) implementing reduced impact logging techniques to minimise damage to residual stand and protect crop trees; b) implementing extraction techniques that minimise damage to soil and water values; c) timing harvesting and regeneration activities to maximise the potential for successful forest regeneration; and d) demarcating sensitive areas for the protection of soils	Y
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	Indicators 8.2.1, 8.4.1, 8.4.2, 8.4.3, 8.4.4	Indicator 8.4.1 The FSO demonstrates that planned harvesting levels of both timber and non-forest timber products are sustainable in the long term and based on the best available information. Indicator 8.4.2 For large concessions, the FSO undertakes pre-harvest inventories, harvest planning	Y

			<p>and sustainable yield calculations.</p> <p>Indicator 8.4.3 For small concessions, the FSO complies with allowable cut quotas established by the GFC.</p> <p>Indicator 8.4.4 The FSO maintains records of the quantity of timber and important non-timber forest products harvested and complies with the GFC's Wood Tracking System.</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	Indicators 8.5.1, 8.5.2, 9.6.2	<p>Indicator 8.5.1 The FSO plans, constructs, and maintains its harvesting infrastructure (such as roads, skid trails or bridges) to ensure the efficient delivery of goods and services.</p> <p>Indicator 8.5.2 The FSO establishes and implements procedures, consistent with the Code of Practice and relevant Guidelines, to ensure that the construction and maintenance of its harvesting infrastructure (such as roads, skid tracks or bridges) minimise negative impacts on the environment. (See explanatory note 29 in Annex 1)</p> <p>Indicator 9.6.2 The FSO plans, constructs, and maintains the infrastructure (roads, skid trails, watercourse crossings, log markets, borrow pits, workshops, and camps) for its forestry operations in accordance with the Code of Practice and Guidelines in order to: a) minimise damage to ecosystems, especially rare, sensitive, or representative ecosystems and genetics; and b) take into consideration threatened or other key species, in particular, their migration patterns in the case of fauna.</p>	Y
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	Indicator 9.1.1	Indicator 9.1.1 The FSO demonstrates that management planning aims to maintain, conserve, or enhance biodiversity on landscape, ecosystem,	Y

			species and genetic levels.	
<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	Indicators 9.2.1, 9.2.2, 9.2.3	<p>Indicator 9.2.1 The FSO has identified and mapped ecologically important forest areas from which harvesting will be excluded, including: a) Areas of ecological, scientific, or touristic importance; b) Areas of extensive diversity of wildlife; c) Habitat of endemic species, and unique and fragile habitats; d) Watercourses, swamps, and rock outcrops; and e) Very steep areas (>60%).</p> <p>Indicator 9.2.2 The FSO has implemented buffer zones in accordance with the Guidelines to protect or conserve ecologically important areas.</p> <p>Indicator 9.2.3 For large scale operations, the FSO has set aside 4.5% of the productive forest area as a biodiversity reserve, which typifies the representative ecosystems/forest types of the entire forest management area. (See explanatory note 30 in Annex 1).</p>	Y
<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.</p> <p>Note: The requirement does not preclude trade according to CITES requirements.</p>	Yes	Indicators 9.3.1, 9.3.2	<p>Indicator 9.3.1 The FSO does not exploit protected, threatened and endangered plant and animal species for commercial purposes (except in accordance with trade authorised under CITES), and, where necessary, implements measures for their protection and, where relevant, to increase their population. (See explanatory note 31 in Annex 1)</p> <p>Indicator 9.3.2 The FSO ensures that keystone species are protected during harvesting in accordance with the requirements of the Code of Practice and Guidelines, and that no Bulletwood (<i>Manilkara bidentata</i>) trees are harvested without the written permission of the Commissioner of Forests or an authorized GFC Officer. (See explanatory notes 32 & 33 in Annex 1)</p>	Y
<p>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.</p>	Yes	Indicators 9.4.1, 9.4.2, 9.4.3, 9.4.4	<p>Indicator 9.4.1 The FSO implements RIL techniques in accordance with the Code of Practice and Guidelines to ensure successful natural regeneration of forests after harvesting, relying solely on natural seed and propagules present within the harvested area.</p>	Y

			<p>Indicator 9.4.2 The FSO does not fell trees with a diameter at breast height (dbh) (or in the case of a buttressed tree at a point immediately above the top of the buttress) of less than 35 cm unless it is for demonstrated infrastructure purposes</p> <p>Indicator 9.4.3 The FSO maintains canopy gaps in harvested areas in accordance with the Code of Practice and Guidelines to facilitate the natural regeneration of commercially harvested species, and limit the proliferation of undesirable vines, weeds or pioneer species.</p> <p>Indicator 9.4.4 The FSO marks and protects potential crop trees, seed trees, heritage trees, trees representative of harvested species and very large (>120 cm dbh) in accordance with the Code of Practice and Guidelines</p>	
<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	Yes	Indicator 6.3.2	<p>Indicator 6.3.2 The FSO does not undertake afforestation of ecologically important non-forest ecosystems, or afforestation and reforestation of forest ecosystems except in justified circumstances where the conversion or afforestation and reforestation meet the following: 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 landuse planning governed by a governmental or other official authority; and b) is established based on a decision-making basis where affected stakeholders have opportunities to contribute to the decision-making on conversion through transparent and participatory consultation processes; and c) does not have negative impacts on threatened (including vulnerable, rare, or endangered) non-forest ecosystems, culturally and socially significant areas, important habitats of threatened species or other protected areas; and d) entails a small proportion of the ecologically important non-forest ecosystem and forest ecosystem managed by the FSO; e) does not destroy areas of significantly high carbon stocks; f) makes a contribution to long-term conservation, economic, and social benefits; and g) involve tree</p>	Y

			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 damage.	
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	Indicator 6.3.2	Connectivity is not addressed at 6.3.2. However, forest regeneration is addressed in relation to this requirement at 9.4.1, 9.4.3 and 9.4.4. In application, the successful regeneration of forests after harvesting is designed to ensure natural regeneration of forests ensuring, for example, that seed trees are demarcated prior to harvest and for skid trail demarcation. Similarly, the requirements for canopy gaps are oriented towards canopy gaps for the successful regeneration of forest areas.	Y
8.4.7 The standard requires that genetically-modified trees shall not be used. Note: The restriction on the usage of genetically- modified trees has been adopted by the PEFC General Assembly based on the Precautionary Principle. Until enough scientific data on genetically modified trees indicates that impacts on human and animal health and the environment are equivalent to, or more positive than, those presented by trees genetically improved by traditional methods, no genetically-modified trees will be used.	Yes	Indicator 9.5.1	Indicator 9.5.1 The FSO does not use genetically modified trees within the forest management area. (See explanatory note 34 in Annex 1).	Y
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.	Yes	Indicator 9.1.2	Indicator 9.1.2 The FSO has procedures in place, appropriate to the size and scale of the operation, to promote, where applicable: a) diversity of both horizontal and vertical structures and the diversity of species such as mixed stands, with the aim of also maintaining or restoring landscape diversity; and b) the use of traditional management practices that create valuable ecosystems on appropriate sites.	Y
8.4.9 The standard requires that traditional management practices that create valuable ecosystems on appropriate sites shall be supported, where appropriate.	Yes	Indicator 11.5.1	Indicator 11.5.1 Where relevant, the FSO seeks and incorporates appropriate forest-related experience and traditional knowledge, innovations, and practices such as those of forest owners, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), local communities, and	Y

