

Procedures for the Management of the Certification System and Standard Setting of PEFC Italy

Associazione PEFC
Italia
Via Pietro Cestellini, 17
06135 Perugia

T. +39. 075.7824825
+39. 075.5997295
[e. info@pefc.it](mailto:info@pefc.it)
www.pefc.it

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In the event of inconsistencies between the English and Italian versions, the English version of the standard approved by the PEFC Council shall refer.

Introduction to the document

PEFC Italy, as a standard-setting body, develops and periodically revises its certification system. This document has been drawn up in accordance with PEFC Standard ST 1001:2017 Standard-setting - Requirements and describes the procedures for the Management of the PEFC Italy Certification System, including standards revision and accreditation, updating the previous PEFC ITA 1000:2015.

For any prescribed requirements missing in this document, please refer to PEFC ST 1000-2017.

1 The actors in the system

1.1 PEFC-Italy

PEFC-Italy is the association that constitutes the national governing body of the PEFC certification system. Its composition, tasks and functioning comply with what is defined in its Statutes and in this document.

1.1.1 General Assembly

In addition to the provisions contained on the Association's Statutes, the Members' Assembly:

- a) appoints the President to start the process for the creation and subsequent revision of the standards,
- b) appoints the Board of Directors to identify the Group of Experts (permanent and external) to be responsible for the periodic review and revision of the Standards and to identify the three experts for the 'Conflict Resolution Group' that may arise during the course of the Standards Review activities;
- c) ratifies or modifies the decisions of the Board of Directors concerning the periodic review of the standards.

1.1.2 President

In addition to what is contained on the Statutes, the President carries out the procedures to initiate the periodic review process of the standards; he/she coordinates the work of the Board and the Secretariat for the approval of the standards.

1.1.3 Board of Directors

In addition to the provisions contained on the Association's Statutes, the BoD:

- a) arranges for the development, formal adoption and amendment of rules relating to the certification;
- b) arranges for the development, formal adoption and amendment of rules concerning the control of CoC certification;
- c) approves the final revision of the proposed management standards by the Group of Expert and the Forum;
- d) concludes contracts with TGs, RGs and owners/operators (AZ) for the use of the PEFC logo.

1.1.4 Forum Working Group

A permanent Working Group of external experts (representing a balanced representation of the stakeholder categories relevant for the forest and Trees outside Forests sectors) is delegated by the PEFC Italy Assembly to periodically do the revision (at least every 5 years) the national standards in the form of a Forum in compliance with the PEFC International recognised standard-setting procedures; the final review is approved by the Board.

PEFC Italy identifies disadvantaged and 'key' stakeholders, identifying difficulties to their participation and proactively stimulating their intervention and contribution in the Standard's revision activities.

1.1. General Secretariat

The PEFC-Italy general Secretariat has the task of managing the ordinary and administrative activities of PEFC, maintaining institutional relations with the TGs and RGs, coordinating the Association's activities and seeing to the execution of the resolutions of its bodies.

- a) The Secretariat is headed by the Secretary General of PEFC-Italy. In particular, coordinates those involved in the review of documentation according to PEFC-Italy procedures;

- b) communicates to applicants the list of ACCREDIA accredited Bodies and the list of Bodies that have applied for accreditation to ACCREDIA;
- c) maintains and updates the register of certified owners/operators (AZ), TGs and RGs;
- d) maintains and updates the register of territorial or group certification members;
- e) maintains and updates the register of PEFC logo users, communicating the data to PEFC International;
- f) offers informative support to all applicants (companies, TGs, RGs, CBs, etc.);
- g) is the only entity delegated to provide the authentic interpretation of the PEFC Italy scheme, with regard to issues related to the scheme and not to third party audits.

1.2 Certification Bodies (CBs) and Accreditation Bodies (ABs)

Certification is carried out by the independent and third-party CBs, accredited by a national CB, member of the IAF - International Accreditation Forum - (e.g. ACCREDIA in Italy) for the certification of implemented management schemes and of the CoC of forest and wood products, which have subsequently been notified by PEFC Italy. On operating procedures see PEFC ITA 1003-1

2 PEFC Italy as a standard-setting body

2.1 PEFC Italy has written procedures concerning the standard's revision activities describing:

- a) Its status and structure, including a body responsible for reaching consensus and formally adopting the standards;
- b) the record-keeping procedures;
- c) procedures for balanced stakeholder representation;
- d) the standard review and revision processes;
- e) the mechanisms for reaching consensus;
- f) the revision of standards/regulatory documents.

2.2 PEFC Italy makes its Standard revision procedures publicly available and regularly revises them, considering stakeholder comments.

