



PEFC BG ST 1002:24



PEFC Standard for sustainable forest management in Bulgaria - Requirements

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Foreword

Council for sustainable forest management and certification in Bulgaria / CSFMCB or also PEFC Bulgaria is the exclusive owner of the PEFC trademark in Bulgaria and promotes it throughout Bulgaria as the national governing body of the international certification system for PEFC forests.

PEFC - Program for the Endorsement of Forest Certification

PEFC Bulgaria is a member of the PEFC Council. It also has its own members representing all stakeholders involved in the forest and timber sector, which are grouped into three circles: forest owners, business-economic interests and other stakeholders. This collegial structure allows for the participation of all stakeholders through the exchange of different perspectives. The purpose of this organizational structure is to continuously seek consensus among the parties involved.

Through its forest certification standard, PEFC Bulgaria defines good management practices also for forests that are spread outside the forest territories (*Trees and forests outside the forest territories TFoFT*), but according to the international and FAO nomenclatures and registers they are subject to statistical information, and according to the Bulgarian practice and legislation imposed so far in Bulgaria, they are subject to intensive or extensive management.

Sustainable forest management leads to climate protection.

Global climate change with its complexity and dynamics also affects the forests in Bulgaria. In particular, rising average temperatures, less rainfall and more frequent extreme weather events are also putting pressure on forest ecosystems. This leads to changes in forest habitats and species composition. Disasters are increasing and invasive species and pests causing new disease processes are challenging forests and forest management. Even if the general direction of development is already discernible, the spatial and temporal development to be expected is still unknown in detail.

The PEFC standard for sustainable forest management aims to take this into account and can provide guidance in this regard. When possible or necessary, the standard's text refers to the importance of climate stability in forest management.

Forest preservation, as well as the diversity and range of forest ecosystem services, is primarily ensured through sustainable forest management. However, their financing from timber revenues is increasingly threatened in view of the frequent and sometimes prolonged disasters that are regularly accompanied by declining timber yields. In the future, individual ecosystem services must be properly retributed by direct beneficiaries and the public to enable forest enterprises to restore and maintain stands, and to ensure the urgently needed climate adaptation of forests. PEFC supports this development by providing evidence of active forest management through audits and additional standard proposals.

The variety of goals of the owners in relation to the different ecosystem services is not yet very characteristic of Bulgarian forestry. PEFC considers all forest areas that provide ecosystem services

(climate, water, soils, recreation and tourism, renewable energy, forest-based light and processing industry, furniture industry, etc.) to be eligible for certification.

Forest owners who direct their forest management towards this overall goal of comprehensive sustainability can participate in PEFC certification. Documenting sustainable forest management (SFM) will be done primarily on a regional (group) basis, but also on an individual basis, based on/depending on the list of indicators.

Introduction

Sustainable forest management (SFM) in Bulgaria is carried out in a way that biological diversity, production potential, their vital and regenerative capacity, and their ability to perform present and future important ecological, economic and social functions at local, national and world level, is secured and no other ecosystems are damaged {as defined by *Resolution B1* adopted during the Second Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (Helsinki, 1993), now Forest Europe}.

The main principles of sustainable forest management, adopted there and later formed as criteria of **"The Pan-European Operational Level Guide - PEOLG**, are as follows:

- 1) Maintaining and appropriately enhancing forest resources and their contribution to global carbon cycles.*
- 2) Maintaining the health and vitality of forest ecosystems.*
- 3) Maintaining and promoting the productive functions of forests.*
- 4) Maintenance, protection and appropriate enhancement of biological diversity in forest ecosystems.*
- 5) Maintaining and appropriately improving the protective functions of forests (in particular soil protection and water protection functions);*
- 6) Maintenance of other socio-economic functions of forests.*

These basic criteria for sustainable forest management have been adopted in the forestry practice in Bulgaria at a strategic level, with the National Strategy for the Development of the Forestry Sector 2013-2020, and after its update in 2021 remained the same.

For our part, we from the CSFMCB have accepted **The framework criteria and guidelines of the standard PEFC ST 1003:2018**, which overlap with the cited European criteria, as a natural continuation of the already well-known in our country at the strategic level requirements for the responsible management of forests in Bulgaria. From this point of view, those forming the Bulgarian **PEFC standard for forest management** criteria and indicators, in a more natural way would serve to assess the compliance of each specific managed forest unit /MFU/ with the requirements for sustainable management according to these criteria, resp. standard to prove it. i.e. the strategic indicators and requirements already have developed specifics and can be adopted at the operational management level as well.

In depth, these requirements are developed by the Council for Sustainable Forest Management and Certification in Bulgaria (CSFMCB / PEFC Bulgaria) in an open, transparent, consultative and consensus-based process involving a wide range of stakeholders.

Our PEFC criteria and indicators form the basis for assessing the state of forest management for all forms of forest ownership in the certification process by an independent certification body under the PEFC scheme and include certain certification criteria both for individual forest areas and at regional level. In particular, they serve to define the subject and scope of audits and to determine the compliance of the state and management of forests with the requirements of the PEFC framework standard for sustainable forest management.

The main objectives of the current revision of the standards and documents of the PEFC system in Bulgaria were:

- adaptation to the revised requirements of PEFC International (the new framework standard PEFC ST 1003:2018);
- taking into account comments arising from the national review;
- improving the clarity and consistency of documents to make them easier to use in practice.
- reflecting the European and global regulatory framework created in the meantime related to climate change, such as: EU Deforestation Regulation (EURED), European Union's Renewable Energy Directive. Number II (RED II).

The standard has been drafted in such a way that ensuring compliance with PEFC requirements does not create additional bureaucracy. Instead, it shall contribute to the promotion of sustainable forestry and allow the organization to benefit from it. The technical documentation compiled to demonstrate compliance with PEFC requirements (criteria, indicators and verifiers) adds value to the organization; also, a process-focused approach shall contribute to improved productivity. Regarding the simplification of the compliance evaluation process (for both internal and external control/audit), it was necessary to implement (merge) the previous *Guide with criteria and indicators for operational implementation (PEFC BG 1002-1:)* in the standard itself, as the same has been expanded with texts to verify the indicators for each criterion.

In addition, the biodiversity conservation principles were reviewed in the standard revision process to ensure that they do not become unduly burdensome for the organization and, in particular, that they will allow the knowledge and accumulated over 140 years of experience of Bulgarian foresters in all areas of forestry to create greater diversity and sustainability in Bulgaria's forests.

The project standard inquiry was reviewed by representatives of key stakeholders. The Working Group (Forest Certification Council /FCC) in the face of a Key Working Group (KWG) reviewed their feedback and improved the comprehensiveness and relevance of the project of the inquiry before making it public.

This document defines, at the level of a certified organization, the forest management requirements resulting from the process *FOREST EUROPE* and the requirements of *PEFC INTERNATIONAL* and PEFC Bulgaria.

Certification process

Certification is an assessment that verifies compliance with the requirements of a given standard, in this case the PEFC Framework Standard for Forest Management – PEFC ST 1003:2018.

This means that the development and revision of standards (standardization), certification and accreditation are completely separate to eliminate the risk of conflict of interest and ensure the highest level of competence. PEFC International develops international standards, while at national level this is the task of a national standardization body, namely a PEFC national representative. The standardization body for the PEFC system in Bulgaria is CSFMCB (or PEFC Bulgaria), which, in partnership with stakeholders, adapts the standards to local laws and regulations, conditions, practices and other aspects.

Certifying authorities assess the compliance of the management system with the standard and their decision to issue a certificate must be objective, independent and justified. Accreditation, the process of evaluating the performance of certification bodies, is carried out by accreditation bodies that are members of the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) or a regional IAF accreditation group. For Bulgaria, such an organization is an Executive Agency **"Bulgarian Service for Accreditation" - BSA**. Complaints filed against certified owners or companies are dealt with by the certification bodies (CBs), and the activity of the CBs is supervised by the relevant accreditation body (in our case – from BSA).

As a result of a successful certification process, the certification body issues a certificate to the forest manager for five years and once a year carries out a supervisory audit to ensure continuous compliance with the requirements of the Bulgarian National PEFC Forest Management Standard (referred to hereinafter as the Standard). Certificate holders are allowed to use the assertion *"100% PEFC certified"* and use the PEFC label. The requirements of the standard are mandatory and are observed by all operators and workers who carry out work in the certified area. The certificate may be suspended or terminated if the requirements of the standard are not met.

The PEFC forest management certificate confirms that the forest manager carries out responsible and sustainable forest management, e.g. by preserving and/or improving ecosystem services and social requirements, following occupational health and safety requirements, respecting workers' rights and other economic, social and environmental aspects. According to the requirements of the Standard, for management to be sustainable, the forest manager must identify ecosystem services, as well as assess the impact of management activities and plan activities to mitigate this impact.

For example, the standard includes requirements for the assessment of greenhouse gas emissions and CO₂ accumulation, caused by economic activity, protection of biological diversity, protection of water and soil resources, opportunities for recreation, promotion of the local economy and employment, optimal use of wood resources, etc.

The organization must keep records of its activities to provide evidence of compliance with the requirements of the PEFC standard. If the PEFC standard does not require a written record to demonstrate compliance with the requirement, the organization may provide verbal verification. If the organization is allowed to explain the problem verbally, the auditor has the right to request the information in writing if the audit reveals that the verbal verification is not sufficient.

*Note: In general, the key steps of the certification process, compliance assessment, sampling and sample size, issuance and termination of certificates (certificate of participation in group / regional certification) are detailed in the Standard **PEFC BS ST 04:2021 Certification and accreditation procedures** from the Balkan Forest Certification System and the additional technical documents to the Bulgarian Forest Certification System (PEFC BG TD 1004-1: *Rules for Auditing Sustainable Forest Management - Handbook*; PEFC BG TD 1004-2: *Rules for auditing group and regional forest management*).*

PEFC Sustainability Indicators

Sustainable forest management in Bulgaria is exercised in a manner and to an extent that maintains the viability, biodiversity, productivity and regenerative capacity of the forest and its potential to perform, now and in the future, relevant ecological, economic, social and cultural functions without causing damage to other ecosystems.

The structure of the standard is also based on the six international PEFC sustainability criteria (**the framework guidelines of the standard PEFC ST 1003:2018**), which as can be seen are almost identical to those of "Forest Europe":

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

Criterion 2: "Maintenance of the health and vitality of the forest ecosystems"

Criterion 3: "Maintenance and enhancement the productive functions of the forests (timber and non-timber)"

Criterion 4: "Maintenance, protection and appropriate enhancement of biological diversity in forest ecosystems"

Criterion 5: "Maintenance or appropriate enhancement of protective functions in forest management (notably soil and water)"

Criterion 6: "Maintenance or appropriate enhancement of socio-economic functions and conditions"

Conformity assessment

The criteria and guidelines of the PEFC International Standard for Sustainable Forest Management (PEFC ST 1003:2018, hereinafter referred to as the Guidelines) are included here in Chapter 8 of the Bulgarian National PEFC Standard for Forest Management. **The criteria** determine the general goals and principles for management of forest and plantation forest to achieve sustainable management. **The indicators** are measurable requirements/indicators (sub-criteria) for an independent third-party assessment relative to the requirements for determining compliance with the criteria. The indicators in the standard are clearly described, often with accompanying texts,

action-oriented and auditable. **The verifiers** set the minimum requirements that the forest manager must meet in order for the management to be sustainable, but the forest manager can take additional actions aimed at ensuring sustainable development, including social and economic responsibility, mitigating climate change, increasing productivity and biodiversity, etc. Specific minimum numerical values are not included in the indicators, as in most cases they are determined by laws and regulations.

Note:** The assessment of compliance with the requirements cited above, incl. and with the framework requirements of PEFC and those of FOREST EUROPE is carried out with the present document: **PEFC BG ST 1002: xx Standard for sustainable forest management in Bulgaria.

Availability of the standard

This standard is a public document that is freely available on the PEFC Bulgaria website www.pefc.bg and which can be freely distributed to all stakeholders. No part of this standard may be changed or supplemented, reproduced or copied in any form or by any means for commercial purposes without the permission of CSFMCB / PEFC Bulgaria. The current version of the standard is available on the website www.pefc.bg.

All stakeholders may submit their comments and suggestions for improving the standard electronically or in writing by sending them to the email address pefc.bg@gmail.com / info@pefc.bg or by post to CSFMCB / PEFC Bulgaria, Sofia-1303, 64 Pirotska St. Based on the comments and suggestions of stakeholders, PEFC Bulgaria may introduce changes to the standard in accordance with the established procedure for revising the standard.

The PEFC BG ST 1002: xx standard was developed in 2023 and is approved by the GA of CSFMCB on 21.02.2024. The standard is reviewed and, if necessary, revised at least once every five years.

The standard has been re-approved by PEFC International on 5 December 2024.

1. Scope of the standard

The Bulgarian national PEFC standard for forest management is applicable throughout the territory of Bulgaria, for all types of forests, for all forestry and hunting farms, regardless of their type, size and ownership of the forests.

Certification according to the standard can only be carried out at the initiative of the forest owner. Object of certification is a forestry unit or units that are included in the scope of certification, as well as **non-forested areas (TOF) – trees and forests in agricultural, urbanized and protected areas**. The requirements applicable to them are presented in **Annex-1** to the Standard (in a separate body).

Accredited independent certification bodies carry out forest certification based on the requirements of the current PEFC system standard. A forest manager can create separate forest management units –**Managed Forestry Unit (MFU)** and to certify all or only one/few of them. Forestry units shall be identified both on the map and in the field. The requirements of the standard are mandatory for the forest manager and workers who work in the certified area.

When certifying **forests of artificial origin** (plantation forests or forest crops), the requirements of this standard or the **TOF** annex (Annex 1) apply when they are not forest areas, but are **trees and forests (and crops) in agricultural, urbanized and Protected Areas**.

Forest owners can apply for certification individually, either by joining one of the forest owner groups or by forming a new group.

Individual certification is more suitable for large forest owners. The size of the forestry unit is not a determining factor in the choice of individual certification, but this type of certification can be expensive for a forest owner from a cost perspective. The forest manager submits an application for certification to the certification body, which performs an assessment of the management system and issues a PEFC forest management certificate as a result of a successful assessment.

Group or regional certification is more suitable for small owners or enterprises whose scope includes more than a few in number (as the case may be, including on a geographical or administrative basis /e.g. by districts/) territorial units / divisions. In group certification, several forest managers come together and define the group entity. The group entity (management body) has responsibilities for ensuring compliance with the requirements of the sustainable forest management standard in order for the forest management to be certified. The group body, through its manager is responsible for the compliance of all members of the group with the requirements of the standard and maintains the list of certified managed forestry units (MFUs). In group certification, all members of the group engage to achieve and ensure compliance with the requirements of the standard. To join one of the certification groups, the forest manager must contact the organization of the group (the group body, through its manager), coordinate the certification process and conclude a written contract. The binding requirements for group certification, which differ from individual certification, are specified in **The Group Certification**

Also within the scope of the standard are the interpretations for the **trees and forests outside the forest territories - TFoFT / TOF**, which are described in **Annex 1**. All requirements within the standard referring to "forest" are also applicable to TFoFT /TOF, unless it is otherwise specified in the cited Annex 1.