			Indigenous peoples in the management of the forest and rewards the use such knowledge.	
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	Indicators 1.2.4, 1.2.5, 9.4.1, 9.4.2, 9.4.3, 9.4.4	<p>Indicator 9.4.1 The FSO implements RIL techniques in accordance with the Code of Practice and Guidelines to ensure successful natural regeneration of forests after harvesting, relying solely on natural seed and propagules present within the harvested area.</p> <p>Indicator 9.4.2 The FSO does not fell trees with a diameter at breast height (dbh) (or in the case of a buttressed tree at a point immediately above the top of the buttress) of less than 35 cm unless it is for demonstrated infrastructure purposes.</p> <p>Indicator 9.4.3 The FSO maintains canopy gaps in harvested areas in accordance with the Code of Practice and Guidelines to facilitate the natural regeneration of commercially harvested species, and limit the proliferation of undesirable vines, weeds or pioneer species.</p> <p>Indicator 9.4.4 The FSO marks and protects potential crop trees, seed trees, heritage trees, trees representative of harvested species and very large (>120 cm dbh) in accordance with the Code of Practice and Guidelines</p>	Y
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	Indicators 8.5.1, 8.5.2, 9.6.2	<p>Indicator 8.5.2 The FSO establishes and implements procedures, consistent with the Code of Practice and relevant Guidelines, to ensure that the construction and maintenance of its harvesting infrastructure (such as roads, skid tracks or bridges minimise negative impacts on the environment. (See explanatory note 29 in Annex 1)</p> <p>Indicator 9.6.2 The FSO plans, constructs, and maintains the infrastructure (roads, skid trails, watercourse crossings, log markets, borrow pits, workshops, and camps) for its forestry operations in accordance with the Code of Practice and Guidelines in order to: a) minimise damage to ecosystems, especially rare, sensitive, or representative ecosystems and genetics; and b) take into consideration threatened or other key species, in</p>	Y

			particular, their migration patterns in the case of fauna.	
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	Indicators 9.3.1	Indicator 9.3.1 The FSO does not exploit protected, threatened and endangered plant and animal species for commercial purposes (except in accordance with trade authorised under CITES), and, where necessary, implements measures for their protection and, where relevant, to increase their population. (See explanatory note 31 in Annex 1) The requirement here is not just about protected/threatened/endangered but about animal populations in general and 'pressure' of populations.	N/C
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	Indicator 7.1.4	Indicator 7.1.4 The Forest sector operator ensures that standing and fallen dead wood, hollow trees, old groves, and rare tree species are left in quantities and distribution necessary to safeguard biological diversity.	Y
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	Indicators 6.1.1, 6.1.2, 10.1.1, 10.1.2, 10.2.1, 10.2.2, 10.2.3, 10.2.4, 10.2.5, 10.2.6	Indicator 6.1.1 Appropriate to the scale and size of the operation, the FSO establishes and implements a policy to maintain or increase forests and their ecosystem services, and maintains or enhances the economic, ecological, cultural and social values of forest resources. Indicator 6.1.2 Appropriate to the scale and size of the operation, the FSO establishes and implements procedures to ensure the area of forest and the associated ecosystem services are maintained or increased; and the economic, ecological, cultural and social values of forest resources are maintained or enhanced. Indicator 10.1.1 The FSO has documented a commitment in accordance with the Code of Practice to maintain or enhance the protective functions of forests for society within the forest management area, including their potential role in: • Erosion control; • Flood prevention; • Water purification; • Climate	Y

			<p>regulation; • Carbon sequestration; and • Other regulating or supporting ecosystem services</p> <p>Indicator 10.2.1 The FSO has identified areas within the forest management area with sensitive soils, as well as areas prone to erosion and areas where operations might lead to excessive erosion of soil into watercourses.</p> <p>Indicator 10.2.2 The FSO has established and implements forest management techniques and uses machinery assessed by the regulatory authority as being suitable for such areas.</p> <p>Indicator 10.2.3 The FSO has identified and mapped forest areas where soil and water values are vulnerable to impacts of forestry activities, including: • Areas with fragile or erodible soils; • Watercourses and swamps; and • Steep areas.</p> <p>Indicator 10.2.4 The FSO has implemented buffer zones in accordance with the Guidelines to protect areas identified in 10.2.1 to minimise the potential for soil erosion and the potential for soil to enter watercourses.</p> <p>Indicator 10.2.5 If approved by the regulatory authority to undertake harvesting operations in areas with steep slopes, the FSO shall: a) use appropriate equipment and RIL techniques to minimise adverse impacts such as soil erosion; and b) undertake harvesting operations in accordance with the Code of Practice and the Guidelines</p> <p>Indicator 10.2.6 The FSO implements post-harvest rehabilitation of logged areas, including closure of blocks, roads, and skid trails, in accordance with the Guidelines</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	Indicators 10.1.2, 10.2.3	<p>Indicator 10.1.2 The FSO has assessed, documented and mapped the known protective functions of forests within the forest management area and incorporated this information into planned operations.</p> <p>Indicator 10.2.3 The FSO has identified and mapped forest areas where soil and water values are</p>	Y

			vulnerable to impacts of forestry activities, including: • Areas with fragile or erodible soils; • Watercourses and swamps; and • Steep areas.	
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	Indicators 10.2.1, 10.2.2, 10.2.3, 10.2.4, 10.2.5, 10.2.6	<p>Indicator 10.1.1 The FSO has documented a commitment in accordance with the Code of Practice to maintain or enhance the protective functions of forests for society within the forest management area, including their potential role in: • Erosion control; • Flood prevention; • Water purification; • Climate regulation; • Carbon sequestration; and • Other regulating or supporting ecosystem services</p> <p>Indicator 10.2.1 The FSO has identified areas within the forest management area with sensitive soils, as well as areas prone to erosion and areas where operations might lead to excessive erosion of soil into watercourses.</p> <p>Indicator 10.2.2 The FSO has established and implements forest management techniques and uses machinery assessed by the regulatory authority as being suitable for such areas.</p> <p>Indicator 10.2.3 The FSO has identified and mapped forest areas where soil and water values are vulnerable to impacts of forestry activities, including: • Areas with fragile or erodible soils; • Watercourses and swamps; and • Steep areas.</p> <p>Indicator 10.2.4 The FSO has implemented buffer zones in accordance with the Guidelines to protect areas identified in 10.2.1 to minimise the potential for soil erosion and the potential for soil to enter watercourses.</p> <p>Indicator 10.2.5 If approved by the regulatory authority to undertake harvesting operations in areas with steep slopes, the FSO shall: a) use appropriate equipment and RIL techniques to minimise adverse impacts such as soil erosion; and b) undertake harvesting operations in accordance with the Code of Practice and the Guidelines</p> <p>Indicator 10.2.6 The FSO implements post-harvest rehabilitation of logged areas, including closure of</p>	Y

			blocks, roads, and skid trails, in accordance with the Guidelines	
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	Indicators 10.2.1, 10.2.2, 10.2.3, 10.2.4, 10.2.5, 10.2.6	<p>Indicator 10.1.1 The FSO has documented a commitment in accordance with the Code of Practice to maintain or enhance the protective functions of forests for society within the forest management area, including their potential role in: • Erosion control; • Flood prevention; • Water purification; • Climate regulation; • Carbon sequestration; and • Other regulating or supporting ecosystem services</p> <p>Indicator 10.2.1 The FSO has identified areas within the forest management area with sensitive soils, as well as areas prone to erosion and areas where operations might lead to excessive erosion of soil into watercourses.</p> <p>Indicator 10.2.2 The FSO has established and implements forest management techniques and uses machinery assessed by the regulatory authority as being suitable for such areas.</p> <p>Indicator 10.2.3 The FSO has identified and mapped forest areas where soil and water values are vulnerable to impacts of forestry activities, including: • Areas with fragile or erodible soils; • Watercourses and swamps; and • Steep areas.</p> <p>Indicator 10.2.4 The FSO has implemented buffer zones in accordance with the Guidelines to protect areas identified in 10.2.1 to minimise the potential for soil erosion and the potential for soil to enter watercourses.</p> <p>Indicator 10.2.5 If approved by the regulatory authority to undertake harvesting operations in areas with steep slopes, the FSO shall: a) use appropriate equipment and RIL techniques to minimise adverse impacts such as soil erosion; and b) undertake harvesting operations in accordance with the Code of Practice and the Guidelines</p> <p>Indicator 10.2.6 The FSO implements post-harvest rehabilitation of logged areas, including closure of blocks, roads, and skid trails, in accordance with the</p>	Y