2.3 PEFC Italy maintains documentation related to the review and revision process providing evidence of conformity between the requirements of PEFC ST 1001 and its own procedures. The documentation is retained for at least five years after the publication of the standard and it is available to any interested party upon request. The following documentation is maintained:

- 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 standards;
- g) Outcomes from working groups considerations;
- h) Evidence of consensus on the final version of the standards;
- i) Evidence relating to the review process; and
- j) Final approval by the Board of Director of PEFC Italy.

2.4 PEFC Italy shall establish a permanent or temporary working group responsible for the Standard's revision activities.

The Working Group:

- a) is open to materially and directly interested Stakeholders;
- b) has a balanced representation for both the decision-making of the relevant stakeholder categories with respect to the topic of discussion and for the geographical scope of the standard in which individual interests must neither dominate nor be dominated in the process;
- c) includes stakeholders with competences relevant to the subject of the standard, both those substantially affected by the standard and those who can influence the implementation of the standard. The first type of stakeholder must represent a significant part of the participants;
- d) has balanced representation considering appropriate gender balance, relevance of the organization, individual's competence, and an individual's relevant experience.

2.5 PEFC Italy shall establish procedures to address any substantive and procedural complaints related to standardization activities that are accessible to stakeholders.

Following any complaints, PEFC Italy:

- a) notifies the person concerned that the complaint has been received;
- b) gathers and verifies all the necessary information to validate the complaint, impartially and objectively assesses the content of the complaint, and decides regarding the complaint;
- c) formally informs the person concerned of the decision regarding the complaint and its handling process.

2.6 PEFC Italy establishes at least one contact person for queries and complaints concerning its standard revision activities. The contact person shall be easily reachable.

3 Revision Process

3.1 For the creation of a new standard, PEFC Italy elaborates a proposal including:

- a) the scope of the standard;
- b) a justification of the need for the standard;
- c) a clear description of the expected outcomes;
- d) a risk assessment of potential negative impacts arising from implementing the standard;
- e) a description of the stages of standard development and their expected timetable.

For the revision of already existing standards points 3.1 a) and 3.1 e) shall be applied.

3.2 PEFC Italy, at the beginning of the review process, identifies stakeholders relevant to the objectives and scope of the standard revision work, based on the nine main stakeholder groups 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 must be included in the stakeholder mapping¹

- forest owners;
- business and industry;

¹ The stakeholder mapping exercise includes defining the sectors affected, why they are affected and, for each sector, the most important topics, stakeholders and most suitable media

- indigenous people;
- youth;
- non-governmental organizations;
- scientific and technological community;
- workers and trade unions.

3.3 PEFC Italy identifies stakeholders, disadvantaged stakeholders and 'key' stakeholders, identifying difficulties to their participation and proactively stimulating their intervention and contribution in the Standard's revision activities.

3.4 PEFC Italy shall communicate the start of the Standard's setting process through a public announcement containing an invitation to stakeholder to participate in the process, both on its website and in other appropriate media, in order to allow stakeholders to meaningfully contribute. The announcement shall be made in a timely manner (at least four weeks before the first activity of the revision process).

The public announcement includes:

- a) information on the objectives, purpose, steps of the standard's revision process and related schedule;
- b) information about opportunities for stakeholders to participate in the process;
- c) requests to stakeholders to nominate their representative(s) or themselves to the working group. 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;
- d) explicit invitation and clear instruction on how to submit feedback on the scope and standard-setting process;
- e) access to the standard-setting procedures.

3.5 PEFC Italy reviews the standard-setting process based on feedback received in response to the public announcement. PEFC Italy establishes a working group or adjusts the composition of an already existing working group based on received nominations. Acceptance and refusal of nominations is justified in relation to the requirements for balanced representation of the working group and resources available for standard-setting.

3.6 The Working Group activities are organized in an open and transparent manner, in which:

- a) working drafts are available to all members of the Working Group;
- b) all members of the Working Group are given the opportunity to contribute to the development or revision of the standard and to provide feedback on working drafts;
- c) feedback and views given by any member of the working group are be considered in an open and transparent way where the outcome of these considerations is recorded.

3.7 PEFC Italy organises a public consultation on the draft and ensures that

- a) the start and the end dates of public consultation are announced in a timely manner through suitable media²;
- a direct invitation to comment on the enquiry draft is sent to each stakeholder identified by stakeholder identification mapping aiming for a balanced participation of stakeholder groups
- b) invitations are sent to disadvantaged and key stakeholders by methods that ensure they reach recipients and are easy to understand;

² Timely manner: at the latest the day before the start of public consultation

- c) the enquiry draft is made publicly available;
- d) public consultation is for at least 60 days;
- e) all feedback is considered by the working group in an objective manner;
- f) a synopsis of feedback is compiled for each material issue, including the outcome of considering the issue. The synopsis is sent to each stakeholder/party that gave feedback and is made publicly available (on the PEFC Italy website).