2. Normative references

Components of this document (in its texts to the end, including the Annexes) are the provisions of the documents and standards cited in it. For the purposes of this document, documents such as:

- legislation relating to international conventions (e.g. the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change Mitigation, in this regard also the European Deforestation and Degradation Directive EUDR, the Renewable Energy Directive REDII, Convention on International Trade with Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora [CITES], Biosafety Protocol, Core Conventions of the ILO [International Labor Organization]);
- specialized national legislation and
- all contractual obligations of forest owners, such as signed/written agreements

***Note:** The applicable regulatory framework is noted for each of the indicators in their tabular presentation in Section 8 "Guidelines for sustainable forest management", item 8.2. PEFC criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management in Bulgaria*

The provisions of the documents and standards listed below are integral parts of this document, incl. its annexes. At the time of publication of this document, the referred to materials are in effect. All documents and standards are subject to revisions, and participants in agreements based on this document must use the latest edition of the documents and standards cited in the standard:

2.1. International normative documents

1. ILO No. 87, *Convention on freedom of association and protection of the right to organize*, 1948
2. ILO No. 29, *Forced Labor Convention*, 1930
3. ILO No. 98, *Convention on the right to organize and collective bargaining*, 1949
4. ILO No. 100, *Equal Remuneration Convention*, 1951
5. ILO No. 105, *Convention on the Abolition of Forced Labour*, 1957
6. ILO No. 111, *Convention on discrimination (employment and occupation)*, 1958
7. ILO No. 138, *Minimum Age Convention*, 1973
8. ILO No. 169, *Convention on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples*, 1989
9. ILO No. 182, *Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labour*, 1999
10. ISO / IEC 17021-1, *Conformity assessment - Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems - Part 1: Requirements*

11. ISO Guide 2, Standardization and related activities - General vocabulary
12. UN, *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, 2007
13. UN, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, 1948 *Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants*, 1998
14. Directive 2001/18/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 March 2001 on the deliberate release into the environment of genetically modified organisms and repealing Council Directive 90/220/EEC
15. Directive 2009/128/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 establishing a framework for Community action to achieve the sustainable use of pesticides, signed in Florence on 20 October 2000 (Legislative Journal 2006 no. 14, item 98).
16. Convention for the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, Bonn, 23 June 1979 (Journal of Laws 2003 No. 2, Item 17).
17. Convention on Biological Diversity, done at Rio de Janeiro on 5 June 1992 (Journal of Laws 2002 No. 184, Item 1532).
18. Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, as amended in 2009
19. Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, done at Kyoto on 11 December 1997 (OJ 2005 No 203, Item 1684).
20. The Paris Agreement of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, done at New York on 9 May 1992, adopted at Paris on 12 December 2015 (OJ 2017, para. 36).
21. REGULATION (EU) 2023/1115 of the EP and of the Council of 31 May 2023 on the making available on the Union market and on the export from the Union of certain goods and products related to deforestation and forest degradation (EUDR) and repealing Regulation (EU) No 995/2010
22. DIRECTIVE (EU) 2018/2001 of the RP and of the Council of 11 December 2018 to promote the use of energy from renewable sources (revised text) - RED II.
23. Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Matters Relating to the Environment, done at Aarhus on 25 June 1998 (OJ 2003, No. 78, Item 706).
24. Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, done at Washington on 3 March 1973 (CITES) (Journal of Laws 1991 No 27, Item 112)
25. Conclusions of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Rio de Janeiro, 1992);
26. Resolutions of the Ministerial Conferences on Forest Protection in Europe (Helsinki 1993, Lisbon 1998, Vienna 2004);
27. PEFC ST 1001, *Standard Setup - Requirements*
28. PEFC ST 1002, *Forest Management Group Certification - Requirements*
29. PEFC GD 1007, *Approval and mutual recognition of national systems and their revision*

2.2. Standards from the Balkan Regional Forest Certification Scheme*:

No	Document code – BG (BgFCS)	Document code - Balkan system – BFCS, currently in effect also for Bulgaria /BgFCS/	Name of the standard in effect at the time of the current revision
1	PEFC BG 0001:	PEFC BS 01	Description of PEFC Balkan Forest Certification System
2	PEFC BG ST 1001:	PEFC BS 02	Standard setting and revision procedures
3	PEFC BG ST 1002: /in revision procedure	PEFC BG ST 1002: xx	PEFC National Standard for SFM in Bulgaria
4	PEFC BG ST 1002-1: /in revision procedure		Guide with criteria's and Indicators for SFM / now incorporated in the BG ST 1002: xx

5	PEFC BG ST 1003:	PEFC BS 06	Group Forest Management Certification, Rules and Procedures
6	PEFC BG ST 1004:	PEFC BS 04	Certification and accreditation procedures
7	PEFC BG ST 1005:	PEFC BS 07	Issuance of PEFC trademarks license procedures
8	PEFC BG ST 1006:	PEFC BS 05	Notification of Certification Bodies for Chain of Custody and Forest Management Certification
9	PEFC BG ST 1007:	PEFC BS 08	Complaints and appeals procedures
International PEFC standards accepted for Bulgarian			
10	PEFC ST 2001:2008/20	PEFC ST 2001:20020	PEFC Trademark Rules - Requirements
11	PEFC ST 2002:2013/20	PEFC ST 2002:2020	Chain of Custody of Forest and Tree Based Products - Requirements
12	PEFC ST 2003:2012/20	PEFC ST 2003:2020	Requirements for Certification Bodies operating Certification against the PEFC International CoC Standard

Note: The specified (in bold**) documents are from the Balkan Regional Forest Certification Scheme (regarding procedural standards), which in 2022 was joined by our Bulgarian Forest Certification System. **The Balkan Forest Certification System** has been approved by the PEFC Council in the period 2019-2021. The SFM standard for every country from the BFCS is specifically for each of them.*

2.3. Laws and regulations of the Republic of Bulgaria*

National strategy for development of the forest sector in Republic of Bulgaria, 2022 - Principles of state policy in the field of forests, as amended;

The specialized laws, with their amendments, such as: Law on Forests, 2011; Law on Hunting and Game Conservation, 2000; Law on Protected Areas 1998; Law on Environmental Protection, 2002; Law on Biological Diversity, 2002; Law on Medicinal Plants, 2000; Law on Water, 2000; Law on Spatial Development, 2008, etc.

** See the note in the Chapter 2.*

3. Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in Guide 2 of ISO / IEC, as well as the standard-related terms and definitions as presented in the framework standard PEFC ST 1003:2018, are taken into account.

The detailed list of terms and definitions is presented here in "**Annex-3**".

Note 1: The Bulgarian standard includes the specific values, terms and definitions in to the relevant criteria and indicators according to those adopted in the national legal framework, as they are presented here in "Annex 3".

Note 2: When establishing a difference in the definition of the same term according to the presented in the framework standard PEFC ST 1003:2018 and this from the specific definitions and values of the specialized national framework, in the cited Annex 3, both definitions are presented with the corresponding marking (PEFC or BG). For the purposes of the Standard, we specify that the clarifications and definitions from the national legal framework (BG) are in effect.

4. Context and application of the standard

4.1 General

The requirements for sustainable forest management defined by this national PEFC standard:

- 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 objective 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 (eg group/regional) is forest health monitoring. By monitoring forest health at the regional level and reporting the results at the forest holding level, the objective of the requirement is achieved without the need to carry out individual monitoring of each forestry unit.

- b) be clear, performance-based and auditable;
- c) refers to activities of all forest operators in the designated forest territory that have an impact on achieving compliance with the requirements;
- d) requires record keeping that provides evidence of compliance with the requirements of forest management standards;
- e) specifies requirements regarding the information that must be provided to a client certified under the PEFC chain of custody (See item 4.6 "*Notice of origin and sale of certified products*");
- f) includes a review of the applicable legislation if the requirements of this indicator are not reflected in the regional, national or subnational standard as they have already been addressed through legislation.

The declarations /labels/ and the logo /trademark/ "PEFC" provide information about the origin of forest products from sustainably managed forests and other non-contradictory sources. The main purpose of using the "PEFC" logo and trademarks, is to support the demand and supply of products that come from sustainably managed forests by providing accurate and verifiable information, thereby stimulating the market's potential for continuous improvement of the world's forest resources.

4.2 Context of the national PEFC standard for SFM

- 4.2.1 The subject of forest certification is the management and use of forests and other wooded lands covered by certification. The certification applies to farms/holdings declared by a forest owner for forest certification in their entirety. The certified area may include forests and lands covered with tree and shrub vegetation, identified in the category "Forest Territories" (FT), as well as forests outside of FT, identified in the categories "Agricultural

territories", „Urbanized territories" and „Protected Areas".

- 4.2.2 The certification granted to a forest owner may refer to one or several MFU (farms/holdings) of the same owner.
- 4.2.3 Forest management certification can be applied at the level of an individual forest of an owner/manager (individual/IndC) or at the level of a group certification (group/GrC) / regional group certification (regional/RegC). In the case of (regional) group forest management certification, some requirements of this standard must be fulfilled by the (regional) group entity at (regional) group level.
- 4.2.4 The certificate holder must store information about the certified area. The scope of the certificate is expressed by the area of forests (forested and non-forested land) and other forested areas outside the forest territories, eg: protected, urbanized, agricultural territories.
- 4.2.5 In the case of valid objections to the ownership or possession of the property, the disputed area cannot be subject to certification and accordingly the timber and non-timber forest products and other ecosystem services derived from the area must not be traded under the PEFC application /labels, while the dispute has not been resolved.
- 4.2.6 In the event that an organization with a valid PEFC certificate acquires and/or increases the forest land it owns, the area is also considered a certified area from the date of acquisition.
- 4.2.7 The organization is not responsible for uncoordinated activities carried out by third parties on the organization's land and/or by the previous owner prior to the acquisition of the land by the organization. The organization must, where possible, resolve the non-conformities caused by such activities and bring them into compliance with the requirements of the PEFC standard within one year of acquiring ownership or, if there are compelling reasons, determine a longer period.
- 4.2.8 The requirements of this standard apply to all participants in forestry (eg: employees, contractors, buyers of timber and other forest products) whose actions have an effect on the fulfillment of the requirements of the standard within the area covered by the certificate.
- 4.2.9 Forest owners/managers (and those applying for group certification or regional group certification and the organizations participating in the group certification) undertake to provide the services affected by the requirements of this standard from companies certified to the PEFC CoC standard / chain of custody/, which are also registered by PEFC Bulgaria.
- 4.2.10 Only the owner/manager of a forest that is covered by a PEFC-recognized forest management certificate can use the "PEFC" logo and labels indicating that the product originates from the certified area / covered by a PEFC-recognized certificate issued according to the standard.
Note: All other participants, regardless of their possible involvement in a forest management certificate, may use PEFC labels on the certified origin of the product, only on the basis of a valid chain of custody certificate issued for PEFC ST 2002.
- 4.2.11 Only with the PEFC ST 2001:2020 standard "PEFC Trademark Rules - Requirements", regarding the information to be provided to a PEFC Chain of Custody certified customer

are specified (www.pefc.org);

- 4.2.12 Labels with the claim "PEFC certified" can only be issued in relation to roundwood, wood chips, energy wood and non-timber forest products, as well as other key ecosystem services originating in the certified area.
- 4.2.13 If the forest owner/manager supplies products from an area other than the certified area, only products from the certified area are sold with the label stating "100% PEFC certified" and the organization must have a documented procedure to separate incoming raw materials from certified and non-certified areas.
- 4.2.14 In the event that the PEFC standard does not specify compliance limits, the requirements set out in the legislation apply.
- 4.2.15 The organization must keep records of its activities in a way that provides evidence of compliance with the requirements of the PEFC standard.
- 4.2.16 The owner of the **forest management certificate** must provide the following for publication to the CSFMCB / PEFC Bulgaria:
- a) immediate notification for the issuance of the certificate, for any changes to its validity and possible revocation of the certificate
 - b) contact information of the person who responds to inquiries about the certificate and to any complaints
 - c) annually updated information on the certified area,
 - d) annual report on external audit findings, including recorded deviations due to non-compliance with certification requirements.

Note: This information, as well as the agreement on the right/license to use the "PEFC" labels and logo, can also be provided by the certification body, if it has a corresponding agreement with the certificate holder.

Verification method: certification participant documentation.

4.3 Good forestry practice

In the management of the certified areas, good agricultural / forestry practices are followed for the management of forest stands and other non-forest lands within the scope of the certificate. In case of doubt or complaint during the audit, the presence of injunctions issued by the relevant state authorities and state registers can be checked.

4.4 Understanding the needs and expectations of affected stakeholders

Forests in Bulgaria are a strategic and extremely valuable asset. Therefore, they must be managed but also used for the benefit of all citizens and communities who depend on the forest or live, relax or create in the forest environment, or the forest significantly affects their quality of life. Because affected interest groups (stakeholders) for whom the application of the standard may lead to a direct change in living or working conditions, or who may be users of the standard and therefore subject to the requirements of the standard, are more attached to the certified territory,

the certification participant must monitor his condition and focus, understand their needs and expectations, and maintain open and constructive communication about SFM.

The goal is lasting provision of forest products and services that meet the requirements of the owner, citizen (client), applicable legal rights and requirements.

Requirements:

4.4.1 The certification participant must determine:

- a) affected stakeholders – those who may experience a direct change in working and/or living conditions from the application of the standard. In the case of group / regional forest management certification, the stakeholders are determined by the Management Body/ Certification Gateway Entity (EAC).
- b) the relevant needs and expectations of affected stakeholders regarding forest management and use.
- c) to monitor and, if necessary, make changes in the performance of the activity so that it reflects the needs and expectations of directly affected stakeholders;
- d) maintain a list of affected stakeholders by interest.

Note: Definition of affected stakeholder see Annex3 "Terms and Definitions"

Verification method: certification participant documentation.

4.5 Determining the scope of the management system

The management system refers to the management, administration and rationalization of process activities related to ensuring the sustainable management of the forests managed by the certified person/certification participant.

Note: The system for quality management (ISO 9001) or the environmental management system (ISO 14001) used by the organization may serve to fulfill the minimum management system requirements defined in this standard.

The aim is to ensure the effective functioning of the system for sustainable forest management within the scope of the certificate, including the processes for its continuous improvement.

Requirements:

- 4.5.1 The standard requires that the organization shall define the boundaries and applicability of the **management system** to establish its scope (4.3.1. PEFC)
- 4.5.2 The standard requires that forest management shall include the cycle of inventory and planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation and includes appropriate assessment of social, environmental and economic impacts of forest management practices. This shall form the basis for a cycle of continuous improvement. (4.3.2. PEFC)
- 4.5.3 The management system with a description of processes, competences, management tools and control mechanisms shall correspond to the legal form, size and scope of the participant's work. Sample documents from the sustainable management system are presented below in item 10.4.

- 4.5.4 The subject of managing the processes of Sustainable Forest Management consists of:
- a) assessment of the state of the forest;
 - b) monitoring the quality of work;
 - c) assessment of the effects of economic activities carried out in MFU, including their social, environmental and economic impacts.

Verification method: certification participant documentation, interview and field observation.

4.6 Note of origin and sale of certified products.

- 4.6.1 Only organizations that are covered by a PEFC certificate for sustainable forest management can report the PEFC certified origin of products from an area covered by this standard.
- 4.6.2 The organization shall use the statement "100% PEFC Certified ", or "100% PEFC Origine" (according to 3.27 of 2002:2020) to communicate to customers the PEFC certified origin of products from an area covered by this standard.

Note 1: In the case of a full-fledged participant in a PEFC group certification for sustainable forest management, compliance with this requirement is not required, as it is taken for granted when the same is a full member of the group.

Note 2: The abbreviations approved by the PEFC Council as well as the statement "100% PEFC Certified"/ "100% PEFC Origine" and their foreign language translations are available on the website www.pefc.org.

- 4.6.3 Only products originating in areas covered by this standard are sold with the statement „100% PEFC Certified"/ „100% PEFC Origine“. The use of these claims is excluded when selling products from areas not covered by this standard.
- 4.6.4 Provide the customer with a PEFC certified chain of custody document that allows them to record the PEFC certified origin of the products. This document must include the following elements:
- a) supplier identification;
 - b) product identification;
 - c) quantity of the products;
 - d) delivery information: delivery date, or delivery period, or accounting period;
 - e) recipient identification;
 - f) a statement "PEFC Certified 100%" for each product from an area covered by this standard;
 - g) PEFC sustainable forest management certificate number.
- 4.6.5 Provide the client with a PEFC Chain of Custody Certificate with any information they request, in order to carry out a risk analysis within their PEFC Due Diligence System (PEFC DDS / Reliable verification).

Note 1: In the case of a full-fledged participant in the PEFC forest management group certification, compliance with the 100% PEFC Certified Declaration requirement is not required for each product from an area covered by this standard.

Note 2: In the case of a PEFC Forest Management Group Certification participant, compliance with requirement 4.6.4 g) can be met by using the participants number in the Group Certification

Note 3: Documentation provided with the delivery, such as an invoice or delivery note, may include the required information.

Note 4: System-specific statements of standards approved by PEFC and approved by the PEFC Council abbreviations of such statements and the claim "100% PEFC certified", as well as their translations into languages other than English, are published online on the website of PEFC www.pefc.org. This allows linking a Group / Regional Certification Participant to a Management Body/ Certification Gateway Entity (EAC).

Verification method: certification participant documentation, an interview.

5. Leadership

5.1 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**.

5.2 This commitment must be publicly available

Note: In the case of group forest management certification, the requirements of sections 5.1 and 5.2 are fulfilled by signing a commitment form or contractual agreement within the group certification of the Management Body (Certification Gateway Entity / EAC) and by publishing this commitment on the online participant database.