			<p>Guidelines</p> <p><i>Avoiding general adverse effects on water quality and quantity is addressed at indicator 10.2.1.</i></p> <p><i>Inappropriate use of chemicals/harmful substances and their potential impact on water quality is addressed under 8.4 of the Guidelines for Forest Operations; inappropriate use of silvicultural practices affecting water quality is addressed at 4.4 in the Guidelines for Forest Operations.</i></p> <p><i>Guidelines for Forest Operations (4.4) addresses downstream water balance and quality by introducing strict requirements for riparian buffers; Post Harvest Activities (7) addresses downstream water values in relation to post-harvesting.</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	Indicators 8.5.2, 9.6.2, 10.2.1, 10.2.2, 10.2.3, 10.2.4, 10.2.5, 10.2.6	<p>Indicator 8.5.2 The FSO establishes and implements procedures, consistent with the Code of Practice and relevant Guidelines, to ensure that the construction and maintenance of its harvesting infrastructure (such as roads, skid tracks or bridges minimise negative impacts on the environment. (See explanatory note 29 in Annex 1)</p> <p>Indicator 9.6.2 The FSO plans, constructs, and maintains the infrastructure (roads, skid trails, watercourse crossings, log markets, borrow pits, workshops, and camps) for its forestry operations in accordance with the Code of Practice and Guidelines in order to: a) minimise damage to ecosystems, especially rare, sensitive, or representative ecosystems and genetics; and b) take into consideration threatened or other key species, in particular, their migration patterns in the case of fauna.</p> <p>Indicator 10.1.1 The FSO has documented a commitment in accordance with the Code of Practice to maintain or enhance the protective functions of forests for society within the forest management area, including their potential role in: • Erosion control; • Flood prevention; • Water purification; • Climate regulation; • Carbon sequestration; and • Other regulating or supporting ecosystem services</p>	Y

			<p>Indicator 10.2.1 The FSO has identified areas within the forest management area with sensitive soils, as well as areas prone to erosion and areas where operations might lead to excessive erosion of soil into watercourses.</p> <p>Indicator 10.2.2 The FSO has established and implements forest management techniques and uses machinery assessed by the regulatory authority as being suitable for such areas.</p> <p>Indicator 10.2.3 The FSO has identified and mapped forest areas where soil and water values are vulnerable to impacts of forestry activities, including: • Areas with fragile or erodible soils; • Watercourses and swamps; and • Steep areas.</p> <p>Indicator 10.2.4 The FSO has implemented buffer zones in accordance with the Guidelines to protect areas identified in 10.2.1 to minimise the potential for soil erosion and the potential for soil to enter watercourses.</p> <p>Indicator 10.2.5 If approved by the regulatory authority to undertake harvesting operations in areas with steep slopes, the FSO shall: a) use appropriate equipment and RIL techniques to minimise adverse impacts such as soil erosion; and b) undertake harvesting operations in accordance with the Code of Practice and the Guidelines</p> <p>Indicator 10.2.6 The FSO implements post-harvest rehabilitation of logged areas, including closure of blocks, roads, and skid trails, in accordance with the Guidelines</p> <p><i>The requirement is primarily met at 8.5.2. Compliance with the guidelines for the construction of the roads, bridges and infrastructure are a verifier for the Indicator, at 4.5.1, 4.7, 5.1.3, 5.6, 6.3, 7.2-4 a. These guidelines minimise bare soil exposure, avoids the introduction of soil into watercourses and preserves the natural level and function of water courses and river beds in a highly prescriptive manner. Drainage is addressed at 5 (Construction of Road Network) within</i></p>	
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			<i>the Guidelines.</i>	
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	Indicator 11.1.1	Indicator 11.1.1 The FSO ensures that forest management planning recognises the importance of all socio-economic functions of forests and has clearly defined strategies to respect and enhance these functions.	Y
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	Indicator 11.2.1	Indicator 11.2.1 For large and small concession holders, the FSO facilitates access to persons travelling through the State forest and occupying or using the State forest for the purposes of their journey in accordance with the Forests Act.	Y
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	Indicator 11.3.1	Indicator 11.3.1 The FSO marks and protects any existing verified areas of special cultural, religious or historical significance, sites of cultural or religious value, e.g., sacred trees and forests (these should be identified in collaboration with the local communities) in accordance with the Code of Practice and the Guidelines. (See explanatory note 35 in Annex 1)	Y
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	Indicator 11.4.1	Indicator 11.4.1 The FSO has a plan and strategy to promote the long-term health and well-being of forest-dependent communities including Indigenous peoples within or adjacent to the forest management area.	Y
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	Indicator 11.5.1	Indicator 11.5.1 Where relevant, the FSO seeks and incorporates appropriate forest-related experience and traditional knowledge, innovations, and practices such as those of forest owners, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), local communities, and Indigenous peoples in the management of the forest and rewards the use such knowledge	Y
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	Indicators 3.2.7, 11.6.1, 11.6.2	Indicator 3.2.7 The FSO, wherever possible, provides opportunities for employment and training to local and forest dependent communities within or adjacent to the forestry operation. (See explanatory note 16 in Annex 1).	Y

			<p>Indicator 11.6.1 The FSO ensures that its forestry operations contribute to, and enhance local economies, including the well-being of forest-dependent communities.</p> <p>Indicator 11.6.2 Where the FSO employs forest-dependent communities including Indigenous peoples within the concession, the FSO provides regular, appropriate and relevant training, to ensure continual socio-economic benefits.</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	Indicators 11.7.1, 11.7.2	<p>Indicator 11.7.1 Where applicable, the FSO collaborates with the regulatory authority in relevant research activities and data collection necessary to enhance the sustainable management and use of Guyana's forests.</p> <p>Indicator 11.7.2 Where applicable and appropriate to the size and scale of operations, the FSO supports relevant research activities carried out by other organisations that enhance sustainable forest management, when requested to collaborate and/or make a contribution.</p>	Y
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	Indicators 5.1.1, 5.1.2	<p>Indicator 5.1.1 For large scale operations, the FSO establishes and implements a system for: a) monitoring the forest resources (including non-forest timber products where these products are part of the operations) in their concession as well as evaluates the management of the forest resources; and b) feeds the results of the monitoring and evaluation back into the planning process. (See explanatory note 22 in Annex 1).</p> <p>Indicator 5.1.2 For small scale operations, the FSO facilitates monitoring and evaluation of the impacts of forest operations by external regulators including the GFC, to provide feedback into the AWP. (See explanatory note 22 in Annex 1).</p>	Y
9.1.2 The standard requires that health and vitality of forests	Yes	Indicators 5.1.1, 5.1.2	Indicator 5.1.1 For large scale operations, the FSO	Y

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.			<p>establishes and implements a system for: a) monitoring the forest resources (including non- forest timber products where these products are part of the operations) in their concession as well as evaluates the management of the forest resources; and b) feeds the results of the monitoring and evaluation back into the planning process. (See explanatory note 22 in Annex 1).</p> <p>Indicator 5.1.2 For small scale operations, the FSO facilitates monitoring and evaluation of the impacts of forest operations by external regulators including the GFC, to provide feedback into the AWP. (See explanatory note 22 in Annex 1).</p> <p>Monitoring of impacts includes ecological, social, and economic aspects and effects, such as the health and vitality of forests, especially key biotic and abiotic factors that potentially can affect health and vitality of forest ecosystems, such as pests, diseases, overharvesting of wildlife, fire, and damage caused by climatic factors, air pollutants or by forest management operations; and working conditions.</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	Indicators 5.1.1, 5.1.2	Requirements are met at Indicators 5.1.1 and 5.1.2 for monitoring. With regards to the regulation and control of the use of non-wood forest products, hunting and fishing, this is addressed at Indicator 9.3.2, where the FSO is required to actively discourage illegal hunting and trapping of species.	Y
9.1.4 The standard requires that working conditions shall be regularly monitored and adapted as necessary.	Yes	Indicators 5.1.1, 5.1.2	<p>Indicator 5.1.1 For large scale operations, the FSO establishes and implements a system for: a) monitoring the forest resources (including non- forest timber products where these products are part of the operations) in their concession as well as evaluates the management of the forest resources; and b) feeds the results of the monitoring and evaluation back into the planning process. (See explanatory note 22 in Annex 1).</p> <p>Indicator 5.1.2 For small scale operations, the FSO facilitates monitoring and evaluation of the impacts of forest operations by external regulators including the</p>	Y