3.8 For the new Standards, PEFC Italy organizes:

- a pilot test to assess the clarity, auditability and feasibility of the requirements (eg: indicators). The working group must consider the outcome of pilot testing³.
- a second round of public consultation lasting at least 30 days.

3.9 The Working Group Decision

The decision of the working group to recommend the final draft for formal approval is 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) a face-to-face meeting in which there is a vote (verbal yes/no, show of hands for a yes/no vote, a proposal from the President for which there is no dissent, a formal ballot process);
- b) a web-conference meeting in which there is a verbal yes/no vote;
- c) email communications in which members are asked to give their consent or objection. This mode involves the use of a written response from members (in the 'one proxy one vote' mode);
- d) combination of the above.

3.10 In the event of a negative vote involving sustained opposition by a major component of the Forum, the resolution shall be based on the following mechanisms:

- e) finding a compromise through discussion and negotiation on the disputed issue within the working group;
- f) finding a compromise through direct negotiation between the stakeholder(s) making the objection and other stakeholders with different views on the disputed issue;
- g) dispute resolution process.
- h) additional round(s) of public consultation (if necessary). PEFC Italy determines the scope and duration of any additional public consultation.

3.11 Documents concerning the implementation of the standard revision process are publicly available.

3.12 PEFC Italy approves the standards and normative documents formally when there is evidence of consensus among the working group.

3.13 The formally approved standards are promptly published (within a maximum of 14 days after their formal approval) and made publicly available. Printed copies shall be available upon request at a price that covers no more than administrative costs (if any).

³ The Pilot Test is not required in the case of the revision of a standard in which the experience gained from its use can replace the aforementioned pilot text

4. Review of Standards and normative documents

4.1 The standard and the normative documents are reviewed and revised at least every five years. In reviewing its standard documents, PEFC Italy takes into account the latest scientific knowledge and research and the most relevant emerging issues.

4.2 At the start of a review, PEFC Italy evaluates the standard against appropriate PEFC International standards, national laws and regulations, and other relevant standards to identify potential gaps in the standard (gap analysis).

If this analysis does not identify a need to revise the standard, PEFC Italy organises a stakeholder consultation to determine whether stakeholders see a need for revising the standard, including the gap analysis in the stakeholder consultation. The stakeholder consultation will also be complemented with a public consultation period of at least 30 days.

On the basis of the gathered evidences, the PEFC Italy Board of Directors decides whether to confirm the current standards or to initiate a revision process.

In case the BoD decides to confirm the standards, PEFC Italy provides a justification for the decision and makes the justification publicly available; in case the BoD decides to initiate a revision process, PEFC Italy specifies the type of revision (normal or graphic-editorial).

Editorial revisions can be made without activating the ordinary revision process. In this case, PEFC Italy formally approves editorial changes, publishing a revision or a new edition of the standard. PEFC Italy announces the review in a timely manner (at the latest four weeks before the first activity is scheduled to occur).

4.3 The revision defines the effective and transition date of the Standard and the updated normative documents.

4.4 The effective date shall not exceed one year from the publication of the Standards. This period is necessary for the recognition of updated standards and normative documents, for the introduction of changes, for the dissemination of information and for training.

4.5 The transition date shall not exceed a period of one year, except in justified and exceptional circumstances where the implementation of the revised Standards and normative documents requires a longer period.

4.6 A time critical revision can only be carried out in the event of a change in national laws and regulations affecting compliance with PEFC International requirements and/or on the basis of instruction by PEFC International to comply with specific or new PEFC requirements within a timescale that is too short for a normal revision.

In this case, the following steps must be observed:

- a) PEFC Italy drafts revised standards, consulting stakeholders where necessary;
- b) revised standards must be formally approved by the Board of PEFC Italy;
- c) PEFC Italy explains the justification for the urgent change(s) and makes the justification publicly available.

4.7 The standards must include the following information:

- a) identification and contact information for the standardizing body;
- b) the 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) approval date and date of next periodic review.

4.8 PEFC Italy makes the development report (refer to PEFC GD 1007) publicly available.

4.9 PEFC Italy establishes and maintains a permanent mechanism for collecting and recording feedback on standards. This mechanism is accessible on the PEFC Italy website, on the page dedicated to the standards review process.

All feedback received through all channels (e.g. public meetings, trainings, e-mails and personal contacts) is addressed to the Italian Secretary General, who is in charge of recording this feedback, storing it and considering it as part of the adaptation process of the Standards.