5.3 Responsibilities for sustainable forest management shall be clearly defined and assigned to responsible persons and/or parties.

Promote and explain PEFC forest certification and the voluntary commitment approach in the best possible way for the organisation, including through signs displayed in the forest.

6. Planning

The requirements are developed in more detail in respectable criteria, indicators and verifiers /requirements and guidelines/ for forest management in this standard in Section 8 "A Guide to Sustainable Forest Management".

6.1. The presence of a sustainable forest management or forest establishment planning document is required:

- a) In the forest territories - state and municipal property:
 - Approved **Forest Management Plan** or **Program – FMP** (or, if not yet approved, the plan/program /awaiting approval/ - with approved by the competent authority plan extracts or other supporting documents) and a signed management contract with a qualified forester in the function of a professional

manager.

Note: Planning for sustainable forest management in Bulgaria is regulated by the Law on Forests' 2011 and Ordinance No. 18 of 7.10.2015 on inventory and planning in forest territories.

- b) In the forest territories - property of individuals and other legal entities (commercial companies, church, school, etc. registered under Bulgarian legislation, including forest processing cooperatives:
- A FMP or program (individual or collective), or
 - Dossier or other related to the produce and operations program / wood quality assortment paper and technological plan, or
 - Code of Good Forestry Practice (CGFP), including logging and/or afforestation program (technological plan).

Note: In exceptional and documented situations that prevent the immediate application of the above requirement, the controlling or auditing organisation evaluates the situation and may grant an extension for compliance.

- c) **IN non-forested areas (trees and forests in agricultural, urbanized and protected areas (TFoFT /TOF):**
- Protected areas management plan, program or project for forests in protected territories under the LPA and for forests in protected areas under the LBD,
 - Landscaping and/or park development plan or landscaping project, afforestation plan and/or Detailed development plan or other equivalent document in its part for the green system of an urbanized territory;
 - Plan, program or other equivalent document for the transformation / conversion of agricultural territory into forest territory through afforestation.

6.2. It is required for all work services including external contractor, eg: for logging, for buying or selling timber, for management activities – **for the contractor to:**

- a) **Participate in certification** of sustainable forest management according to PEFC standards, or
- b) **Contractually commit himself to comply with the requirements** for sustainable forest management according to PEFC standards.

*Note 1: In case of non-conforming management activities, works and operations carried out by an external party **not participating** in the certification of sustainable forest management according to PEFC standards, the contracting party (owner, manager or operator) participating in the certification of sustainable forest management according to PEFC standards, bears full responsibility to PEFC for the consequences of such actions, regardless of the contractual legal liability of the operators involved, including the implementation of corrective actions.*

*Note 2: In case of non-conforming management practices, work activities and operations carried out by an external party **participating** in PEFC sustainable forest management certification, each party (owner, manager, operator or external party) assumes responsibility at the appropriate level for the consequences of non-compliance of PEFC requirements, regardless of their contractual legal liability.*

6.3. It is required to document all services, related to forestry activities, logging, purchases or sales of timber, afforestation and forest management activities **through written contracts**, which state:

- a) The requirement for **compliance with the regulations of this standard**, to ensure their proper implementation;
- b) **Status of co-contractors or subcontractors** as participants in sustainable forest management certification under PEFC, if applicable.

6.4. It is required if the organization is an employer for forest management activities **-to ensure healthy and safe working conditions** for logging, afforestation and other forest operations:

- a) Ensuring that work in the forest is carried out in **good health and safe conditions**, assessing them regularly and organizing the working conditions and/or the place in accordance with the regulatory requirements, in particular by:
 - Identifying the risks associated with workstations in their unique risk assessment document;
 - Identifying and instructing/communicating information to employees about specific risks in the workplace through the Work Instructions for safe conditions when working in forests;
 - Providing employees with personal protective equipment (personal protective equipment - PPE) that meets current standards;
 - Providing employees with a first aid kit;
 - Adapting to work conditions if necessary.
- b) Ensuring compliance with **equal opportunities, non-discrimination**, absence of workplace harassment and promotion of gender equality.

6.5. It is required to identify and take into account forest areas with high ecological value (including conservation) insofar as FI, FMP and/or RPDFT have already done so.

Note: Areas with high conservation value can be assessed based on some or all identified with the forest inventory and/or with FMP/Pr categories of forests with protective and special functions, provided that they have a significant character, and/or according to the methodology for determining forests with high conservation value, and/or according to information from literary and internet sources (including the MEW website for different levels - different sample, separately for habitats and for species:

<https://www.moew.government.bg/bg/priroda/natura-2000/natura-2000-v-bulgariya/informacionna-sistema-za-natura-2000-v-bulgariya/>

6.6. It is required to identify plantations vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. If applicable, include an adaptation plan in sustainable forest management planning, at least during its renewal, based on the best available knowledge and tools.

6.7. It is required to comply with legal and regulatory compliance requirements (6.3.1, 6.3.2, 6.3.3 PEFC) incl. international documents:

- a) Legislation applicable to forest management and operations shall be identified and accessible. It shall be determined how these compliance obligations are implemented.

Note: In the case of PEFC group certification for sustainable forest management, access to the legislation is provided by the Management Body (Certification Gateway Entity /EAC) upon request by the participant (group member or candidate member).

- b) Forest management shall be in accordance with the applicable **legislation on forests**,

environmental protection and nature, endangered and protected species, rights of use and, where applicable, land tenure by local people, respect for property rights, health, protection of classified or registered landscapes and heritage, labor and safety, human rights, anti-corruption measures, as well as payment of taxes and fees.

- c) **Property rights**, timber ownership and land tenure arrangements must be clearly defined, documented and established.
- d) Measures are applied to protect the forest from **unauthorized activities such as illegal logging**, illegal land use, arson and any other illegal activities. **Illegal activities are incompatible with sustainable forest management**, and therefore they are identified and monitored. Measures are in place to combat these activities. In cases where the owner is unable to directly deal with these activities, he must report them to the relevant authorities.
- e) Measures are being applied in order for **forest practices and operations to comply with key ILOs conventions and other applicable international documents** mentioned above in item 2.1.

7. Support

The requirements are developed in more detail in relevant criteria, indicators and verifiers /requirements and guidelines/ for forest management in this standard in Section 8 "A Guide to Sustainable Forest Management".

The organization / MFU, the forest manager, group manager, employees and forest owners shall:

- 7.1. Determines and provides the necessary resources for the implementation, maintenance and continuous improvement of the sustainable forest management system.
- 7.2. **To be trained and informed regularly** on sustainable forest management practices by referring to the available documentation provided by PEFC and CSFMCB, PEFC member organizations and any other competent organizations.
- 7.3. To participate, if necessary, in **training sessions and seminars**, organized by these organisations to understand and apply the current standard and to be able to justify their choice.
- 7.4. To be regularly informed about **innovation in management** of forests, especially those related to adaptation to climate change, maintaining the functionality of the soil and the quality of water and watercourses, forest protection from unjustified (unauthorized) deforestation, biodiversity protection and landscape protection.
- 7.5. **To provide training to forest personnel** involved in operations, to ensure their understanding of the current standard, the importance of quality work in the forest and basic first aid techniques.
- 7.6. To provide effective **communication and consultation with stakeholders, involved in sustainable forest management**. In the case of group certification for sustainable forest management, communication and consultation is facilitated by the Management Body / Certification Gateway Entity (EAC) in accordance with PEFC BS

06:2021 and not by the participant unless the participant chooses to fulfill this requirement themselves.

7.7. In case of group/ regional certification for sustainable forest management **to respond to complaints and disputes** received:

- a) **directly** by the participant in relation to forestry operations, land use rights and working conditions.
- b) **indirectly** through the website (www.pefc.bg) in order to facilitate their resolution by CSFMCB, if this is beyond the authority of the certification body.

7.8. In the case of individual certification for sustainable forest management - to have the ability to **respond to and resolve complaints and disputes**, related to forestry operations, land use rights and working conditions.

7.9. **To keep all relevant documents up to date and archive them**, to document the operations performed and the selections made in relation to the current standard.

Note 1: An example list of documents for group certification participants can be found in the developed technical document PEFC BG TD 1003-1 (for regional certification) available at www.pefc.bg,

Note 2: All the requirements listed above are developed in detail in relevant criteria, indicators and verifiers /requirements and guidelines/ for forest management in this standard, Section 8 "Guidelines for sustainable forest management".

Note 3: The management body /Certification Gateway Entities (EAC) or PEFC Bulgaria has a sample list of documents available for participants in group / regional certification.

8. Guide to Sustainable Forest Management

8.1 Structure of the certification standard

According to the international PEFC forest management certification system, each **national PEFC standard** shall comply with requirements and guidelines that are laid down in the framework standard of the Council of PEFC International, in the case of its latest version – PEFC ST 1003:2018. **Here below** are the **national Bulgarian requirements (their criteria, indicators and verifiers)** for sustainable forest management, which have been confirmed by the General Assembly of PEFC International as meeting the PEFC framework requirements and guidelines (Confirmation letter from CEO of PEFC Council on 05th December 2024)

In the certification process, the independent external assessor will verify **whether the different management elements of the organisation are relevant and correspond to respective section of the Bulgarian requirements (indicators and their verifiers) for sustainable forest management described in PEFC BG ST 1002: xx standard.**

The means of verification, which the auditor must take into consideration to verify that each requirement is met, are the types of objective evidence, such as: documents, on-site inspections or discussions. Examiners cannot always be exhaustive - auditors will not always need all suggested and possible materials and may seek verification in other ways.

The indicators are mandatory to perform, and for this purpose the auditor must assess, in their totality, whether the relevant **verifiers** to each of the indicators, correspond to the expressed possibilities. The auditor expertly and objectively evaluates **for the implementation of the indicator based on the totality of positive responses to the verifiers contained for it.**

Assessment results - this is an auditor's instruction for which he uses *A system for objective assessment of compliance with the requirements of the standard*, in accordance with the requirements of ISO / IEC 17021-1).

Table #1 Structure of the Bulgarian PEFC certification system

No.	PEFC criterion	PEFC Bulgarian Indicators	Bulgarian verifiers	
I	Criterion 1: <i>"Maintenance or appropriate enhancement of forest resources and their contribution to the global carbon cycle"</i>	1.1. Actual inventory and forest management plan	2	14
		1.2. The multifaceted functions of forests are classified and effectively used	1	
		1.3. Description, long-term goals and average annual permissible use of MFU	3	
		1.4. Non-timber forest products and services	1	
		1.5. Provided prevention and fight against conversion and degradation processes	3	
		1.6. Carbon storage and sequestration	3	
		1.7. Dealing with risks and opportunities	1	
II.	Criterion 2: <i>"Maintenance of the health and vitality of the forest ecosystems "</i>	2.1. Health and vitality of forest ecosystems	3	18
		2.2. Maintaining adequate genetic, species and structural diversity	4	
		2.3. Strictly regulated use of fire in the forest	1	
		2.4. Implementation of appropriate forest management practices	2	
		2.5. Disposal of waste and spillage of fuel lubricants	2	
		2.6. Integrated pest and disease management	6	
III.	Criterion 3: <i>"Maintenance and enhancement the productive functions of the forests (timber and non-timber)"</i>	3.1. Sustainable levels of extraction of timber and non-timber resources	2	7
		3.2. Product orientation for sustainable economic results	1	
		3.3. Time and method of operations that protect plants and soils	3	
		3.4. Planning, creation and maintenance of forest infrastructure	1	
IV	Criterion 4: <i>"Maintenance, protection and appropriate enhancement of biological diversity in forest ecosystems"</i>	4.1. Planning to maintain and improve biodiversity	1	19
		4.2. Ecologically important forest areas have been identified and protected	1	
		4.3. Protected, threatened and vulnerable plant and animal species	1	
		4.4. Successful natural regeneration or afforestation	2	
		4.5. Adapted native species are preferred in afforestation	4	
		4.6. Promotion of forest structural diversity	5	
		4.7. Avoiding durable damage to ecosystems in cultivation and regenerative care (mechanisational)	1	
		4.8. The infrastructure is designed and built with minimal damage to the ecosystem	1	
		4.9. The pressure of animal populations is controlled	2	
		4.10. Management of dead and biotope wood	1	
V	Criterion 5: <i>"Maintenance or appropriate enhancement of protective functions in forest management"</i>	5.1. The protective functions of forests for society	1	8
		5.2. The protective functions of ecologically important forest areas	1	
		5.3. Impact of forestry activities on erosion-sensitive soils and watercourses and sites	3	
		5.4. The inappropriate use of chemicals or other harmful substances and forestry techniques is avoided	2	

No.	PEFC criterion	PEFC Bulgarian Indicators	Bulgarian verifiers	
	(notably soil and water)"	5.5. Protection of soil and water quality during construction and repair works	1	
VI	Criterion 6: "Maintenance or appropriate enhancement of socio-economic functions and conditions"	6.1. Role of Socioeconomic Functions of Forests for rural area development	4	26
		6.2. Encourages the quality of life of local communities	3	
		6.3. Using forest-related expertise and traditional knowledge, innovations and practices	1	
		6.4. Knowledge and experience - qualified and competent specialists and workers	2	
		6.5. Health and safety	1	
		6.6. Rights of workers and employees	4	
		6.7. Forestry Science and Innovation.	1	
		6.8. Resolution of disputes and complaints	1	
		6.9. Compliance with legislation and PEFC requirements	9	
Total: 6		Number of indicators: 41		92

Note: In the table, the names of the indicators are presented schematically and for guidance. The "full" and "objective" name of the indicators/sub-criteria are detailed in the second part of this section – in the scheme with criteria, indicators and verifiers for sustainable forest management in Bulgaria.

8.2 PEFC criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management in Bulgaria

The criteria and indicators on the operational level define the objectives and general principles of forest management, which are voluntarily practiced by forest owners, legal owners or forest managers, with a view to ensuring sustainable forest management.

Forest management aims to maintain or enhance forests and their ecosystem functions and to maintain or enhance the economic, ecological, cultural and social values of forest resources. (8.1.1 PEFC)

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

Context: Forest management covers a cycle of inventorying forest resources and planning actions for management, implementation, monitoring and evaluation and includes assessment of their social, ecological and economic impact. This mechanism will form the basis for continuous improvement of the management process, which allows to reduce or avoid the negative effects of the activities carried out. An inventory of forest resources is carried out and the results are mapped according to local or national conditions.

FMPs (or their equivalents) are developed and updated in accordance with national legal requirements and taking into account available research results.

The aim is to manage forests in a widely sustainable manner. Forest resources and their diverse forest functions are maintained and, where necessary, improved; their contribution to global carbon cycles will be increased. Where possible, measures will be implemented to strengthen their carbon sequestration potential. Measures to increase CO₂ sequestration in forests and wood products are implemented wherever possible. Special attention is paid to the replacement of non-renewable energy and material sources with renewable ones originating from forests, mainly from sustainable wood.

Management actions promote climate-friendly practices leading to reduced greenhouse gas emissions, e.g. to prevent fires and natural disasters, poor health, excessive aging, etc., as well as efficient use of resources.

<i>Criterion 1: " Maintenance or appropriate enhancement of forest resources and their contribution to the global carbon cycle "</i>	
Indicator №	1.1
Name:	Actual inventory and forest management plan
Full Text / Requirement:	MFU to have an up-to-date inventory and forest management plan/program for sustainable forest management (item 6 PEFC)
Description:	<p>The management of the forest territory is based on an up-to-date forest inventory and a forest management plan or program (FMPI/Pr) and mapping of the forest area and the resources prepared according to the current legal framework.</p> <p>There must be an up-to-date and suitable for the scale and intensity of the activities inventory and Forest Management Plan / program for forest management / program and map material prepared and approved in accordance with the requirements of the applicable regulatory framework. For FMPI/Pr there must be an assessment of the impact/compatibility/ of the planned activities, in accordance with the requirements of the regulatory framework. (4.3.2, 6. PEFC)</p>
Note for TFoFT:	<i>See in Annex 1: "Guidelines for the interpretation of the requirements for trees and forests (natural and artificial) outside the forest territories TFoFT (TOF)"</i>

Verifiers:	<p>1.1.1. MFU must have an active inventory and mapping of forest resources corresponding to local and national conditions and in accordance with national requirements and the international framework standard. (6.1.2 PEFC)</p> <p>1.1.2. MFU must have a FMPI / Pr meeting the requirements of the regulatory framework, including to be: (6.2.1 PEFC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) developed and periodically updated or continuously corrected; b) suitable for the size and use of the forest area; c) based on applicable local, national and corresponding international legislation, as well as existing land use or other official plans; and d) adequate coverage of forest resources
Related normative base	LF, OIPFT /for Forest Inventory and planning in FT/, Ordinance 8 / for Filling in the forests/, Afforestation Ordinance / OCPAFT/, Ordinance No 20/18.11.2016 on the content, conditions and procedure for the creation and maintenance of forestry maps.
Source of information:	Forest inventory and corresponding map material, Information of the owner (EFA, RFG - RPDFT, the authorized manager), FMPI/Pr or equivalent document.