			<p>GFC, to provide feedback into the AWP. (See explanatory note 22 in Annex 1).</p> <p>Monitoring of impacts includes ecological, social, and economic aspects and effects, such as the health and vitality of forests, especially key biotic and abiotic factors that potentially can affect health and vitality of forest ecosystems, such as pests, diseases, overharvesting of wildlife, fire, and damage caused by climatic factors, air pollutants or by forest management operations; and working conditions.</p> <p><i>More appropriate indicator is in the Guidelines. Working conditions are monitored as required under the Forest Operation Guidelines (10.1.2), the establishment of the Joint Workplace Health and Safety Committee, which has key functions to ensure that recommendations on monitoring and adapting workplace conditions, specifically . the identification of potential or existing hazards of materials, processes or equipment; and safety and health experience and work practices and standards in similar or other industries of which the employer has knowledge.</i></p>	
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				
<p>a) conforms to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the organisation's requirements for its management system; the requirements of the national sustainable forest management standard 	Yes	Indicator 5.2.2	<p>Criterion 5.2 The FSO conducts internal audits and management reviews and practices continual improvement</p> <p>Indicator 5.2.1 Appropriate to the scale and size of the operation, the FSO: a) plans, establishes, implements, and maintains an audit program(s) including the frequency, methods, responsibilities, planning requirements and reporting, which shall take into consideration the importance of the processes concerned and the results of previous audits; b) defines the audit criteria and scope for each audit (e.g., the GSSF); c) selects the auditors and conduct audits to ensure objectivity and the impartiality of the</p>	Y

			audit process; d) ensures that the results of the audits are reported to relevant levels of management within the company/business; and e) retains documented information as evidence of the implementation of the audit programme and the audit results.	
b) is effectively implemented and maintained.	Yes	Indicator 5.2.2	Indicator 5.2.1 Appropriate to the scale and size of the operation, the FSO: a) plans, establishes, implements, and maintains an audit program(s) including the frequency, methods, responsibilities, planning requirements and reporting, which shall take into consideration the importance of the processes concerned and the results of previous audits; b) defines the audit criteria and scope for each audit (e.g., the GSSFm); c) selects the auditors and conduct audits to ensure objectivity and the impartiality of the audit process; d) ensures that the results of the audits are reported to relevant levels of management within the company/business; and e) retains documented information as evidence of the implementation of the audit programme and the audit results.	Y
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	Indicator 5.2.1 (a)	Indicator 5.2.1 Appropriate to the scale and size of the operation, the FSO: a) plans, establishes, implements, and maintains an audit program(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;	Y
b) define the audit criteria and scope for each audit;	Yes	Indicator 5.2.1 (b)	b) defines the audit criteria and scope for each audit (e.g., the GSSFm);.	Y
c) select the auditors and conduct audits to ensure objectivity and the impartiality of the audit process;	Yes	Indicator 5.2.1 (c)	c) selects the auditors and conduct audits to ensure objectivity and the impartiality of the audit process;	Y
d) ensure that the results of the audits are reported to relevant management;	Yes	Indicator 5.2.1 (d)	d) ensures that the results of the audits are reported to relevant levels of management within the company/business; and	Y

e) retain documented information as evidence of the implementation of the audit programme and the audit results.	Yes	Indicator 5.2.1 (e)	e) retains documented information as evidence of the implementation of the audit programme and the audit results	Y
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	Indicator 5.3.1	Indicator 5.2.2 Appropriate to the scale and size of the operation, the FSO carries out an annual management review that includes: a) the status of actions from previous management reviews;	Y
b) changes in external and internal issues that are relevant to the management system;	Yes	Indicator 5.3.1	b) changes in external and internal factors including, results of ongoing consultations with neighbouring forest dependent communities, that are relevant to the management system;	Y
c) information on the organisation's performance, including trends in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • nonconformities and corrective actions; • monitoring and measurement results; • audit results; 	Yes	Indicator 5.3.1	c) information on the operation's performance, including trends in: • nonconformities and corrective actions; • monitoring and measurement results; and • audit results	Y
d) opportunities for continual improvement	Yes	Indicator 5.3.1	d) opportunities for continual improvement. (See explanatory note 23 in Annex 1).	Y
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	Indicator 5.3.1	Indicator 5.3.1 The FSO establishes and implements a system to respond to nonconformities detected through internal mechanisms such as internal audits or through external sources such as regulatory bodies. (See explanatory note 24 in Annex 1).	Y
9.3.3 The standard requires that documented information as evidence of the results of management reviews shall be retained.	Yes	Indicator 5.3.1	Indicator 5.3.1 The FSO establishes and implements a system to respond to nonconformities detected through internal mechanisms such as internal audits or through external sources such as regulatory bodies. (See explanatory note 24 in Annex 1).	Y
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	Indicator 5.3.1	Indicator 5.3.1 The FSO establishes and implements a system to respond to nonconformities detected through internal mechanisms such as internal audits or through external sources such as regulatory bodies. (See explanatory note 24 in Annex 1). The complexity of the system to respond to nonconformities will vary according to the size and scale of the forest management operation. However, the system should have the capacity that when a nonconformity occurs, the FSO: • reacts to the nonconformity and, as applicable: o takes action to control and correct it; o deals with the consequences;	Y
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	Indicator 5.3.1	o evaluates the need for action to eliminate the causes of the nonconformity in order that it does not recur or occur elsewhere, by: ♣ reviewing the nonconformity; ♣ determining the causes of the nonconformity; and ♣ determining if similar nonconformities exist, or could potentially occur; •	Y
c) implement any action needed;	Yes	Indicator 5.3.1	implements any action needed;	Y
d) review the effectiveness of any corrective action taken;	Yes	Indicator 5.3.1	• reviews the effectiveness of any corrective action taken;	Y
e) make changes to the management system, if necessary.	Yes	Indicator 5.3.1	• makes changes to the management system, if necessary.	Y
10.1.2 The standard requires that corrective actions shall be appropriate to the effects of the nonconformities encountered	Yes	Indicator 5.3.1	• where corrective actions are specified, the FSO demonstrates that those actions are appropriate to the effects of the nonconformities identified. •	Y
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	Indicator 5.3.1	The FSO keeps records of documented information as evidence of a) the nature of the nonconformities and any subsequent actions taken; and	Y
b) the results of any corrective action.	Yes	Indicator 5.3.1	b) the results of any corrective action	Y

<p>10.2 Continual improvement</p> <p>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.</p>	Yes	Indicators 5.2.2, 5.3.1	<p>Indicator 5.2.2 Appropriate to the scale and size of the operation, the FSO carries out an annual management review that includes: a) the status of actions from previous management reviews; b) changes in external and internal factors including, results of ongoing consultations with neighbouring forest dependent communities, that are relevant to the management system; c) information on the operation's performance, including trends in: • nonconformities and corrective actions; • monitoring and measurement results; and • audit results; • Records of management reviews. d) opportunities for continual improvement. (See explanatory note 23 in Annex 1)</p> <p>Indicator 5.3.1 The FSO establishes and implements a system to respond to nonconformities detected through internal mechanisms such as internal audits or through external sources such as regulatory bodies. (See explanatory note 24 in Annex 1).</p>	Y
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PART V: STANDARD AND SYSTEM REQUIREMENT CHECKLIST FOR SYSTEM SPECIFIC CHAIN OF CUSTODY STANDARDS – COMPLIANCE WITH
PEFC ST PEFC 2002:2013

GNFCS has adopted PEFC 2002:2020

PART VI: STANDARD AND SYSTEM REQUIREMENT CHECKLIST FOR SCHEME ADMINISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

No.	PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)	
PEFC Notification of certification bodies				
1.	Are procedures for the notification of certification bodies in place, which comply with chapter 5 of PEFC GD 1004:2009, <i>Administration of PEFC scheme</i> ?	Yes	GY-PROC-2023-01 Notification of certification bodies for chain of custody and forest management certifications in Guyana against the requirements of the Guyana National Forest Certification System	<p><i>5.1 The notifying body shall have written procedures for the PEFC notification which ensure that:</i></p> <p><i>a) the PEFC notified certification body is meeting the PEFC Council's and PEFC endorsed scheme's requirements for certification bodies</i></p> <p>The written procedures are defined at 4. Conditions for notification by GFC. They meet the PEFC's requirements for certification bodies.</p> <p><i>b) the scope of the PEFC notification, i.e. type of certification (forest management or chain of custody certification), certification standards and the country covered by the notification, is clearly defined,</i></p> <p>a) The certification body applying for notification for Forest Management certification under the GNFCS shall have valid accreditation, issued by an accreditation body that is signatory of the Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (MLA) for Quality Management Systems certification of the International Accreditation Forum (IAF). The accreditation shall be issued against ISO/IEC 17021 and the scope of the accreditation shall explicitly include all the relevant standards of the GNFCS. b) The certification body applying for notification for Chain of Custody certification under the GNFCS shall have valid accreditation, issued by an accreditation body that is signatory of the Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (MLA) for product certification of the International Accreditation Forum (IAF). The accreditation shall be issued against ISO/IEC 17065:2012 and the scope of the accreditation shall explicitly include PEFC ST 2002:2020, Chain of Custody of Forest Based Products – Requirements.</p>

				<p><i>c) the PEFC notification may be terminated by the notifying body in the case of the certification body's non adherence to the conditions of the PEFC notification or in the case of the cancellation of the contract between the PEFC Council and the authorised body,</i></p> <p>Article 4: Contract Termination 1. Either party may terminate the contract with three-months prior notice provided, in writing, and by registered letter to the last known address. 2. The GFC may suspend the contract with immediate effect, if there are reasons to believe that any provision of the notification contract is not being adhered to. 3. Withdrawal, suspension, or the end of the validity of the Notified Certification Body's accreditation, will result in automatic termination of the contract with effect on the same date as the withdrawal, suspension, or the end of the validity of the accreditation. 4. No notification fee is refunded to the Notified Certification Body in case of temporary suspension or termination of the contract according to the Article 4, Numbers 1, 2 and 3. 5. The GFC is not obliged to pay compensation for any costs or other damages which any temporary suspension or termination causes to the Notified Certification Body.</p> <p><i>d) the PEFC notification is based on a written contract between the notifying body and the PEFC notified certification body,</i></p> <p>The certification body applying for notification by the GFC shall: – be a legal entity; – agree to be listed on the publicly available, web-based PEFC Information Register, including the certification body's identification data and / or other data as specified by the PEFC Council; – sign a notification contract with the GFC (Appendix 1).</p> <p><i>e) the PEFC notified certification body provides the notifying body with information on certified entities as required by the PEFC Registration System,</i></p> <p>7. Forest Management Certification</p> <p>3. Provide the GFC immediately and truthfully with a completed reporting form for each certificate issued, within the scope of PEFC Council notification, and on changes concerning reported certificates. 4. Provide the GFC, upon request, with a list of Forest Management certificates issued under the scope of notification by the GFC, including information defined in the reporting form in the Appendix 6 to this document.</p>
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				<p>8. Chain of Custody certification</p> <p>3. Provide the GFC immediately and truthfully with a completed reporting form for each chain of custody certificate and every site covered by a multi-site certificate, issued under the scope of notification by the GFC, and on changes concerning reported certificates. 4. Provide the GFC, upon request, with a list on certificates issued under the scope of notification by the GFC, including information defined in the reporting form in the Appendix 5 to this document</p> <p><i>f) the PEFC notification does not include any discriminatory measures, such as the certification body's country of origin, affiliation to an association, etc.</i></p> <p>There are no discriminatory requirements.</p>	
PEFC Logo usage licensing					
2.	Are procedures for the issuance of PEFC Logo usage licenses in place, which comply with chapter 6 of PEFC GD 1004:2009, <i>Administration of PEFC scheme</i> ?	Yes	<p>PEFC Logo Usage Rules – Requirements (PEFC ST 2001:2009, Second Edition)</p> <p>PEFC Trademarks Rules – Requirements PEFC ST 2001:2020</p>	<p>PEFC Guyana has adopted</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PEFC Logo Usage Rules – Requirements (PEFC ST 2001:2008, Second Edition) - PEFC Trademarks Rules – Requirements (PEFC ST 2001:2020) adopted by the NSSWG 	
Complaints and dispute procedures					
3.	Are complaint and dispute procedures in place, which comply with chapter 8 of PEFC GD 1004:2009, <i>Administration of PEFC scheme</i> ?	Yes	<p>GY-PROC-2022-01</p> <p>Complaints and Appeals Handling Procedure</p>	<p><i>8.1 The PEFC Council and the authorised bodies shall have written procedures for dealing with complaints relating to the governance and administration of the PEFC scheme.</i></p> <p>8.1: The PEFC Council and the GFC shall have written procedures (Complaints and Appeals Handling Procedures [GY-PROC-2022-01]) for dealing with complaints relating to the governance and administration of the PEFC endorsed certification scheme</p> <p><i>8.2 Upon receipt of the complaint, the procedures shall provide for: a) acknowledgement of the complaint to the complainant, b) gathering and verification of all necessary information, validation and impartial evaluation of</i></p>	

				<p><i>the complaint, and decision making on the complaint, c) formal communication of the decision on the complaint and the complaint handling process to the complainant and concerned parties, d) appropriate corrective and preventive actions.</i></p> <p>8.2: Upon receipt of the complaint, the procedures shall provide for: a) acknowledgement of the complaint to the complainant, b) gathering and verification of all necessary information, validation and impartial evaluation of the complaint, and decision making on the complaint, c) formal communication of the decision on the complaint and the complaint handling process to the complainant and concerned parties, d) appropriate corrective and preventive actions.</p>	
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PART IV: CERTIFICATION AND ACCREDITATION PROCEDURES CHECKLIST

No.	PEFC benchmark requirement		YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)		
Certification Bodies						
1.	Does the scheme documentation require that certification shall be carried out by impartial, independent third parties that cannot be involved in the standard setting process as governing or decision making body, or in the forest management and are independent of the certified entity?	Annex 6, 3.1	Yes	4.3.1	4.3.1 The certification body must be an independent third party of the client organisation and be impartial in terms of its assessments. It may not be involved in any aspects of the standardisation process except for the purposes of gaining accreditation as the certification body for the GNFCS.	Y
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	4.1.1.	The certification body must comply with ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015 standard and the documents of the IAF relating to the application of the ISO 17021-1:2015 standard. The following paragraphs supplement or illustrate the general requirements of the ISO 17021 standard.	Y

3.	Does the scheme documentation require that certification bodies carrying out forest certification shall have the technical competence in forest management on its economic, social and environmental impacts, and on the forest certification criteria?	Annex 6, 3.1	Yes	6.1.1.3 Audit team	<p>6.1.1.2.1 Education The certification body shall ensure that auditors have the knowledge corresponding to at least a secondary education that includes or is supplemented with courses related to forest and/or tree based and related industries where the auditor(s) conducts forest management certification audits.</p> <p>6.1.1.3 Audit team The audit team shall comprise auditor(s) fulfilling the requirements defined in 6.1.1.2 and gender balance should be considered. In addition to the above, the certification body shall ensure the audit team has knowledge and skills in the following areas: • forest management, particularly relating to tropical forest ecosystems; • reduced-impact logging; • water and soil protection, in particular the impacts forestry operations in tropical forest ecosystems have on water resources and soils; 14 GY-PROC-2023-01 Requirements for Certification Bodies operating certification against the Guyana Standard for Sustainable Forest Management • the GNFCS, in particular the GSSFM; • economic, social and environmental impacts of forestry; • ecosystem services provided by forests and forest ecosystem biodiversity, in particular the protection of species and ecologically important areas; • hunting and the management of forest-based wildlife; • forestry operations and technical knowledge, in particular on occupational safety and health, accident prevention and labour laws in Guyana; • the socio-economic functions of forests, in particular for local communities and Indigenous peoples; and • relevant national legislation and regulations.</p>	Y
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	6.1.1.3 Audit team	<p>6.1.1.2.3 The GFC forest management certification systems training. The certification body shall ensure that new auditors have received initial training on the GSSFM that is recognised by the GFC. Additionally, the certification body shall ensure that auditors have received ongoing refresher training on the GSSFM that is recognised by the GFC</p>	Y