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

Indicator №	1.2
Name	The multifaceted functions of forests are classified and effectively used
Full Text / Requirement:	All forest territories are classified and effectively used , and their management guarantees the maintenance of the established ways of use and functions of the forest area. Management aims to maintain or increase forests and their ecosystem services and maintain or enhance the economic, ecological (including climatic), cultural and social value of forest resources. [8.1.1 PEFC].
Description:	FMPI/Pr and the forest management take into account the different functions of managed forest area, with the aim of maintaining or increasing forests and their multiple beneficial functions, as well as the economic, ecological, cultural and social value of forest resources (6.2.2 PEFC, 8.1.1 PEFC) The different uses or functions of the forest are classified and effectively used
Verifiers:	<p>1.2.1. MFU, through RPDFT/or, FI and/or FMP/Pr shall be identified the most important uses and functions of forests, incl. Forests with a high conservation value. Functions in the MFU are defined and management maintains or enhances them by balancing the social, ecological and economic functions of the forest. (6.2.2, 8.1.1. PEFC).</p> <p>To be considered in context with verifier 6.1.1.</p>
Note:	<p>№1: <i>The functional categories of the forests in the forest territories shall be based on Chapter Two, Section I of the 2011 Law on Forests.</i></p> <p>№2: <i>For TFoFT: Look in Annex 1: "Guidelines for the interpretation of the requirements for trees and forests (natural and artificial) outside the forest territories TFoFT (TOF)"</i></p> <p>№3: <i>For information: MFU can benefit by assessing and valuing the role of its sustainably managed forest resources with a positive climate footprint (balance) in the national and/or international carbon market, in relation to the ICCP recommendations under the UN program - LULUCF. Valuation is carried out according to a specified methodology, such as that under Art. 249, paragraph 9 of the Law on Forests for valuing and compensating the ecosystem benefits of forests or according to the IPCC Good Practice Guide for LULUCF (regarding the capture and sequestration of carbon emissions).</i></p>
Related normative base	LF, OIPFT, LEP, LPA, LBD, LOSD

Source of information:	Inventory of forests (FI), incl. RPFT, FMP/Pr, Regional development plan, Municipal development plans, others
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Criterion 1: " Maintenance or appropriate enhancement of forest resources and their contribution to the global carbon cycle "

Indicator №	1.3
Name	Description, long-term goals and average annual permissible use of MFU
Full Text / Requirement:	The FMPI shall include a description of the MFU, long-term objectives and average annual allowable cut, including its justification. (6.2.3 PEFC) The FMPL/Pr includes at least a description of the current forest management unit, long-term objectives and average annual amount of timber extraction, including its justification.
Description:	The FMPI or equivalent document presents a description of the MFU, its long-term objectives, and a justified average annual allowable timber and non-timber uses.
Verifiers:	1.3.1. FMPI or its equivalent must contain description on MFU , borders, neighboring territories, basic physical-geographical and ecological characteristics. 1.3.2. The long-term objectives of management must be disclosed with the FMPI or another document concerning the territory of the MFU, e.g. RPFT, the management system. (6.2.3 PEFC). The change in the target direction of development is substantiated with RPFT, NSFT, SPFT, RDPs and other national and/or regional strategic planning documents. (eg: solid m3, ton, ha...) 1.3.3. The standard requires the FMPI/Pr to include the average annual amount of timber extraction, including its rationale. (6.2.3. PEFC) In the context also of verifier 3.1.1.
Note:	
Related normative base	LF, OIPFT, Ordinance 8 (on felling in the forests),
Source of information:	FI, RPFT, NSFT, SPFT, RDP and other national and/or regional strategic planning documents FMPI/Pr, Report on FT (RFT), MFU SFM system, Declaration of the manager,

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

Indicator №	1.4
Name	Non-timber forest products and services
Full Text / Requirement:	FMPI shall provide, and MFU - ensure the production and sale of non-timber forest products and services in quantities that do not exceed the sustainable levels of their reproduction. (6.2.4 PEFC).
Description:	The annual permissible use of non-timber forest products shall be included in the FMPI, and forest management shall not allow commercial use of non-timber forest products above a level that could have an impact on their long-term sustainability. (6.2.4 PEFC). Non-timber forest products and services are planned and harvested in a way that ensures their long-term sustainability.

Verifiers:	<p>1.4.1. MFU requires the annual permissible use of non-timber forest products to be included in FMPI, and at the same time forest management does not allow commercial use of non-timber forest products above a level that may affect their long-term reproductive capacity. (6.2.4 PEFC).</p> <p>The commercial use of non-timber forest products shall be not exceed their sustainable reproductive capacity.</p>
Note:	<i>This requirement does not apply to non-timber forest products harvested for own needs in accordance with the procedure defined in the laws and regulations of the Republic of Bulgaria</i>
Related normative base	LF, LMP, LEP, LPA, LBD.
Source of information:	FMPI/Pr, Letters and offers of producers, publications, market studies, Contracts, annual plans / information of the owner permits, reports, findings protocols and acts for violations, records of extracted quantities, others.

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

Indicator №	1.5
Name	Provided prevention and fight against conversion and degradation processes
Full Text / Requirement:	<p>FMP has planned measures to avoid or appropriately control negative natural and anthropogenic factors leading to degradation of forest territories.</p> <p>The standard requires that the FMPI specify ways and means to minimise the risk of degradation and damage to forest ecosystems. (6.2.5 PEFC)</p>
Description:	Forest management provides prevention and fight against degradation processes in forests (due to biotic and abiotic/anthropogenic factors).

Verifiers:	<p>1.5.1. MFU must provide prevention and fight against degradation processes in forests (due to biotic and abiotic/anthropogenic factors).(6.2.5 PEFC) and in context with verifier 2.1.1) ha, %.</p> <p>MFU has available the relevant documentation (permits/approvals), others.</p> <p>1.5.2. 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. (8.1.6 PEFC and in context of verifier 2.1.2)</p> <p>A precondition for adding such a value are circumstances where the conversion of degraded forests: (8.1.6 PEFC)</p> <p>a) is in compliance with national and regional policy and legislation applicable to Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry and is the result of national or regional land use planning (LULUCF) managed by a governmental or other official authority; and</p> <p>b) is established on a decision-making basis where affected stakeholders have opportunities to contribute to decision-making on conversion through transparent and participatory consultation processes; and</p> <p>c) has a positive impact on the long-term carbon sequestration capacity of forest vegetation; and</p> <p>d) does not have a negative impact on ecologically and climatically important forest areas, culturally and socially significant areas or other protected areas; and</p> <p>e) safeguards protective functions of forests for society and other regulating or supporting ecosystem services; and</p> <p>f) safeguards socio-economic functions of forests, including the recreational function and aesthetic values of forests and other cultural services; and</p> <p>g) has a land history providing evidence that the degradation is not the consequence of deliberate poor forest management practices; and</p> <p>h) is based on credible evidence that the area has neither been restored nor is in the process of being restored/recovered.</p> <p>1.5.3. Conversion of forests to other land use categories shall not take place unless in justified circumstances where the conversion: (8.1.4.PEFC):</p> <p>a) is in compliance with national and regional policy and legislation applicable for land use and forest management and is a result of national or regional land-use planning governed by a governmental or other official authority including consultation with affected stakeholders; and</p> <p>b) includes a small part (not greater than 5 %) of the forest type within the certified area; and</p> <p>c) does not have a negative impact on ecologically important forest areas, culturally and socially significant areas or other protected areas; and</p> <p>d) does not destroy areas with significantly high carbon stocks; and</p> <p>e) contributes to the long-term conservation, economic and social benefits.</p>
Note for TFoFT:	<p>See in Annex 1: "Guidelines for the interpretation of the requirements for trees and forests (natural and artificial) outside the forest territories TFoFT (TOF)"</p>
Related normative base	<p>LF, LPAL, LEP, Ordinance No. 4 of 19.02.2013 on the protection of forest territories against erosion and torrential rains and the construction of fortifications; REGULATION (EU) 2023/1115 of the EP and of the Council of 31 May 2023 on making available to the Union market and for the export from the Union of certain goods and products related to deforestation and forest degradation (EUDR),</p>
Source of information:	<p>Regional and Municipal Development Plans, RPDFT, Inventory, FMP/Pr, RFT - 1; Signal sheets, Forest pathology examination, Guidelines of the competent and inspecting bodies; Acting Book, Constitutive Protocols; Book of the Fellings, Orders for area changes, other documents, incl. letters and publications.</p>

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

Indicator №	1.6
Name	Carbon storage and sequestration
Full Text / Requirement:	Carbon storage and sequestration must be protected by implementing climate-positive practices. The standard requires the application of climate-positive management practices where the quantity and quality of forest resources and the capacity of the forest to store and sequester carbon are protected in medium- and long-term plan, by balancing the rates of the yield and resource growth, by using appropriate silvicultural measures and techniques that minimize adverse impacts on forest resources, and also reduce greenhouse gas emissions (8.1.2, 8.1.3 PEFC)
Description:	By implementing appropriate silvicultural measures including balancing yield and growth rates , with a view to maintaining a favorable age structure of the forest, the quantity and quality of forest resources and the capacity of the forest to store and sequester carbon , which ability must be sustainably reproduced.
Verifiers:	<p>1.6.1. By balancing cultivation and logging rates in the medium and long term, the carbon sequestration capacity of the forest shall be safeguarded. This is achieved by implementing appropriate silvicultural systems as well as measures to minimize adverse impacts on forest resources. (8.1.2 PEFC).</p> <p>The balance is achieved if the condition of the stand after the introduced systems of felling and other measures is good and very good (eg the average annual tabular growth in the years after felling increases).</p> <p>1.6.2. MFU plans and implements fire prevention measures to protect forests from fire.</p> <p>1.6.3. MFU fulfills the injunctions of the relevant competent authority for the restoration of the areas affected by natural disasters and accidents and by diseases and pests with a view to restoration with living tree vegetation of the species suitable for the habitat of the affected areas and/or minimizing the spread of diseases and pests, fires and others.? (ha/year, lm/year, BGN/year)</p>
Note for TFoFT:	See in Annex 1: "Guidelines for the interpretation of the requirements for trees and forests (natural and artificial) outside the forest territories TFoFT (TOF)"
Related normative base	LF, LEP, LPA, LBD, LCCM, ECL.
Source of information:	FMP/Pr, Report of FT-5, Book of the Fellings, supervision reports (if any have been prepared). Electronic system of EFA, Reports of control bodies; Forest fire protection plan; Approved extracts plan, forest pathology research, logging permits, transport tickets, deed book, other information from the owner

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

Indicator №	1.7
Name	Dealing with risks and opportunities
Full Text / Requirement:	The MFU shall take action to address the risks and opportunities (6.1 PEFC). The standard requires the organization to consider the risks and opportunities associated with compliance with sustainable forest management requirements, while taking into account the size and scale (scope) of the organisation's operations. (6.1.1 PEFC)

Description:	In accordance with the size and scale (scope) of the operations under the FMPI, the MFU takes into account the opportunities and risks to ensure sustainable forest management.
Verifiers:	<p>1.7.1. MFU must have a methodology for assessing risks and opportunities.</p> <p>The goal is to identify and take preventive measures to eliminate and/or mitigate the consequences of natural disasters and accidents, calamities, violations by poachers and other possible events.</p>
Note:	
Related normative base	Disaster Protection Act; LF, LEP, Ordinance No. 9 of December 5, 2019 on the protection of forest territories from diseases, pests and other damage / OPFTDPOD
Source of information:	Management system - procedure and/or documents such as risk assessment methodology; other documents, reports, injunctions, publications

Criterion 2: "Maintenance of the health and vitality of forest ecosystems"

Context: The health and vitality of forest ecosystems is a prerequisite for SFM. Therefore, the aim is, within forestry measures, to preserve and protect forest ecosystems in the long term, which is also one of the most important tools for mitigating climate change. The quantity and quality of forest resources and the capacity of the forest to absorb and store carbon must be protected in the medium and long-term plan. By balancing yield and growth rates, with a view to maintaining a suitable stand age structure, appropriate silvicultural measures should be used and techniques that minimize adverse impacts on forest resources should be preferred.

Criterion 2: "Maintenance of the health and vitality of forest ecosystems"	
Indicator №	2.1
Name:	Health and vitality of forest ecosystems
Full Text / Requirement:	The health and vitality of forest territories shall be maintained or improved , and damaged forest territories are restored wherever and as far as economically feasible, by making the best use of natural structures and processes and using preventive biological measures. [8.2.1 PEFC].
Description:	The health of the forest must not be deliberately endangered or damaged. Degraded areas have been mapped, the feasibility of restoration has been determined and appropriate techniques have been applied according to the long-term plan in the areas designated for restoration.
Note For TFoFT:	<i>See in Annex1: "Guidelines for the interpretation of the requirements for trees and forests (natural and artificial) outside the forest territories TFoFT (TOF)"</i>
Verifiers:	<p>2.1.1. FMP and MFU must take the necessary preventive measures to limit and/or prevent the risks of forest damage in the managed area (in the context of verifier 1.5.1), 6.2.5 PEFC.</p> <p>2.1.2. MFU must identify damaged forest territories and plan activities for their restoration, if it is economically justified. (in the context of verifier 1.5.2), 8.1.6 PEFC.</p> <p>Damaged forest territories, restored in the last 3 years before the audit year, (within the legal limit (ha)</p> <p>2.1.3. MFU must promptly establish, plan and implement (if necessary) subsequent treatment of the areas with carried out forced and sanitary Fellings. E.g. with: afforestation, reforestation, supporting natural regeneration through loosening, etc. / ha, no.</p>
Related normative base	LF, OIPFT, Ordinance on the protection of forests from pests, diseases, other damage /OPFTDPOD, Law on Plant Protection / LPP, Ordinance for Control and Protection of the FT (OCPFT), ORDINANCE

	No 2 of 3 01 2012 on the conditions, methods and procedure for applying plant protection products in forest territories
Source of information:	Documented procedure for risk assessment, purchased protection materials, etc. Signal sheets, Forest-Pathology examination and other recommendations of the FPS, other decisions of the competent authorities, reports, technological plans for afforestation, Instructions from the control authorities, and other corresponding.

Criterion 2: "Maintenance of the health and vitality of forest ecosystems"	
Indicator №	2.2
Name:	Maintaining adequate genetic, species and structural diversity
Full Text / Requirement:	MFU shall maintain and promote the adequate genetic, species and structural diversity to improve the stability, vitality and resistance of forests to adverse environmental factors and to strengthen and intensify natural regulatory mechanisms. [8.2.2 PEFC].
Description:	The diversity (genetic, species and structural diversity) of the forest is described in FI and FMP/Pr or in other records.
Note For TFoFT:	<i>See in Annex 1: "Guidelines for the interpretation of the requirements for trees and forests (natural and artificial) outside the forest territories TFoFT (TOF)"</i>
Verifiers:	<p>2.2.1. MFU shall protect the registered in the Register of forest seed production base genetic resources /bank/ and ensure their regeneration with genetic material from the same plantations if the location or other conditions allow this.</p> <p>2.2.2. MFU, when regenerating the forest massif and selecting tree species, shall take into account the possibility of diversifying the species composition according to the conditions of the habitats, as well as raising the young generation.</p> <p>Also to be considered in the context of the following verifiers: 2.4.1, 4.1.1 and 4.5.1</p> <p>Species and/or genotypes that threaten tree growth, timber quality or other key ecosystem services and their general condition are not introduced or spread in the forest, incl. those of neighboring plantations (and forest owners).</p> <p>2.2.3. MFU shall regulate the composition of plantations relative to their appropriate target composition established with the FI under the Classification Scheme 2011, or take into account changes in natural conditions.</p> <p>The forest management planning, through management guidelines (system of cultivation Fellings), is aimed at the structure of the forest, which ensures long-term maintenance of its regenerative potential, vitality, health and ability to perform all important protective, economic and social functions.</p> <p>2.2.4. MFU shall prepare a periodic monitoring report on the health and vitality of forests in relation to the main biotic, abiotic and anthropogenic factors that may adversely affect them (an integral part of annual management monitoring).</p> <p>In the context of verifiers 1.7.1 (for risk assessment) and 6.1.4 (for forest resource monitoring)</p>
Related normative base	REGULATION No 21 on the conditions and procedure for determining, approving, registering and canceling the sources of the forest seed production base, the collection and extraction of forest reproductive materials, their quality, trade and import; REGULATION No 2 of 02/07/2013 on the terms and conditions for afforestation of forest territories and agricultural lands; REGULATION No 9 of December 5, 2019 on the protection of forest territories from diseases, pests and other damage

Source of information:	FMPI, FI, Correspondence and Approved protocols of the regional FSCS, Sample / copy of the Register of the forest seed production base concerning MFU, Register of newly created forest crops, Annual plans, Periodic report on the health and vitality of the forests in terms of the main biotic, abiotic and anthropogenic factors, Report on the forest protection measures, Report on the established violations / for the protection of FT, Finding acts, AEA, Signal sheets, Electronic system of EFA, Reports, Signal sheets, Forest pathology research, Guidelines, others. MFU provides relevant records/evidence
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Criterion 2: "Maintenance of the health and vitality of forest ecosystems"

Indicator №	2.3
Name:	Strictly regulated use of fire in the forest
Full Text / Requirement:	The standard requires the lighting of fire in the forests to be carried out in a strictly regulated manner , including that the appropriate measures are taken for extinguishing, management and control in the event of fire spreading outside the places designated for lighting fires. MFU has an up-to-date "Plan for the protection of forests from fire" coordinated with the regional service for safety and combating accidents. [8.2.3 PEFC]
Description:	Lighting a fire in the forests is a strictly regulated activity carried out with appropriate extinguishing, management and control measures taken , incl. its use to deliberately ignite counterfire in order to counter an established fire.
Note:	x
Verifiers:	2.3.1. MFU shall strictly carry out the activities set out in the "Plan for the protection of forests from fire" and control the requirements for lighting fires in the forest areas according to this plan and Regulation 8 of the MD FSPP.
Related normative base	LF, LDA, REGULATION No 8 of 11.05.2012 on the terms and conditions for the protection of forest territories from fires
Source of information:	Injunctions of a competent authority, Plan for the protection of forests from fire, Signals, Publications, Technological plans for felling and removal and for afforestation.

Criterion 2: "Maintenance of the health and vitality of forest ecosystems"

Indicator №	2.4
Name:	Implementation of appropriate forest management practices
Full Text / Requirement:	The standard requires that appropriate forest management practices shall be applied, such as afforestation and reforestation with tree species and origins , which are appropriate for site conditions, and to use techniques for care, harvesting and transport that minimize damage to trees and/or soil. [8.2.4 PEFC].
Description:	The technologies used in afforestation and reforestation contribute to minimizing negative impacts on the environment.
Note For TFoFT:	<i>See in Annex 1: "Guidelines for the interpretation of the requirements for trees and forests (natural and artificial) outside the forest territories TFoFT (TOF)"</i>

Verifiers:	<p>2.4.1. Wood species used for afforestation and reforestation must be in accordance with FMPI/Pr and be carried out on the basis of an approved technological plan for afforestation, including with species according to the approved Classification Scheme'2011.</p> <p>Also to be considered in the context of the following verifiers: 2.2.2, 4.1.1 and 4.5.1</p> <p>In the context of verifier 4.5.1, if there is afforestation with non-native species, (which are not according to the Classification Scheme'2011) then there is an assessment for that by a competent body other than the FMPI and the Classification Scheme for the types of forest habitats' 2011 [ha by tree species]</p> <p>2.4.2. In forest management, based on the specific conditions of the terrain, appropriate afforestation, cultivation, harvesting and transport technologies that ensure good afforestation results and also do not disturb the integrity of the forest, do not reduce the productive capacity of plantations and minimize damage to the soil and watercourses shall be used. This verifier shall be considered in the context of verifier 4.7.1, and is also related to 3.3.1, 5.2.2, 5.3.1, 5.5.1 and vice versa.</p>
A related normative base	LF, LBD, OIPFT, OCPFT, OFF, OCPAFT (Regulation 2 on afforestation in FT)
A source of information:	FI, FMPI, Technological plans, Contracts with the contractors of F. activities, Instruction sheets, Manuals / Work instructions for operations in forests, etc.; Compatibility assessment/environmental assessment of REWI/MEW.

Criterion 2: "Maintenance of the health and vitality of forest ecosystems"	
Indicator №	2.5
Name:	Disposal of waste and spillage of fuel lubricants
Full Text / Requirement:	The standard requires that indiscriminate dumping of waste in forest lands must be strictly avoided. Inorganic waste and garbage are collected, stored in designated areas and disposed of in an environmentally responsible manner. Spillage of oil or fuel during forestry operations shall be prevented. Emergency procedures shall be put in place to minimize the risk of environmental damage , resulting from an accidental spill. [8.2.5 PEFC].
Description:	Indiscriminate dumping of waste and spillage of oil or fuel on forest lands must be strictly avoided.
Note:	x
Verifiers:	<p>2.5.1. MFU does not allow disposal of inorganic waste and its discharge in forest lands. Inorganic waste must be collected and stored in designated areas and/or disposed of in an environmentally responsible manner.</p> <p>2.5.2. MFU shall take action to prevent leakage of oil, fuel and other chemicals, but in the event of leakage, these substances are collected according to the manufacturer's documented procedures or instructions. (8.2.5. PEFC)</p> <p>In the context of Verifier 5.4.2, oil and fuel spills and littering during forestry operations are prevented. The forestry equipment work site is equipped with basic contamination control equipment (e.g. shovel, absorbent storage container/plastic bag for contaminated material). The organization has policies, preparedness and capability to prevent and remove oil and fuel spills (e.g. appropriate clauses in service contracts, leak proof boxes and fuel tanks).</p> <p>When performing work where there is a risk of oil spillage, oil that does not pollute the environment (biodegradable oil) is used. Technical liquids, petroleum products, chemicals and water are stored in suitable, properly marked containers or packages.</p> <p>The organization and/or contractor shall have procedures in place to prevent and clean up oil and fuel spills and waste disposal.</p>

Related normative base	LF, LEP, LS; LPP, Ordinance No 9 for the protection of forests from diseases, pests, etc. damage, OCPFT list of plant protection chemicals authorized for marketing and use, registered fertilizers, soil improvers.
Source of information:	Contract for waste collection, Contracts and Instructions for companies/workers working in forests, others. Contracts with the companies performing activities, Invoices for purchased oils and fuels and other chemical products; technical specifications of manufacturers, Instructions, etc. Manual or other similar document for the prevention and removal of oil and fuel spills and littering, others.

Criterion 2: "Maintenance of the health and vitality of forest ecosystems"	
Indicator №	2.6
Name:	Integrated pest and disease management
Full Text / Requirement:	First and foremost, integrated pest management, suitable silvicultural alternatives and other biological measures shall be preferred to minimize pesticide use. [8.2.6 PEFC].
Description:	Integrated pest management is primarily implemented to minimize the use of pesticides. Any possible use of pesticides must be documented.
Note:	<p><i>Means / products for plant protection: See in Ordinance on the Conditions, Methods and Procedure for Implementation of Plant Products Protection in FT - Annex- 3 "Used terms and definitions"</i></p> <p>№ 1</p> <p>№ 2 <i>"Pesticides banned by international agreements" are defined in the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants.</i></p> <p>№ 3 <i>Natural mineral fertilizers are, for example: wood ash, peat ash, straw, hay and root ash; soil improvers are lime, dolomite powder, oil shale ash.</i></p> <p>№ 4 <i>Compensatory measures to maintain or restore the original habitat quality, such as liming for soil protection, are not considered fertilization.</i></p> <p>№ 5 <i>Fertilization at the planting site is allowed to ensure the success of natural regeneration.</i></p>

<p>Verifiers:</p>	<p>2.6.1. MFU gives priority to integrated pest management, minimizing as far as possible the use of chemical methods of plant protection (pesticides), facilitating the use of environmentally friendly means of pest control and applying appropriate alternative forest management methods.</p> <p>The application of plant protection products is used only as a last resort, for example, when the plantation / crop is seriously threatened according to the regulatory documents. Alternative organizational and/or technical measures are preferred. Except for the treatment of wood piles and the use of substances to treat wounds and game damage, all cases of application of means/products for plant protection require a written expert opinion (Guideline 4). The application of plant protection is carried out in all cases by a person who is competent for it according to the plant protection law.</p> <p>Integrated plant protection: A combination of procedures prioritizing mechanical, biological, biotechnological measures for growing plants as well as cultivation measures to minimize the use of plant protection chemicals (§ 2 Plant Protection Act).</p> <p>2.6.2. Biological measures and means to prevent and limit damage to the forest are preferred. The use of non-biological products for plant protection in forest areas is allowed only in justified cases and it is documented.</p> <p>2.6.3. The use of plant protection products of hazard classes 1A and 1B classified by the World Health Organization (WHO) and other highly toxic plant protection products shall be prohibited, except when there is no other viable alternative. Any exception to the use of WHO class 1A and 1B pesticides shall be allowed when the sustainability of the forest is threatened and shall be permitted by the relevant competent authority*. (8.2.8 PEFC)</p> <p>MFU uses only those plant protection agents that are registered in Bulgaria, or those for which a temporary import/use permit has been obtained.</p> <p><i>*Bulgarian Food Safety Agency</i> is a competent and coordinating national body within the matter of Art. 75, paragraphs 1 and 2 of Regulation (EU) No 1107/2009 on the placing of plant protection products on the market.</p> <p>2.6.4. MFU shall be prohibited use of chemical plant protection agents /pesticides/ such as chlorinated hydrocarbons, whose derivatives remain biologically active and accumulate in the food chain beyond permitted levels, as well as any chemical plant protection agents /pesticides/ prohibited by international agreements (8.2.9 PEFC)</p> <p>2.6.5. Any uses of pesticides from MFU are mandatory documented, and the approved norms / instructions for use of the Bulgarian competent authority are followed. The combat is performed only by people who have undergone training and with appropriate equipment. (8.2.7, 8.2.10 PEFC)</p> <p>2.6.6. MFU must justify the need for use of fertilizers. Fertilizers shall be used in a controlled and environmentally sensitive manner. (8.2.11 PEFC)</p> <p>Only organic fertilizers, natural mineral fertilizers, natural soil improvers, biostimulants and bioregulators may be used on forest areas, unless they are prohibited by national legislation.</p>
<p>A related normative base</p>	<p>LPP, LF, Ordinance No. 9 of December 5, 2019 on the protection of forest territories from diseases, pests and other damage / OPFTDPOD, Ordinance for Control and Protection of the FT (OCPFT), Ordinance No. 2 of 3 01 2012 on the conditions, methods and procedure for applying products for plant protection in forest areas;</p> <p>Regulation (EU) No 1107/2009 concerning the placing of plant protection products on the market, the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants,</p>
<p>A source of information:</p>	<p>Contracts with the contractors, Instructions to those working in the forests /workers/, Invoices for purchased means of plant protection, incl. of those of hazard classes 1A and 1B and other highly toxic products for plant protection, technical specifications, Instructions, etc. Work instructions or other plant protection documents.</p>

Criterion 3: "Maintenance and enhancement the productive functions of the forests (wood and non-wood)"

Context: Maintaining the productive function of forests from timber and non-timber forest products is an economic task. Local logging ensures the provision of timber as an ecologically valuable renewable resource – a vital raw material for local and national forest-based processing and furniture industries and local populations. The aim is to enable the forest owner to ensure overall sustainable management of the forest and the forest-based /value-added industry, in the long term, through adequate income from the forest and the forest economy.

Criterion 3: "Maintenance and enhancement the productive functions of the forests (wood and non-wood)"	
Indicator №	3.1
Name:	Sustainable levels of extraction of timber and non-timber resources
Full Text / Requirement:	The standard requires the ability of forests to produce a range of wood and non-wood forest products and services on a sustainable basis shall be supported, (8.3.1 PEFC) and that harvest levels, of both wood and non-wood forest products, shall do not exceed a rate that can be maintained and used optimally in the long term [8.3.4 PEFC].
Description:	MFU maintains sustainable levels of extraction of wood and non-wood forest resources, which enables long-term production of a range of forest products and services on a sustainable basis. Forest planning and management aims to maintain sustainable levels of forest resource extraction (wood and non-wood) that are optimally used by the local and national economy.
Note	№1: <i>The realized annual yield of wood (recalculated - annual average based on the 10-year revision period) is considered sustainable when it does not exceed the amount of the total average annual volume growth calculated for MFU with the current FMPI and longevity and persistence of use is ensured. The exceptions in which this sustainable amount of use is allowed to be exceeded are, for example: predominance of forests with an age higher than the thresholds established by the normative framework; harvested wood from sanitary and forced felling (in case of force majeure circumstances); another applicable legal framework. These exceptions must be defended with the FMPI/Pr, resp. with the environmental assessment made.</i>
	№ 2: <i>For non-wood forest products - the extraction levels, which do not damage the relevant communities and their habitats and ensure the longevity and stability of their use, are sustainable.</i>
	№3: For TFoFT: See in Annex 1: "Guidelines for the interpretation of the requirements for trees and forests (natural and artificial) outside the forest territories TFoFT (TOF)"
	№4: <i>The ecosystem service consisting of the increased absorption of CO2 and on this basis - trade with positive "carbon allowances" / trade with "green certificates" on the Bulgarian and international markets after 01.01.2026. Can count as non-timber services.</i>
Verifiers:	<p>3.1.1. MFU determines the annual volume of timber and non-timber forest resources, with a view to achieving the long-term goals of management.</p> <p>Forest management guarantees longevity and persistence when using wood and non-wood products.</p> <p>Also, in the context of verifier 1.3.3.</p> <p>3.1.2. Forest management preserves and, where possible, increases forest resources and aims towards diversifying the production of goods and services in the long term (timber and non-timber based).</p>

Related normative base	LF; OIPFT, OFF, LHGP; LMP; OCPFT; RPDFT, EC.
Source of information:	FMPI/Pr, Book of yields, permits for felling and use of non-timber forest products /other than those for personal use/, Contracts and invoices for sold timber and non-timber products, transport tickets, electronic system of EFA, references, lists by population locations, investigative protocols and tickets for violations, etc.

Criterion 3: "Maintenance and enhancement the productive functions of the forests (wood and non-wood)"

Indicator №	3.2
Name:	Product orientation for sustainable economic results
Full Text / Requirement:	The standard requires that sound economic performance shall be pursued , taking into account opportunities for new markets and economic activities in relation to all relevant forest goods and services. (8.3.2 PEFC)
Description:	MFU manages its forests in a product-oriented manner , taking into account opportunities for new markets and economic activities in relation to all relevant forest goods and services. Management is product-oriented, when it takes into account the different uses and functions of the forest to achieve sustainable economic results
Note	<p>№ 1: <i>The market of "green certificates" based on the sustainable management of forests and their contribution to ensuring a positive "carbon balance" within the framework of MFU can also be accepted as a new market after 01.01.2026,</i></p> <p>№2: <i>For TFoFT: See in Annex 1: "Guidelines for the interpretation of the requirements for trees and forests (natural and artificial) outside the forest territories TFoFT (TOF)"</i></p>
Verifiers:	<p>3.2.1. Encouragement of the production function aims to achieve optimal economic results, using available market research and opportunities to expand into new markets for forest products and services (including the predictions of FMP; see also note in Indicator 3.1)</p> <p>MFU has developed a plan / program / other equivalent document / for the use of wood and non-wood products, which does not allow the commercial use of such forest products above a level that may affect their long-term sustainability. (6.2.4 PEFC). In the context of Verifiers 3.1.1 and 1.3.3</p> <p>The forest manager maintains and/or facilitates the structural diversity of the forest ecosystem as far as possible to ensure the diversity of non-timber products and ecosystem services in the MFU.</p>
Related normative base	LF; OIPFT, OFF, LHGP; MDP, RPDFT
Source of information:	FMPI/Pr, sales contracts, payment documents, market research within the site and/or district, and/or country. Scientific -applied reports, exchange of experience in foreign countries, trainings, etc.