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	6 Resource requirements	6.1.1.2.5 Audit experience For a first qualification of an auditor, the certification body shall ensure that the auditor, within the last three years, has performed as an auditor-in-training in forest management certification audits for at least four organisations under the leadership of a qualified auditor, including at least two PEFC forest management certification audits. The number of forest management certification audits-in-training can be reduced to two PEFC forest management certification audits for auditors that are qualified for chain of custody standards, ISO 9001 or ISO 14001 in forest and/or tree related sectors	Y
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	Introduction (page 5) Table 1: Overview of qualification requirements (pages 1718) 6.1.1.2.4 Audit training	6.1.1.4.4 Audit training The certification body shall ensure that the reviewer and certification decision maker have successfully completed training in audit techniques based on ISO 19011. 6.1.1.4.6 Competencies The certification body shall ensure that the reviewer and certification decision maker demonstrate ability to apply knowledge and skills in the following areas: a) the objectives and core processes of the PEFC system including the requirements from the PEFC Sustainable Forest Management standard (PEFC ST 1003) covered in the PEFC chain of custody definition of controversial sources, (PEFC ST 2002, clause 3.6 paragraphs b, c, d and e); b) audit principles, procedures and techniques (see 7.2.3.2.a of ISO 19011:2018). c) organisation situations (see 7.2.3.2.c of ISO 19011:2018), including organisational size, structure, functions and relationships, general business processes and related terminology, and cultural and social customs; and	Y
7.	Does the scheme documentation include additional qualification requirements for auditors carrying out forest management audits? [1]	Annex 6, 3.2	Yes	6.1.1.2.5 Audit experience	6.1.1.4.5 Audit experience 6.1.1.4.5.1 For a first qualification of a reviewer or a certification decision maker, the certification body shall ensure that the reviewer or certification decision maker, within the last three years, have observed at least one PEFC certification audit.	Y
Certification procedures						

8.	Does the scheme documentation require that certification bodies shall have established internal procedures for forest management certification?	Annex 6, 4	Yes	7.1.1.1: Certification framework	7.1.1.1.1: The certification body shall have internal procedures that are specific to forest management certification and compatible with the requirements of the ISO 17021-1 standard. These procedures shall cover, at a minimum, the following steps: • development of an audit plan; • setting up of an audit team; • determination of audit time requirements; • sampling methodology; and 19 GY-PROC-2023-01 Requirements for Certification Bodies operating certification against the Guyana Standard for Sustainable Forest Management • the audit processes	Y
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	4.1: General Skills 7.1.1.1: Certification framework 7.1.1.2: Pre-certification activities 7.1.1.3: Audit scheduling 7.1.1.4: Conducting of audits	7.1.1.1.1: The certification body shall have internal procedures that are specific to forest management certification and compatible with the requirements of the ISO 17021-1 standard. These procedures shall cover, at a minimum, the following steps: • development of an audit plan; • setting up of an audit team; • determination of audit time requirements; • sampling methodology; and 19 GY-PROC-2023-01 Requirements for Certification Bodies operating certification against the Guyana Standard for Sustainable Forest Management • the audit processes 7.1.1.2: Pre-certification activities All requirements of clauses 9.1.1 and 9.1.2 of the ISO/IEC 17021-1 standard apply.	Y
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	6.1.1.2 Auditors 6.1.1.4.4 Audit training 6.1.1.4.6 Competencies 7.4: Audit	7.4: Audit All relevant clauses of ISO/IEC 17021-1 and ISO 19011 apply. 7.4.1: The certification body shall have documented procedures to ensure that an audit plan is established for each audit, to provide a basis for agreement regarding the conduct and scheduling of the audit activities. The audit plan shall be communicated, and the dates of the audit shall be agreed upon in advance with the client organisation. Note: Guidance for preparing the audit plan is provided by ISO 19011:2018, clause 6.3.2 7.4.5: The certification body shall conduct the audit following the relevant guidance provided in ISO19011:2018, clause 6.4. In general, audits (initial, surveillance and recertification) shall be conducted on-site, except in those cases where requirements 7.4.6 or 7.9.2	Y

					of this standard apply, where certification bodies may decide to conduct remote audits 7.4.8: The certification body shall have documented procedures for sampling within the audit in accordance with the guidance provided in ISO 19011:2018, A.6.	
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	7.7.7. 7.10: Changes affecting certification	7.7.7 Certification bodies shall immediately inform the GFC, when certification is granted, suspended, terminated, withdrawn, its scope is changed or any other changes affecting the certification or the information that certification bodies shall report to PEFC	Y
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	4.2 Legal and contractual matters	4.2.2 The certification body shall make clear to the client organisation that the PEFC logo on the issued certificate only refers to the client organisation's compliance with the GNFCS (which are based on the requirements of the PEFC Council) and does not provide the client organisation with the right to use the PEFC trademarks for any other purpose other than for certification under the GNFCS. In addition, the certification body shall carry out controls of PEFC logo usage if the certified entity is a PEFC logo user	Y
13.	Does a maximum period for surveillance audits defined by the scheme documentation not exceed more than one year?	Annex 6, 4	Yes	7.1.1.2.2	7.1.1.1.2: The audit programme for a full certification cycle is over five years and shall include surveillance audits at least once a year without a period exceeding one year between them. The first surveillance audit shall not take place more than twelve months after the initial certification	Y

					audit. After a period not exceeding five years, a new cycle may start with a renewal audit.	
Y14.	Does a maximum period for assessment audit not exceed five years for forest management certifications?	Annex 6, 4	Yes	7.1.1.2.2	7.1.1.1.2: The audit programme for a full certification cycle is over five years and shall include surveillance audits at least once a year without a period exceeding one year between them. The first surveillance audit shall not take place more than twelve months after the initial certification audit. After a period not exceeding five years, a new cycle may start with a renewal audit.	Y
15.	Does the scheme documentation include requirements for public availability of certification report summaries?	Annex 6, 4	Yes	4.7 Publicly available information 7.1.1	7.1.1: The certification body may provide publicly available documents, such as guidance, clarifications, and interpretations published by the PEFC Council or the GFC. In addition, the certification body shall make certification report summaries publicly available	Y
16.	Does the scheme documentation include requirements for usage of information from external parties as the audit evidence?	Annex 6, 4	Yes	7.1.1.4.2	7.1.1.4.2: During the audit, the certification body shall review all relevant information received from third parties, such as government bodies, NGOs, etc., and use it as evidence to assess compliance with the certification requirements.	Y
17.	Does the scheme documentation include additional requirements for certification procedures? [“1]	Annex 6, 4	Yes	7.9.2	7.9.2: The on-site surveillance audit may be replaced by other audit techniques, such as documentation and records review, and the period between on-site surveillance audits shall not exceed two years where: a) the certification body can justify that the audit techniques used deliver sufficient confidence in the certified entity's compliance with the certification criteria; and b) no nonconformity was raised during the previous initial, surveillance or recertification audit; and c) the client organisation procurement does not include significant risk supplies; and d) the client organisation provides the certification body with all the records required to be kept on the GSSF and the Guyana Group Certification Standard or a list of all the records that allow the certification body to establish an independent sampling; or e) the submitted records provide sufficient evidence that the client organisation or client organisation's site or sites	Y

					has not procured raw material and has not sold any product with a PEFC claim since the last audit.	
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	Appendix 2 (normative): Accreditations accepted by the PEFC Council for PEFC notification	Certification bodies carrying out forest management or chain of custody certification, shall be accredited by a national accreditation body so as to ensure the credibility of the certification work and to facilitate mutual recognition.	Y
19.	Does the scheme documentation require that an accredited certificate shall bear an accreditation symbol of the relevant accreditation body?	Annex 6, 5	Yes	7.7.4	Appendix 2: An accredited certificate shall bear an accreditation symbol of the relevant accreditation body.	Y
20.	Does the scheme documentation require that the accreditation shall be issued by an accreditation body which is a part of the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) umbrella or a member of IAF's special recognition regional groups and which implement procedures described in ISO 17011 and other documents recognised by the above mentioned organisations?	Annex 6, 5	Yes	4.1: General skills Appendix 2 (normative): Accreditations accepted by the PEFC Council for PEFC notification	Appendix 2: Accreditation bodies shall be a member of the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) or a member of IAF's special recognition regional groups and implement procedures described in ISO/IEC 17011:2004(4) and other documents recognised by the above organisations.	Y

21.	Does the scheme documentation require that certification body undertake forest management certification as “accredited certification” based on ISO 17021 and the relevant forest management standard(s) shall be covered by the accreditation scope?	Annex 6, 5	Yes	<p>4.1: General skills</p> <p>7.1.1.1: Certification framework</p> <p>7.1.1.2: Pre-certification activities</p> <p>7.1.1.3: Audit scheduling</p> <p>7.1.1.4: Conducting of audits</p> <p>Appendix 2 (normative): Accreditations accepted by the PEFC Council for PEFC notification</p>	Appendix 2: The scope of the accreditation shall explicitly cover: • PEFC ST 2002, Chain of Custody of Forest and Tree Based Products – Requirements and PEFC ST 2001, PEFC Trademarks Rules – Requirements in its valid version as presented at the PEFC website www.pefc.org ; and • the GSSF and Group Certification Standard in their valid versions as presented at the GFC website: https://forestry.gov.gy/ The scope of accreditation shall also explicitly state ISO/IEC 17021-1, PEFC ST 2003 and other requirements against which the certification body has been assessed.	Y
22.	Does the scheme documentation include a mechanism for PEFC notification of certification bodies?	Annex 6, 6	Yes	Appendix 1 (normative): PEFC notification of certification bodies	Appendix 1 (normative): PEFC notification of certification bodies (Requirements are additional to the accreditation of the certification body) The GFC, as the PEFC authorised body, shall notify the PEFC Council of all certification bodies operating under the PEFC Council endorsed GNFCS. Both the GFC and the PEFC notifications require that the certification body shall have a valid accreditation recognised by the PEFC Council (see Annex 2 of this document). The certification body shall provide to the PEFC Council and the GFC the relevant information on granted certifications as specified by the PEFC Council or the GFC. Note: The information on granted certifications includes (but it is not limited to) identification of the client organisation, scope of the granted certifications and the client organisation's turnover where used for determination of the PEFC notification fee. Both the GFC and PEFC notifications may require the certification body to pay a fee. The notification fee paid by the certification body to the GFC shall be specified by the GFC	Y

23.	Are the procedures for PEFC notification of certification bodies non-discriminatory?	Annex 6, 6	Yes	4.5: Non-discriminatory conditions	There are no conditions within the accreditation procedures that are discriminatory.	Y
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PART V: STANDARD AND SYSTEM REQUIREMENT CHECKLIST FOR SYSTEM SPECIFIC CHAIN OF CUSTODY STANDARDS – COMPLIANCE WITH
PEFC ST PEFC 2002:2020

GFC as fully adopted PEFC ST 2002:2020 Chain of Custody of Forest Based Products Requirements therefore this part of the assessment is not applicable.

ANNEX B: REPORT ON FIELD VISIT AND CONSULTATION

A field visit to Guyana was taken from October 9 to October 13 inclusive. An itinerary for the visit is listed below, with more detail in the following section.

October 8	Arrive Georgetown Airport, Guyana
October 9	Meetings at Guyana Forestry Commission
October 10	Visit to Kaieteur National Park conservation area
October 11	Stakeholder Consultations
October 12	Site visits to: Soesdyke Forest Station, Linden Forest Station, XXXX Timbers, XXX Nursery , Ituni Community, Ituni Forest Station
October 13	Site visit to: Quality Timbers Concessions
October 14	Depart Georgetown

October 9: Guyana Forestry Commission

Present: Kwame Asumadu, Basamatee Mohabeer, Khalil Hegarty

The day was spent discussing the findings of the draft report, with GFC providing responses to and clarifications to the potential non-conformities and information gaps in the scheme documentation. The day covered the Sustainable Forest Management standard.

Conversation principally concerned the relationship between the Guyana Forestry Code of Practice and Forest Management Guidelines. An overview of the Wood Tracking System (WTS) was also provided.

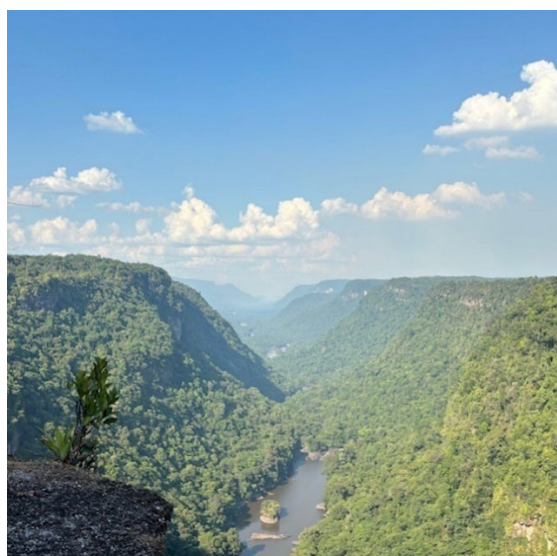
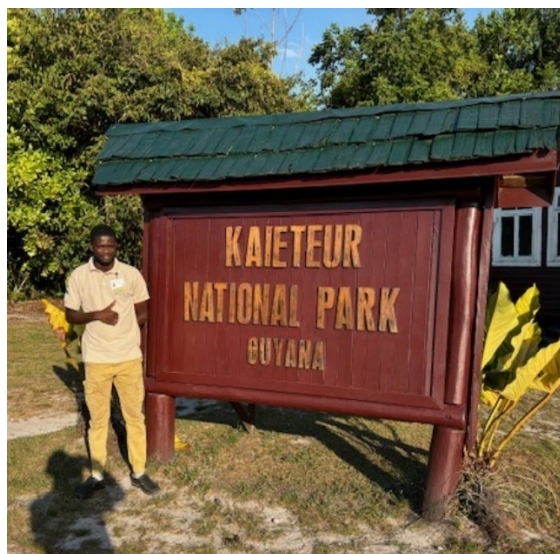
October 10 Kaieteur National Park Conservation Area

A field visit to Kaieteur Falls National Park was undertaken. Kaieteur Falls National Park, located in the Potaro-Siparuni region of Guyana, spans an area of approximately 627 square kilometers (242 square miles). Established in 1929, the park is positioned on the Guiana Shield, characterized by a terrain that includes plateaus, deep gorges, and savanna ecosystems. A prominent feature is the Kaieteur Plateau, part of the Pakaraima Mountains. The Potaro River flows through the park, leading to the creation of Kaieteur Falls, one of the world's highest single-drop waterfalls.

The park's biodiversity is notable, with a diverse range of flora, including endemic species. The predominant tropical rainforest houses a variety of tree species, epiphytes, ferns, and orchids. Its fauna includes numerous bird species, mammals, amphibians, and insects, with notable species like the Guianan Cock-of-the-rock (*Rupicola rupicola*), the Golden Rocket Frog (*Anomaloglossus beebei*), and various bats and primates. A high level of endemism is observed, particularly among amphibians and reptiles.

The park is protected area under Guyanese law, specifically Kaieteur National Park Act, Protected Areas Act, Environmental Protection Act, and the Forests Act. The park's primary objectives are the conservation of its unique natural environment and biodiversity.

During the visit, it was possible to observe: the park management's processes for visitor and recreational management (including record keeping); techniques for the collection of non-forest products by indigenous groups; informational outreach activities; and species conservation strategies for the *Drosera Roraimae* (carnivorous sundew). Informal consultations took place with conservation officers on site, as well as indigenous community members that have been provided employment opportunities as part of park management.



MONTH	AIR	LAND TOTAL
JANUARY	539	7 546
FEBRUARY	568	3 561
MARCH	549	2 851
APRIL	1143	6 1145
MAY	622	10 632
JUNE	801	801
JULY	1071	1071
AUGUST	1263	5 1268
SEPTEMBER	1013	8 1018
OCTOBER		
NOVEMBER		
DECEMBER		
TOTAL	8151	8152

2023 RESULTS

Clockwise from top left, various pictures from Kaieteur National Park: GNFC staff; Sundew (*Drosera kaieteurensis*) carnivorous plant; visitor record-keeping at the park facility; view over the Potaro River.