Criterion 3: "Maintenance and enhancement the productive functions of the forests (wood and non-wood)"

Indicator №	3.3
Name:	Time and method of operations that protect plants and soils

Full Text / Requirement:	The standard requires that management, yield and regeneration operations shall be carried out at a time and in a manner that does not reduce the productive capacity of the forest, for example by avoiding damage to the soil and other stands and trees. (8.3.3 PEFC)
Description:	Forestry operations are carried out at a time and in a way that does not damage the forest (soil, undergrowth and remaining trees)
Note:	<p>№1: <i>The plantation must be accessible through a system of work routes (technological corridors) which allows the use of forestry machinery in a way that reduces the impact on the soil (applies to planned regeneration or cultivated Fellings).</i></p> <p>№2: <i>The pressure of the machine on the ground (forming of deep tracks) during transit can be minimized by: the use of branch padding along the work route, the use of wide tires with low pressure, machines with more wheels, half-chains and planning the operations of hauling the materials to a temporary storage (permanent forest paved road).</i></p>
Verifiers:	<p>3.3.1. As a result of economic activities, including logging and regeneration are carried out with technologies and machines that do not damage the remaining trees, soil and the regeneration. If such are allowed, have they already been removed or are they in the process of removal (rehabilitation)?</p> <p>The method of extracting whole trees (with the roots) shall not be used. The use of wood leftovers for energy purposes depends on the richness of the habitat and its conservation needs, incl. for a positive carbon balance.</p> <p>3.3.2. In a quantitative and qualitative aspect, the use of wood and non-wood resources shall be guaranteeing longevity and persistence to ensure their sustainable reproduction without reducing the productive capacity of the forest.</p> <p>3.3.3. When using non-wood forest products in MFU, negative impacts on their reproductive capabilities, as well as on the environment (trees, etc. vegetation, soil cover) shall not be allowed.</p> <p>Adverse effect on reproduction of each of these resources can be established in the case of repeatedly increased amounts of use of a certain species (medicinal plant, forest fruit, mushroom, etc.) from one locality, as well as in their collection in a predatory manner, by uprooting (of herbs etc.), breaking branches, etc.</p>
Related normative base	LF, LS, LPAL, LEF, OFF, REGULATION No 4 of 19.02.2013 on the protection of forest territories against erosion and torrential rains and construction of fortification facilities/
Source of information:	Information system of EFA forests; RFT -5, Protocols for assessment of fellings, Ordinance 8, Art. 44 "Methodology for evaluation of restoration", contracts for the assignment of activities and for the sale of timber (per root), instruction book, annual plans for felling / Register of the fellings , technological plans, maps and sketches; composed investigative reports, tickets for violations, compensated; Comparisons of the agreed quantities by categories/assortments with the actually produced quantities by categories/assortments, assortment sheet, transport tickets, permits, invoices, publications in the local press.

Criterion 3: "Maintenance and enhancement the productive functions of the forests (wood and non-wood)"

Indicator №	3.4
Name:	Planning, creation and maintenance of forest infrastructure
Full Text / Requirement:	The standard requires that the appropriate infrastructure , such as roads, skid tracks or bridges, shall be planned, established and maintained , to ensure efficient delivery of goods and services while minimizing negative environmental impacts. [8.3.5. PEFC].

Description:	MFU works purposefully for optimization of the road and transport network oriented to the actual needs, as well as to its maintenance in good condition.
Note for TFoFT:	<i>See in Annex 1: "Guidelines for the interpretation of the requirements for trees and forests (natural and artificial) outside the forest territories TFoFT (TOF)"</i>
Verifiers:	3.4.1. MFU plans (designs), builds and maintains (repairs) the forest infrastructure in accordance with the scale and intensity of operations, with care for the protection of biotopes. To be considered in the context of verifiers 3.3.1, 4.8.1, 5.3.1. and 5.5.1 (for protection of forest ecosystems , for soil and water protection).
Related normative base	LF, LOSD, LPAL, LEP, OCFT, OIPFT, OCPFT, OFM, Ordinance № 5 for construction in the forest territories without changing their purpose.
Source of information:	Projects for the construction of new and/or for the reconstruction of existing forest roads and other infrastructure), technological plans for felling or afforestation, contracts for the assignment of activities and for the sale of timber (per root), instruction book, files of the activated for use subdivisions /felings, technological plans, maps and sketches, compiled tickets for violations, compensations, etc.

Criterion: 4. Maintenance, protection and appropriate enhancement of biological diversity in forest ecosystems

Context: The goal is to maintain, protect and appropriately improve biological diversity in accordance with national and international commitments (e.g. the international and national ecological network "Natura 2000" with the two directives - for protection of the species' habitats and for the protection of wild birds). Forest management takes into account scientific knowledge, especially from research in natural forests, to make the best use of natural structures and processes to maintain biodiversity and to create stands close to nature and adapted to climate change. Where the protection of biodiversity causes disproportionate economic harm to the forest owner, this should be compensated by means of support programs and/or contract-based nature preservation measures.

<i>Criterion: 4. Maintenance, protection and appropriate enhancement of biological diversity in forest ecosystems</i>	
Indicator №	4.1
Name:	Planning, to maintain and improve biodiversity
Full Text / Requirement:	The standard requires that forest management planning shall to maintain, protect or enhance biodiversity at the landscape, ecosystem, species and genetic level. (8.4.1 PEFC)
Description:	FMPI (another equivalent document) guarantees the protection and improvement of biodiversity in forests.

Verifiers:	<p>4.1.1. In accordance with the scale and intensity of the forest activities, the MFU plans, shall be maintains, protects or improves the biological diversity of the species and genetic, ecosystem and also at landscape levels. (8.4.1 PEFC)</p> <p>In addition to naturally pure stands, there shall also be mixed stands with site-adapted tree species maintained and/or secondarily introduced.</p> <p>Restoration measures (artificial restoration) are used to increase the proportion of mixed species. Special attention is paid to climate-resistant native tree species.</p> <p>To be considered also in the context of the following verifiers: 2.4.1, 2.2.2 and 4.5.1.</p> <p>If alien tree species (which are not invasive species according to "Annex 5.3") are mixed in, it must be ensured that their natural regeneration does not impair the ability of native/indigenous tree species to regenerate, mainly as a result of their suppression.</p> <p><u>A tree species will be considered adapted to the site, if it</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) is competitive with other tree species, shrubs, grasses and herbs throughout the life cycle due to - physiological and morphological adaptations to site conditions, b) is resistant to damage to a great extent and c) maintains or improves the quality of the site.
Note	<p>№1: <i>For TFoFT: See in Annex 1: "Guidelines for the interpretation of the requirements for trees and forests (natural and artificial) outside the forest territories TFoFT (TOF)"</i></p> <p>№2: <i>The species suitable for the habitat, specified in the scientific and practical guide of EFA in 2011, "Classification scheme of the types of forest habitats in the Republic of Bulgaria", are considered adapted.</i></p> <p>№3 <i>A plantation (artificial) or a natural stand are considered mixed if the participation of a second, etc. species in the composition is more than 1/10.</i></p> <p>№4 <i>List of prohibited tree species for afforestation in FT - provided by RPDFT.</i></p>
Related normative base	LF, LBD, OIPFT, Ordinance on felling in forests, the Birds Directive (79/409/EEC) and the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC
Source of information:	Protocols of the FSCS, FMPI or other equivalent document, annual plan, Book on afforestation, Injunctions of the FSCS, Reports and instructions, others.

Criterion: 4. Maintenance, protection and appropriate enhancement of biological diversity in forest ecosystems	
Indicator №	4.2
Name:	Ecologically important forest areas have been identified and protected
Full Text / Requirement:	The standard requires that inventory, mapping and planning of forest resources shall identify, protect, conserve or set aside ecologically important forest areas. [8.4.2. PEFC].
Description:	Inventory, mapping and planning of forest resources identify (separate), protect and preserve ecologically important forest areas.
Verifiers:	<p>4.2.1. MFU has available current information, incl. mapping, for the ecologically significant forest (high conservation value forests - HCVF) and non-forest territories identified within its borders and ensures their protection, including for the wood and non-wood resources in them, e.g. in protected areas under the LPA, protected zones under the LBD, in which indicative and/or prohibitory signs, barriers, etc. are placed. The same are defined and mapped with FI or with another equivalent document.</p>

Note	Nº 1:	<i>This does not prohibit forest management activities that do not damage the important ecological values of these biotopes [8.4.2. PEFC].</i>
	Nº 2:	Ecologically significant forest areas in the context of the criterion are the ones defined in the relevant groups of Forests with high conservation value / HC VF, which are defined by the FMPI and/or by the RPDFT, and/or by another relevant document). Forested area by Special Function categories - ha. (from the table by types of forests, according to Annex 5 of the OIPFT),
	Nº 3:	For the purposes of the standard, no-forested areas are defined as such when the same is a constituent or additional non-forest territory (agricultural, urbanized, protected or other), but it is within the scope of the certificate .
	Nº 4	As ecologically important non-forest territories, those agricultural territories, protected territories, transport territories, water bodies, regulated land properties, etc. outside the forest territories, with a legally established special (protected) status, with a special infrastructure built according to their status and access, easements, etc., which are reflected on the cadastral map and the departmental specialized maps that fall under the scope of MFU, and which are in the scope of the certificate can be considered as Ecologically important non-forest territories . Only in cases where this is explicitly required, these sites are also applied to the map material to the FMPI/Pr, without being the subject of consideration / reflection in the explanatory note and other annexes to the FMPI/Pr
	Nº5:	<i>For TFoFT: See in Annex 1: "Guidelines for the interpretation of the requirements for trees and forests (natural and artificial) outside the forest territories TFoFT (TOF)"</i>
Related normative base		LF, LBD with its annexes, OIPFT, Ordinance 20 on the content, conditions and procedure for the creation and maintenance of forestry maps; The Birds Directive (79/409/EEC) and the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC)
Source of information:		RPDFT, FMP or equivalent document, including the Balance of FT on a 5-year basis, Developments, Reports and others.

Criterion: 4. Maintenance, protection and appropriate enhancement of biological diversity in forest ecosystems

Indicator №	4.3
Name:	Protected, threatened and vulnerable plant and animal species
Full Text / Requirement:	The standard requires protected, endangered and vulnerable plant and animal species to not be gathered, or captured, or killed . When necessary, measures are taken to protect them and, when applicable, to increase their population.
Description:	Protected, endangered and vulnerable plant and animal species are protected and not used for commercial purposes.
Verifiers:	<p>4.3.1. MFU undertakes preventive measures for the protection of protected, endangered and vulnerable plant and animal species with a view to preventing their illegal gathering, capture or killing. The management complies with the requirements of the laws and by-laws in this regard.</p> <p>In the context of <i>Convention on International Trade with Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora [CITES]</i>, if applicable, the same cannot be the subject of commercial transactions (including: to pick and gather, capture or kill).</p>
Note:	<i>The requirement does not exclude trade under CITES clauses. [8.4.3 PEFC].</i>
Related normative base	LBD with Annexes 1 and 2, LF, Red Book of Bulgaria, CITES Convention
Source of information:	FMPI, other plans / publications, Reports, Note/s, development on Natura 2000 development to the FMPI, contracts, invoices, etc.

Criterion: 4. Maintenance, protection and appropriate enhancement of biological diversity in forest ecosystems

Indicator №	4.4
Name:	Successful natural regeneration or afforestation
Full Text / Requirement:	The standard requires that successful regeneration be ensured through natural regeneration or afforestation , which is suitable for ensuring the quantity and quality of forest resources [8.4.4. PEFC].
Description:	Successful regeneration (natural and/or artificial) is provided, which ensures the quantity and quality of forest resources in MFU, including all ecosystem functions of forests.
Verifiers:	<p>4.4.1. Renewal felling in its final phase is carried out only in the regenerated areas with sufficient cover of natural undergrowth and young growth, and/or artificial growth.</p> <p>Natural regeneration can be assisted in the stands, where timely and qualitative regeneration is difficult due to climatic factors, compromising by grazing of wild or domestic animals, damage during felling and other biotic, abiotic and anthropogenic factors.</p> <p>4.4.2. MFU must take measures for the successful regeneration of forest stands damaged by diseases and pests, by natural disasters and accidents, and by anthropogenic factors.</p>
Note:	The supporting natural regeneration is without and with afforestation ,
Related normative base	LF, LBD, Ordinance on felling in forests, OIPFT, Ordinance No. 2 of 02/07/2013 on the conditions and procedures for afforestation of forest territories and agricultural lands (OCPAFT)
Source of information:	FMPI, Electronic system of EFA, Book of afforestation, Protocols under Art. 44a, para. 3 of Ordinance 8, on the methodology for assessing the regeneration, Reports of the FT, Supervision of the implementation of the FMPI, Reports of inspections carried out by the competent authorities, Signal sheets, Forest pathology examination, Injunctions, Reports of inspections carried out by the competent authorities and others.

Criterion: 4. Maintenance, protection and appropriate enhancement of biological diversity in forest ecosystems

Indicator №	4.5
Name:	Adapted native species are preferred in afforestation
Full Text / Requirement:	The standard requires afforestation and reforestation to give preference to origins of species that are well adapted to site conditions. Only those introduced in practice species, origins or varieties whose impact on the ecosystem and on the genetic integrity of native species and native origins has been scientifically assessed are used and if negative impacts can be avoided or minimized.
Description:	For Afforestation and reforestation can be avoided only those introduced species, origins or varieties whose impact on the ecosystem and on the genetic integrity of native species and native origins has been scientifically assessed and negative impacts can be minimized are preferred.

<p>Verifiers:</p>	<p>4.5.1. The standard requires afforestation and reforestation to give preference to origins of species that are well adapted to site conditions. In afforestation, by planting and sowing, reproductive material of proven origin and corresponding to the provisions of the FMPI and the regulations is used.</p> <p>To be considered also in the context of verifiers: 2.2.2, 2.4.1 and 4.1.1.</p> <p>4.5.2. The standard requires that afforestation shall not occur in ecologically important non-forest ecosystems (falling within the scope of the certificate and not intended to be regenerated artificially), <u>except in justified circumstances</u>, when the conversion: (8.1.5. PEFC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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) 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 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 <p>The "reforestation and afforestation of ecologically important non-forest ecosystems" requirement means that ecologically important non-forest ecosystems reforested or afforested after December 31, 2010 under other than "justified circumstances" do not meet the requirement and are not eligible for certification.</p> <p>4.5.3. Afforestation, reforestation and other tree planting activities, which contribute to the improvement and restoration of ecological connectivity and CO2 absorption, shall be promoted. (8.4.6. PEFC)</p> <p><u>For example:</u> Afforestation of unforested areas or after bare felling under Art. 104 of LF'2011, forest territories, creation of plantation (industrial / intensive, etc.) crops with a short rotation period for biomass, for absorbing CO2, anti-erosion, etc., which correspond to the examples corresponding to the established habitat types according to the scientific and practical guide of EFA from 2011 "Classification scheme of the types of forest habitats in the Republic of Bulgaria", (In context also with the Note to verifier 4.5.1)</p> <p>4.5.4. MFU shall be not use genetically modified trees (8.4.7 PEFC)</p> <p>MFU shall describe the characteristics of reproductive material used in afforestation.</p>
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Note:	<p>№1: <i>The guiding principles of the European Biodiversity Strategy, to prevent, introduce and mitigate the impact of alien species that threaten ecosystems, habitats or species, are recognized as guidelines for avoiding invasive species. [8.4.5, 8.4.6 and 8.4.7 PEFC].</i></p> <p>№2: Species used for afforestation must not be among the ones listed under Annex 5.3 "List of Invasive Species" based on EU Regulation 1143 of 2014 to prevent the introduction of Invasive species. An exception is allowed for white acacia tree species (<i>Robinia pseudacacia</i>), on eroded and other intrazonal habitats and industrial/intensive crops, incl. for biomass, for which the scientific and practical development of EFA from 2011 "Classification scheme of the types of forest habitats in the Republic of Bulgaria " allows the acacia with the corresponding participation (1-10/10) in the composition of the plantation/culture.</p> <p>№3: For the purposes of the standard, we are talking about a non-forest ecosystem, when the same is a composite or additional non-forest territory (agricultural, urbanized, protected or other), but is within the scope of the certificate.</p> <p>№4: For Ecologically important non-forest areas can be considered those agricultural territories, protected territories, transport territories, water bodies, regulated land/urban properties, etc. outside the forest territories, with a legally established special (protected) status, with special infrastructure and access built according to their status, easements, etc., which are reflected on the cadastral map and departmental specialized maps, and which fall within the scope of MFU. Only in cases where this is explicitly required, these sites are also applied to the map material to the FMPI/Pr, without being the subject of consideration / reflection in the explanatory note and the other annexes to the FMPI/Pr.</p> <p>№5: The restriction on the use of genetically modified trees was adopted by the PEFC General Assembly based on the precautionary principle. Until sufficient scientific data on genetically modified trees show that the impacts on human and animal health and the environment are equivalent or more positive than those presented by trees genetically improved by traditional methods, genetically modified trees will not be used. [8.4.7 PEFC].</p>
Related normative base	LF, LEP, LBD with its annexes, LOSD, OCPFT, OCPAFT, OIPFT
Source of information:	RPDFT, FMPI, Book of afforestation; Supervision of the implementation of FMPI, incl. Map of types of forest habitats and Map of habitats, equivalent plans and programs, Assessments and reports from inspections carried out by the competent authorities, Specifications and letters of the FSCS for the provided afforestation material, Certificates, Regional and/or municipal development plans, DLP - Detailed Layout Plans and developments, Environmental Assessments according LEP and LBD, Invoices, others.