October 11: Guyana Forestry Commission

Stakeholder consultations took place throughout the day on October 11. These are summarised below.

- 10.00 Group Consultation (Hybrid)
- Present: Quacy Bremner (Guyana Forestry Training Centre); Colin Klautky (GOIP), Ariana Seeraj (MNR), Mona Bynoe (FPA), Anne-Marie Ford (Iwokrama).
- 11.00 Consultation with Laura George, Amerindian Peoples' Association
- 12.00 Consultation with Guyana Manufacturing Association (Rafeek Khan)
- 12.30 Consultation with Vanda Radzik, Women and Gender Representative

The discussions focused on the standard development process. All participants noted that:

- Participation in the initial standard development discussions was straightforward;
- The nomination of representatives to the NSSWG was straightforward;
- Documents and updated drafts were provided ahead of meetings and on time;
- GFC accommodated the ability of disadvantaged stakeholders to attend the meetings;
- If in the case of representatives were unable to attend, items in the standard were not considered closed unless consensus had been achieved;
- The discussion was considered open and robust, comments were taken seriously and reflected in the multiple drafts;
- In terms of consensus, there was no sustained opposition to any of the particular items, and therefore no additional processes needed to be amended;
- Consensus was achieved via exchange of emails, with late amendments in the process;
- Members were appreciative of GFC's efforts, to achieve consensus.

Participants also noted the following:

- The conventional 'developed world' model of written correspondence to ensure participation from stakeholders in the consultation processes was not necessarily appropriate for the Guyanese context, and that the working group representatives would generally consult with their constituencies on the standard development intersessionally via informal means.
- There was generally a great deal of trust between the Working Group members and of the GFC's ability to manage the process following the FLEGT VPA processes.
- Some organisations did note that they would sometimes struggle with internal capacity to respond to everything because of a large number of processes outside the GNFCS process, but acknowledged that this was an internal resourcing problem, and that GFC was accommodating.

In the afternoon, GFC gave presentations and an overview of the country's wood tracking system (WTS), the land tenure regime across Guyana, and the status of indigenous peoples.

October 12: Field assessment

October 12 commenced a two-day field assessment as follows:

- 7.30am Depart GFC
- 8.30am Short stop at Soesdyke Forest Station
- 9.30am Arrive Linden Forest Station

Discussion with Linden Forest Station staff, who provide a full overview of the tracking and inspection system implemented by the GFC. Explanation of system documentation, compliance and enforcement is provided, including the traceability of logs via documentation to concessions and inventory.

10.30am Arrive STS Timber Services, Linden

Discussion with site manager and explanation of certification types offered by the entity, including inspection of arrival area and log pond and timber segregation.

11.20am Arrive Linden seedling nursery and drying facility. Discussion on the use of seedlings for rehabilitation of old mining sites, and examination of internationally-funded kiln-drying project.

2.00pm Arrive Ituni for discussion / consultation with Richard James and other members of the community concerning local forestry operations, including:

- The structure and governance of the local forestry association;
- The number of concessions managed by the local community group;
- The number of local people dependent upon forestry operations for income;
- Gender balance within the local forestry operations;
- End uses for the timber harvested;
- Government pilots for processing and manufacturing and the financing of the operations;
- Training needs required and received by local community members;
- Broader community needs to sustainability of the operations;

3.00pm Arrive Ituni Forest Station; opportunity to observe inspection of logging truck and matching of timber tags against manifest documents

4.30pm Arrive Bamboo Landing and Variety Woods timber yard to observe processing operations

October 13: Field assessment (day 2)

7.00am Depart Kwakwani Junction (overnight stay)

10.30am Arrive Variety Woods and Greenheart Ltd harvesting operation at Maam and Essequibo, Block 22-AF.

- Inspection of logging camp;
- Observation of tree tagging and inventory maintenance;
- Observation of harvesting and skidding
- Observation of post-harvest stump and log tagging
- Opportunity to discuss pilot testing and auditing with the pilot test auditor.

3.30pm Return to Georgetown

October 14

[illegible]

The top row consists of three photographs. The leftmost photo shows large logs with green protective caps and labels, stacked in a yard. The middle photo shows three men standing in front of a green building with a wooden door, likely a mill or processing facility. The rightmost photo shows a man wearing a hat and a blue shirt, holding a clipboard and looking at a large stack of logs.

Above: concession map (l); block inventory (r)



Above: Pre-harvest inventory tagging; post-harvest production tagging



Above: Post-harvest measurement and tagging; post-harvest

ANNEX C. RESULTS OF STAKEHOLDER SURVEY

Very few responses were received for the email-based stakeholder survey. The survey was distributed on September 8. A lack of responses prompted a re-sending of the survey via the GFC approximately two weeks later.

Stakeholder consultations indicated clearly that email communication is not the clear preference of Guyana's stakeholders, and a low number of responses was to be expected. The issues covered in the stakeholder survey were confirmed during the field visit. All stakeholders wished to remain anonymous.

Question	Responses		
What type of organisation are you?	Indigenous NGO	Environmental NGO	Academic / technical
Describe your relationship with the GNFCS bodies.	Not fully participatory	As an NGO Rep, my relationship with the GNFCS is mostly as an observer.	Committee member
Approximately when were you invited to participate in the GNFCS standard development or consultation process?	Don't remember. We had different persons representing us over the years.	I think 2021, but very early in the process	At the development stage
How did you first hear about the process?	Email	Email	Email
How easy was it for you and other stakeholders to participate?	Somewhat difficult	Very easy	Somewhat easy
How well were the consultations structured and planned?	Somewhat not well	Very well	Very well
Did GFC provide you with the materials you needed for the process (e.g. drafts, etc.)?	Unsure	Yes	Yes
Were your views appropriately considered during the revision process?	No	Yes	Yes
Do you think the stakeholders adequately represented stakeholders across Guyana?	No	Yes	Yes

If you answered no above, who else should have been represented?	Persons who actually work all their life in the Forest Sector, & based in Guyana's outback/interior.		
Are there other aspects of the standards that should be considered in future revisions of the scheme?	Don't know enough to say.		Not at the moment
If you were a member of the National Standard Setting Working Group (NSSWG), please describe how consensus on the draft standards were achieved.	Unsure consensus was achieved.	Consensus was accomplished during the meeting by discussion with stakeholders, if stakeholders couldn't come to consensus then documents were recirculated for extended review, additional clarification etc.	Was done following protocols agreed by the working group
Please add any other comments you think are appropriate.	The general language used in the paperwork throughout this processs needed to be much simpler & user-friendly for the majority of us who don't have University degrees etc. But the general objectives seemed to be credible		

ANNEX C: RESULTS OF INTERNATIONAL CONSULTATION

No comments were received for the international consultation.

ANNEX D. INTERNAL REVIEW COMMENTS

COMMENT	RESPONSE
Page 5: Editorial: Please replace “scheme” with “system”	Term has been replaced.
Page 7: Please use the structure and the wording of the recommendation chapter as you did with Brazil	Structure has been revised accordingly.
Page 7: Please add this to the non-conformities to be addressed within 6 months. Procedures should be fully compliant.	Agreed on oversight, text added.
Page 8: Please include an observation to highlight the potential overlap between the “Forest plantation” and “Plantation forests” definition. For EUDR perspective planted forest is relevant, we shouldn’t allow to blur these definitions.	Agree on the observation, and a paragraph has been added noting the potential for overlap.
Page 11: List these as “adopted” not “developed”	Agreed, the standards that were adopted have been listed as such.
Page 27: Do you mean the NGB’s website?	Drafting error, the term has been replaced.
Page 43: Please add chapter/section reference from GY-ST-2023-01	Drafting error, the term has been replaced.
Page 45: Please add acronym	Drafting error, the acronym has been replaced.
Page 188: Same [repeated] paragraph above	Drafting error, the repeated paragraph has been deleted.
Page 188: Could you add captions for the photos?	Captions have been added.