Criterion: 4. Maintenance, protection and appropriate enhancement of biological diversity in forest ecosystems

Indicator №	4.6
Name:	Promotion of forest structural diversity
Full Text / Requirement:	The standard requires that the variety of horizontal and vertical structures and the variety of species , such as mixed stands, shall be encouraged where appropriate. Practices shall also aim to maintain or restore diversity at the landscape level. [8.4.8 PEFC].
Description:	MFU, where appropriate, shall promote forest structural diversity, for example mixed-age and multistory stands, which at the same time serves to maintain or restore landscape diversity. A variety of horizontal and vertical structures and a variety of species such as mixed and/or mixed-age stands are encouraged where appropriate.

Verifiers:	<p>4.6.1. Depending on the type of forest and the conditions of habitats , with the methods of forestry, MFU guides the formation of forest plantations with a diverse composition (various tree species) and with a vertical structure (with different ages of tree species), within the framework of the regulatory requirements.</p> <p>4.6.2. Valuable and rare species, such as: Sorbus torminalis, Sorbus domestica, Viburnum opulus, Cerasus sylvestris, Acer pseudoplatanus, forest fruit trees, etc. shall be tolerated and an individual management approach shall be applied to them.</p> <p>When logging in suitable locations, the management of FU shall maintain those single tree species or those in small groups that are suitable for the forest type and site conditions.</p> <p>4.6.3. MFU preserves and direct structural diversity on the periphery of the forest massifs, roadside and suburban plantings (in strips with a width of 15-20 m or more)</p> <p>Structurally rich forest peripheries provide habitats for a variety of plant and animal species, some of which are rare. They also have a positive effect on the internal climate of the forest and can reduce the risk of wind etc. negative agents.</p> <p>4.6.4. MFU shall be identifies and implements traditional practices for creating and/or maintaining valuable ecosystems in appropriate places where appropriate. (8.4.9 PEFC)</p> <p>In the case of valuable ecosystems (the priority habitat types for protection according to Annex 1 of the LBD, column 2, in Natura 2000 areas), the traditional management practices that led to their creation shall be supported as far as this is reasonable and legally possible.</p> <p>4.6.5. In case of valuable habitats of species under Directive 79/409/EEC (Annex 2 of the LBD) for the protection of wild birds, and from Annex 3 for the protection of wild plant and animal species, as well as for the protection of stands in which, during breeding, molting, wintering or migration, significant numbers of birds of species, other than those specified in annexes No. 2 and No. 3, congregate, the same must be observed and preserved in Forestry related activities (FRAs).</p>
Note:	<p>№1: <i>See in Annex 1: "Guidelines for the interpretation of the requirements for trees and forests (natural and artificial) outside the forest territories TFoFT(TOF)"</i></p> <p>№2: <i>Traditional forest management practices include, but are not limited to: care during the first 3 years, preliminary (for lighting) thinning and cultivation and selection of young and middle-aged trees, management of regeneration (renewable felling), support of regeneration without or with afforestation, cutting of unwanted undergrowth and scrub, grazing control, fire protection and forest protection.</i></p> <p>№3: <i>The cited habitats and species are observed and protected in the different FRAs in the different seasons when birds are observed (recognizable species that are known by all).</i></p>
Related normative base	LF, LBD with its annexes, Directive 79/409/EEC on habitats, LPA, LW, OFF , OIPFT, OCPAFT, LOSD, ODPMP
Source of information:	RPDFT, Territorial Regulatory Plan (TRPI), FI, FMPI, Balances of FT: 1-4, 6-7, by types of plantations and age classes, Categorization of forests, Book of yields, Book of crops, annual reports, plans, contracts for forest activities , Invoices, reports; The Hunting Plan and the Plan for Fire Fighting Activities; Plans for the management of protected zones and protected territories, Plans for the management of water basins, injunctions of the MEW, Correspondence with departments and services, MEW - decision to assess the need for an Impact Evaluation of the activities in the FMPI, others.

Criterion: 4. Maintenance, protection and appropriate enhancement of biological diversity in forest ecosystems

Indicator №	4.7
Name:	Avoiding durable damage to ecosystems in cultivation and regenerative care (mechanized)
Full Text / Requirement:	The standard requires that tending and harvesting operations shall be conducted in a manner which does not cause lasting damage to ecosystems. Where possible, practical measures shall be taken to maintain or enhance biological diversity. (8.4.10 PEFC)

Description:	The maintenance and use of forest territories (respectively with cultivation and regenerative fellings) must be done in a way that does not cause lasting damage to ecosystems. Cultivation and regenerative care of forest plantations is carried out in a way that does not cause lasting damage to ecosystems.	
Verifiers:	<p>4.7.1. Forestry and logging operations shall be conducted in a manner that does not cause lasting damage to ecosystems. MFU protects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) viable trees and shrubs in the undergrowth and subsoil, according to good silvicultural practice; b) trees remaining in the stands after felling; c) watercourses (e.g. ditches, streams), but if the water flow in water beds is disturbed after logging, the necessary actions must be taken to restore the watercourses as close as possible to their natural state; d) the wet spots with their characteristic vegetation and the significantly increased level of humidity; e) the breeding and resting places of the protected species. f) the surface soil layer - its integrity and coverage of dead forest cover, if disturbed, shall be promptly restored and/or measures to prevent erosion processes shall be applied (stacks of branches, wicker, transverse ditches, etc. are placed). g) permanent pass ability of the road network is ensured - the constructed temporary dirt roads for the removal of materials allow the use of forestry equipment in a soil-friendly way. Irreversible disturbance of the soil surface and creation of concentrated swelling is not allowed. <p>In this context, Verifier 2.4.2 is also considered.</p>	
Note:	№1:	<i>For terrain slopes of more than 25 degrees or site-specific situations, it is not necessary to build a strictly schematic system if it helps prevent damage to plantings and soil.</i>
	№2:	<i>The exceptional cases that allow more massed passage by machines include, for example: tillage, mulching, planting, sowing. These operations are reduced to the bare minimum. In pressure-sensitive soils, soil preservation-oriented measures are taken (in wet soil, as well as in the use of soil-sensitive machines), in the context of verifiers 3.3.1, 5.2.2, 5.3.1 and 5.5.1.</i>
	№3:	<i>Damage during exploitation and transfer (moving felled trees to temporary storage in the forest) is permissible on a maximum of 10% of the remaining trees in the plantation and from the regeneration.)</i>
Related normative base	LF, Law on Registration and Control of Agricultural and Forestry Equipment; OFF, OIPFT, OCPFT	
Source of information:	FMPI, Electronic system of EFA, RFT 5, Instruction sheet/book, Protocols for certification of fellings (after felling has been carried out), Tickets for established violations and findings protocols, Reports of the competent authorities from inspections and others.	

Criterion: 4. Maintenance, protection and appropriate enhancement of biological diversity in forest ecosystems

Indicator №	4.8
Name:	The infrastructure is designed and built with minimal damage to the ecosystem
Full Text / Requirement:	The standard requires that infrastructure shall be planned and built in a way that minimizes damage to ecosystems , especially of rare, sensitive/vulnerable or representative ecosystems and genetic reserves, and which takes into account endangered or other key species – in particular their migration patterns – into consideration. (8.4.11 PEFC)
Description:	MFU plans and builds forest infrastructure in a way that minimizes damage to the ecosystem with particular attention to rare, sensitive/vulnerable and endangered species and their habitats.

Note for TFoFT::	See in Annex 1: "Guidelines for the interpretation of the requirements for trees and forests (natural and artificial) outside the forest territories TFoFT (TOF)"
Verifiers:	<p>4.8.1. In planning, construction and repair of sites of forest infrastructure, MFU shall evaluate their impact on forest territories, especially the habitat types prioritized for preservation according to Annex 1 of the WFD, column 2, as well as the habitats of the species under Annexes 2 and 3 of the LBD, and when necessary, shall plan operations to mitigate the potential negative impact on them.</p> <p>To be considered also in the context of verifier 3.4.1 (for negative impact on the environment) and 5.5.1 (for soil and water protection).</p>
Note:	<i>The priority habitat types for protection also include the habitats of rare, representative or sensitive ecosystems, which are described in the High Conservation Value Forests (HCVF) identified for the certification site, according to RPDFT, and/or according to FMPI, and/or according to another normative base document.</i>
Related normative base	LF, LOSD, LPAL, LEP, OCFT, OIPFT, OCPFT, Ordinance on construction in forest territories under Art. 152 of the LF.
Source of information:	FMPI, Development for Natura 2000 to FMPI and Work plan/project, project documentation for construction or repair of roads, anti-erosion and other activities in forests, Instruction sheet/book, protocols for certification of fellings (after felling has been carried out), tickets for established violations and findings protocols, reports from inspections of the competent authorities, Decision / Assessment on the need for an Environmental Assessment Report carried out by the MEW and/or REWI and others.

Criterion: 4. Maintenance, protection and appropriate enhancement of biological diversity in forest ecosystems

Indicator №	4.9
Name:	The pressure of animal populations is controlled
Full Text / Requirement:	The standard requires, with due regard to management objectives, that measures shall be taken to control the pressure of animal populations on forest regeneration and growth , as well as on biodiversity. (8.4.12 PEFC)
Description:	The management of FU takes timely measures to protect the regeneration and growth of plantations from the pressure of animal populations.
Note for TFoFT::	See in Annex 1: "Guidelines for the interpretation of the requirements for trees and forests (natural and artificial) outside the forest territories TFoFT (TOF)"
Verifiers:	<p>4.9.1. MFU manages the number of game in the allowable optimal concentration according to its habitat, and also, if necessary, shall be takes timely measures to reduce its damage.</p> <p>4.9.2. MFU annually coordinates the opportunity to protect forest plantations from grazing of domestic animals, and also, if necessary, shall be applies additional measures.</p>
Related normative base	LF, LHGP, Implementation Manual of the LHGP, Ordinance on the protection of forests from pests, diseases and other damage
Source of information:	Game management plan, Annual taxation of game, Development for Natura 2000, Grazing plan, instructions, grazing permits, tickets for established violations, findings protocols, invoices, contracts, etc.

Criterion: 4. Maintenance, protection and appropriate enhancement of biological diversity in forest ecosystems

Indicator №	4.10
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Name:	Management of dead and biotope wood
Full Text / Requirement:	The standard requires standing and fallen dead wood, hollow trees, old groves and rare tree species shall be left in quantities and distribution necessary to protect biological diversity, taking into account the potential impact on the health and stability of forests and on the surrounding ecosystems, incl. the emission of greenhouse gasses, as well as the safety of people in highly visited places. (8.4.13 PEFC)
Description:	To preserve biodiversity, an appropriate proportion of dead and biotope wood shall be preserved and encouraged, taking into account the potential impact on the health and stability of forests and surrounding ecosystems, the emission of greenhouse gasses and the safety of people in highly visited places.
Verifiers:	4.10.1. When carrying out forestry activities, MFU shall be preserve, in quantities and distribution according to the current legal framework, structural elements typical of a natural forest, such as: trees with large bird nests, hollows, vegetation around wet spots, animal burrows, etc. (so-called "biotope" trees), as well as dead wood (standing and lying) that contribute to the maintenance and possible enhancement of site-specific biodiversity in the long term, while taking into account the technological possibilities for F activities and health and safety requirements.
Note:	<i>Adopted forestry practice "Methodology for measuring the amount and characteristics of dead wood (lying and standing) and biotope trees" can be used. It is appropriate to require this with the FI tasks and to be performed simultaneously by the same operator, which is the established practice in 2020.</i>
Related normative base	LF, LBD, Ordinance on felling in forests, Methodology for measuring the amount and characteristics of dead wood and biotope trees in forest ecosystems
Source of information:	Reports, FI, FMPI, Injunctions of FPS and RFD, studies, reports, contracts for the assignment of activities in forests and contracts for the sale of root wood, Instruction sheet / book, Report on the established violations / for the protection of FT and/or dead wood, Findings acts/protocols, Protocols for certification of fellings and others;

Criterion: 5. Maintenance or appropriate enhancement of protective functions in forest management (especially soil and water)

Context: Forest management aims to maintain and appropriately improve the regulatory protective functions of forests, which are an essential part of the complex ecosystem functions of forests. The protective functions of the forest (especially the soil and water) are of particular importance and significance for the protection of populated areas (urbanised territories), agricultural territories, territories occupied by waters and water bodies, and transport territories.

<i>Criterion: 5. Maintenance or appropriate enhancement of protective functions in forest management (especially soil and water)</i>	
Indicator №	5.1
Name:	The protective functions of forests for society
Full Text / Requirement:	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. (8.5.1 PEFC)
Description:	MFU maintains or enhances the protective regulatory functions of forests for erosion prevention, flooding, water quality and quantity, as well as for climate regulation and carbon sequestration.

Note for TFoFT::	See in Annex 1: "Guidelines for the interpretation of the requirements for trees and forests (natural and artificial) outside the forest territories TFoFT(TOF)"
Verifiers:	<p>5.1.1. Planning and management of forests shall be maintain and enhance their potential role for soil erosion control, flood prevention, water treatment (eg taking into account buffer zones along watercourses and sites), climate regulation, carbon sequestration and other regulatory or supporting ecosystem services. (In the context of verifiers 4.7.1, 5.3.1 and 5.3.2)</p> <p>Maintaining or enhancing the protective functions of plantations, MFU must be carried out through silvicultural regulatory and support measures, for example by choosing the appropriate systems of cultivation and regeneration felling, which preserve and improve the protective (anti-erosion and/or water retention functions of the stands and plantations.(in context of verifier 2.4.2 "...use appropriate cultivation, harvesting and transport technologies that do not disrupt the integrity of an ecosystem, do not reduce the productive capacity of plantations and minimize damage to soil and watercourses...")</p>
Related normative base	LF, LBD, LPA, OIPFT, OFF, OCPFT, LPCSA, ORDER No. 4 of 19.02.2013 for the protection of forest territories against erosion and torrential rain and construction of fortifications.
Source of information:	RPDFT, FMPI, Annual plans, Electronic system of EFA, Book of afforestation, Carnet inventories, Certification protocols, Reports of inspections carried out and others, findings protocols, Tickets for established violations, Constitutive protocols, Contracts for the commission of logging and for the sale of timber per root etc. Instruction sheet, Current weather forecasts and more

Criterion: 5. Maintenance or appropriate enhancement of protective functions in forest management (especially soil and water)

Indicator №	5.2
Name:	The protective functions of ecologically important forest areas
Full Text / Requirement:	The standard requires that places in forests that perform specific and recognized protective functions for society shall be mapped, and that forest management plans and operations shall ensure that these functions are maintained or enhanced. [8.5.2. PEFC] .
Description:	The planning, mapping and implementation of forestry operations maintain or enhance the protective functions of ecologically important forest areas.
Note:	x
Verifiers:	<p>5.2.1. RPDFT and/or FMPI has identified and mapped the available legally established forests for water protection - former and current water supply and sanitary protection zones, as well as the zones for soil protection (anti-erosion forests), and MFU has complete information and map material for the territories that are important for the protection of water and soil, according to the LF and by-laws, and on this basis protects them.</p>
Related normative base	LF, LBD, LPA, OIPFT, Ordinance on felling in forests, OCPFT, RPDFT, MDP.
Source of information:	RPDFT, FI, FMP or equivalent document, map material, Natura 2000 areas Report; Work instructions/rules or other document/instruction/ for water and soil protection.

Criterion: 5. Maintenance or appropriate enhancement of protective functions in forest management (especially soil and water)

Indicator №	5.3
Name:	Impact of forestry activities on erosion-sensitive soils and watercourses and sites

Full Text / Requirement:	The standard requests that special care shall be given to forestry activities on sensitive soils and areas prone to erosion , as well as in areas where activities may lead to excessive soil erosion in watercourses and sites. Applied technologies, techniques and used machines must be suitable for working in such areas . Special measures shall be taken to minimize the pressure of animal populations on these areas. [8.5.3 PEFC].
Description:	In areas sensitive to soil erosion and watercourses and sites vulnerable to it, appropriate technologies and techniques are applied and efforts are made to minimize the pressure of animal species/populations.
Verifiers:	<p>5.3.1. The methods and machines for forest activities - for timber extraction, export and transportation of materials, and for soil preparation for afforestation shall be not lead to soil erosion (in context of verifier 5.1.1.)</p> <p>When planning and carrying out activities in forests on soils with low bearing capacity, (shallow and too shallow, eroded, intrazonal, on very steep slopes /> of 31 g. soils), appropriate technologies, methods and weather conditions must be chosen, to reduce topsoil layer damage and leaking of suspended soil particles into watercourses and water bodies.</p> <p>5.3.2. When crossing watercourses during economic operations, such technologies and methods shall be chosen that prevent and/or reduce the leakage of suspended particles from the soil into watercourses and water bodies, as well as prevention of clogging of waterways.</p> <p>5.3.3. FU management ensures that in places where water flow has been affected as a result of economic activities, as well as pressure from animal populations, measures shall be planned to restore the water flow (e.g. removal of temporary crossings, repair of culverts and bridges, and also: removal of timber residues from logging operations, including parts of stems in the reach of the highest waters of the watercourse).</p>
Note:	<p>№1: <i>Careful soil disturbance and soil cultivation limited to patches (pots and windows) and strips will be permissible if implemented to achieve strategic regeneration and cannot be achieved otherwise</i></p> <p>№2: <i>Machine tillage, incl. full plowing for afforestation, for forest protection and for establishment and maintenance of fire protection strips / clearings and roads for fire protection strips /clearings and roads for firefighting equipment is allowed.</i></p>
Related normative base	LF, LS, LW, LEP, LBD, Law on Registration and Control of Agricultural and Forestry Equipment; OFF , OCPFT, MDP, ORDERINANCE No. 4 of 19.02.2013 on the protection of forest territories against erosion and torrential rains and the construction of fortifications; Ordinance for construction in forest areas under Art. 152 of the LF
Source of information:	RPDFT, FMP, Technological plans, contracts for the commission of logging and for the sale of root wood, briefings, etc.; Management system - Work instructions/rules/instructions for water and soil protection.

Criterion: 5. Maintenance or appropriate enhancement of protective functions in forest management (especially soil and water)

Indicator №	5.4
Name:	The inappropriate use of chemicals or other harmful substances and forestry techniques is avoided
Full Text / Requirement:	The standard requires that special care shall be given to forestry activities in forest territories with water protection functions in order to avoid adverse effects on the quality and quantity of water resources. Inappropriate use of chemicals or other harmful substances or inappropriate silvicultural practices , which have a harmful effect on water quality shall be avoided. The water balance and water quality downstream shall not be significantly affected by the operations. [8.5.4. PEFC].

Description:	In the forest areas with a regime for the protection of water resources special attention is paid to avoid a negative impact on their quantity and quality , incl. from the use of chemicals or other harmful substances.
Verifiers:	<p>5.4.1. The management of designated forests for the protection of water resources (sanitary protection areas, water supply areas, reservoirs and river courses), shall be not allow interventions that may negatively affect water quality, which guarantees the maintenance and improvement of the protective functions of the respective territory.</p> <p>5.4.2. When using chemicals, MFU shall be complied with the requirements of laws and regulations, so as not to negatively affect water quality. (In the context of verifier 2.5.2.)</p> <p>For reasons of water protection during forestry operations, easily biodegradable chain oils* and hydraulic fluids must be used.</p> <p>The exception is the use of hydraulic fluids if technology is applied that does not have a separate hydraulic circuit or if the machine manufacturer allows their use.</p>
Note:	<p>№1 <i>The term "forestry operations" includes the following: logging, removal, care/cultivation and afforestation.</i></p> <p>№2: <i>*Chain oils and hydraulic fluids are considered readily biodegradable if they have an ecolabel (e.g. Blue Angel, EU Ecolabel) or if proof is provided that the EU Ecolabel criteria for lubricants (in the case of hydraulic fluids: DIN ISO 15380 and OECD 301). Exceptions apply to machines that were put into service before 01 January 2022 and were filled with RAO oil.</i></p>
Related normative base	LS; LF; Law on Protection from the Harmful Effects of Chemical Substances and Mixtures; Law on Water Protection (LWP); LEP, List of plant protection chemicals, registered fertilizers, soil improvers permitted for marketing and use.
Source of information:	PMPI, Work instructions/rules for water and soil protection or another equivalent document from the management system, technological plans for extraction, carnet inventory, findings protocols and tickets for violations; contracts for the carrying out of logging and for the sale of root wood, instruction sheet / other equivalent document, reports and findings protocols from inspections of the competent authorities, reports and injunctions of the Forest protection station Sofia, others.

Criterion: 5. Maintenance or appropriate enhancement of protective functions in forest management (especially soil and water)

Indicator №	5.5
Name:	Protection of soil and water quality during construction and repair works
Full Text / Requirement:	The standard requires that construction and repair of roads, bridges and other infrastructure shall be carried out in a manner that minimizes exposed soil , avoids its deposition in watercourses and preserves the natural level and function of watercourses and river beds. Adequate road drainage facilities shall be installed and maintained. [8.5.5. PEFC] .
Description:	The construction and repair of roads, bridges and other infrastructure in the forest shall be carried out in a way that protects the soil and water as much as possible, i.e. be carried out in such a way as to limit the destructive damage to the soil and its excessive deposition in water courses and riverbeds, while at the same time installing and maintaining road drainage facilities at the relevant sites where necessary.
Verifiers:	<p>5.5.1. When planning, construction, maintenance and operation of forest infrastructure and drainage systems (drainage ditches, culverts, bridges, etc.), as well as anti-erosion facilities, MFU shall be plan and implement measures to prevent drying of adjacent slopes and reduce soil runoff into water courses.</p> <p>To be considered in context also of the verifiers 3.4.1 (for negative impact on OS) and 4.8.1 (for the protection of forest ecosystems).</p>

Note for TFoFT::	See in Annex 1: "Guidelines for the interpretation of the requirements for trees and forests (natural and artificial) outside the forest territories TFoFT (TOF)"
Related normative base	LF, LS, Ordinance for construction in forest areas under Art. 152 of the LF
Source of information:	FMPI, Projects/plans for the construction or repair of forest infrastructure and anti-erosion facilities and Project documentation to them, Technological plans, Assessments, reports and findings protocols from inspections carried out by the competent authorities and others.

Criterion: 6. Maintenance or appropriate enhancement of socio-economic functions and conditions

Context: The owner of the forest bears his responsibility to society and especially to the employees of his forest in its entirety. Safety and health protection when working in forests is a priority. The diverse socio-economic functions of the forest are guaranteed and encouraged.

<i>Criterion: 6. Maintenance or appropriate enhancement of socio-economic functions and conditions</i>	
Indicator №	6.1
Name:	Role of Socio-Economic Functions of Forests for rural areas development
Full Text / Requirement:	The standard requires that forest management planning shall aims to: respects all the socio-economic functions of forests. (8.6.1 PEFC) , and shall give due regard to the role of forestry in local economies. Special attention is paid to the new training and employment opportunities for the local population. [8.6.6. PEFC] .
Description:	Forest planning and management respects the socio-economic functions of forests , and considers the role of forestry in the development of rural areas and local economies. At the same time, the situation on the labor market is taken into account, and in this connection, attention is paid to the employment of people in the region, as well as to the needs of businesses for raw materials in a national plan. [PEFC 8.6.1, 8.6.6]. MFU promotes the socio-economic functions of forests for the general well-being of local communities and the region in the form of people and businesses.

Verifiers:	<p>6.1.1. The standard requires management that shall have the goal to maintain or enhance economic, environmental, cultural and social values of forest resources. (8.1.1 PEFC)</p> <p>6.1.2. The standard requires that effective communication shall be provided with local communities and populations and other stakeholders, related to sustainable forest management. (7.3.1. PEFC)</p> <p>6.1.3. MFU has a summary of the management plan, corresponding to the scope and scale of forest management, which shall be publicly available and include information on the general objectives and principles of forest management. (6.2.7 PEFC)</p> <p>From the publicly disclosed summary of FMPI (published on the Internet), confidential business and personal information is excluded according to applicable legislation, or with a view on protecting cultural sites or sensitive natural resources. (6.2.8 PEFC).</p> <p>6.1.4. The standard requires that monitoring shall be carried out to periodically observe, control and/or regulation: (In context also of verifier 2.2.4 / for periodic monitoring report)</p> <p>a) forest resources by assessing their management, including ecological, social and economic effects, and feeding the results back into the planning process (9.1.1 PEFC)</p> <p>b) forest health and vitality especially from key factors such as pests and diseases, overgrazing, fires, floods, etc. caused by climatic factors, state of protected, endangered and vulnerable species established on the territory of UGSE, pollution, etc. violations from activities in the forest, (9.1.2 PEFC);</p> <p>c) the use of non-wood forest resources, incl. hunting and fishing, as well as compliance with working conditions. (9.1.3, PEFC) and</p> <p>d) working conditions, adapting them if necessary (9.1.4 PEFC)</p>
Note:	<p>№1: <i>In the Republic of Bulgaria, there is no separation/conditioning of category "indigenous population". The entire population originating from the territory of the country is considered local population.</i></p> <p>№2: For TFoFT: See in Annex 1: "Guidelines for interpreting the requirements for trees and forests (natural and artificial) outside the forest territories TFoFT (TOF)"</p>
Related normative base	LF, Health Act, Law on Regional Planning (LRP), LHSW, OIPFT, ISO 17021, PEFC ST 1003:
Source of information:	FMPI, Organization Management System / the management body, including Declaration of the owner/manager; protocols of acceptance of the Terms of FMPI, protocols of the work of the Commission under Art. 37 of the LF (First and Second Forest Management Meetings), letters, reports, etc. correspondence, protocols of public discussions, publication on the MFU website, etc.

Criterion: 6. Maintenance or appropriate enhancement of socio-economic functions and conditions	
Indicator no	6.2
Name:	Encourages the quality of life of local communities
Full Text / Requirement:	The standard requires that adequate public access to forests for recreational purposes shall be provided, taking into account respect for property rights, safety and rights of others, impacts on forest resources and ecosystems, and compatibility with other forest functions. (8.6.2 PEFC)
Description:	<p>Management shall be supporting 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 populations [PEFC 8.6.2, 8.6.4.].</p> <p>The MFU shall be provides, in an appropriate manner, the permissible public access to the forest, for the purpose of safe and healthy recreation and tourism, promotes the long-term health and well-being of the communities within or adjacent to the management site.</p>

Verifiers:	<p>6.2.1. Forest management maintains the long-term sustainability and commitment of local communities.</p> <p>As far as possible, MFU uses local labor, and for forestry activities and for buyers of raw materials, regional or national companies that add value to the raw material are preferred. (7.3.1 PEFC)</p> <p>Lists of local companies candidates for the purchase of timber for processing in their own workshops, as well as lists of the local population for the purchase of firewood, are prepared annually.</p> <p>In this whole context, as far as it is appropriate and practicable, the MFU promotes the long-term health and well-being of communities within or adjacent to the MFU (8.6.4 PEFC).</p> <p>6.2.2. Universal access to forests must be provided, while respecting property rights and forest access restrictions under current legislation, taking into account impacts on forest resources and ecosystems and links with other forest functions.</p> <p>According to the right of entry, the forest is open to everyone, taking into account the characteristics of the organization's economic activities.</p> <p>In the recreational forests, it is possible to use the paths and roads after the completion of forestry activities.</p> <p>6.2.3. The places with recognized historical, cultural or spiritual significance, as well as areas that are central to meeting the needs of local populations, shall be protected and managed in a way that recognizes their special significance. (8.6.3 PEFC)</p> <p>Forest management promotes the long-term cultural and socio-economic well-being of the local population. The historical, cultural and spiritual values provided for in national regulations or agreed between the local community and the organization are taken into account.</p>
Note: №1: №2: №3:	<p>See in Annex 1: "Guidelines for the interpretation of the requirements for trees and forests (natural and artificial) outside the forest territories TFoFT (TOF)"</p> <p>Forest access restrictions are allowed in substantiated cases, such as: protecting property rights, ensuring the health of the forest, obtaining a financial benefit for not providing key ecosystem services, preventing intentional littering and ensuring safety for people or in case the use of ecosystem services may threaten the protection of natural habitats.</p> <p>Valuables that must be preserved are, for example: graves and cemeteries, tombs, burial mounds, stone fences, chapels, forest springs or healing springs, rock formations /megaliths/ and those for worship, floating stones in forests, moraines, forest bunkers etc.</p>
A related normative base	LF, LOSD, LCPR, LOUF, OCPFT,
A source of information:	RPDFT , FMP /equivalent document/, regional and/or municipal plan /development strategy, Categorization of FT; Forest management regimes in Natura 2000 areas; Specialized instructions and legal provisions, Orders, Registry of MFU - Personnel, Contracts with operators; Accounting information, Electronic system of EFA, contracts for sales of wood by the root and from the warehouse of local companies, lists of registered sites under Art. 206, others.

Criterion: 6. Maintenance or appropriate enhancement of socio-economic functions and conditions	
Indicator №	6.3
Name:	Using forest-related experience and traditional knowledge, innovations and practices
Full Text / Requirement:	<p>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 the population. Equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the use of this knowledge shall be encouraged. [8.6.5 PEFC].</p>

Description:	Forest management, forest owners, NGOs, local communities shall be uses traditional knowledge, experience and practices in the most expedient way and promotes their fair sharing, incl. of traditional knowledge, innovations and practices [8.6.5. PEFC].
Note for TFoFT:	<i>See in Annex 1: "Guidelines for the interpretation of the requirements for trees and forests (natural and artificial) outside the forest territories TFoFT (TOF)"</i>
Verifiers:	<p>6.3.1. The property and the use of forest land shall be clearly defined, established and documented. Customs and traditions of forest use are respected to the extent consistent with applicable legislation (6.3.2.1 PEFC)</p> <p>The best use of forest-related experience and traditional knowledge, innovations and practical methods related to forest management by forest owners, NGOs, scientific units and others is applied [8.6.5 PEFC].</p> <p>MFU shall be provide meaningful opportunities for stakeholders to participate in forest management decisions, while respecting the processes, roles and responsibilities set out in policies and laws, (6.3.2.2 PEFC)</p>
Note:	<p>№1: <i>These actions must be in accordance with the current legislation and above all with the principles of persistence, continuity and sustainability of the forest.</i></p> <p>№2: <i>Guidance on tenure arrangements can be obtained from the FAO Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible Tenure Management of Land, Fishing and Forests in the Context of National Food Security.</i></p>
Related normative base	LCPR, LPET, LF, LC LHSW, LHE
Source of information:	FMPI, Property documents (deeds for state / municipal property, Decisions of MOAF, notarial acts, etc.); Protocol of the conference under Art. 37 of the LF (First forest management), Protocol of public discussion, letters from departments and institutions, from NGOs, etc. stakeholders and offices, orders, reports, articles, etc.

<i>Criterion: 6. Maintenance or appropriate enhancement of socio-economic functions and conditions</i>	
Indicator №	6.4
Name:	Knowledge and experience - qualified and competent specialists and workers
Full Text / Requirement:	The management of the forests and the realization of the activities in the MFU shall be based on competence, knowledge, accumulated experience and skills of management staff and specialists , as well as the contractors and their employees and workers.
Description:	The employees and those performing forestry activities have the necessary qualifications for their work - only qualified and competent specialists and workers, according to the applicable legislation, are allowed in the management and activities in the forest territories
Note for TFoFT::	<i>See in Annex 1: "Guidelines for the interpretation of the requirements for trees and forests (natural and artificial) outside the forest territories TFoFT (TOF)"</i>

Verifiers:	<p>6.4.1. The heads of the MFU and contractors assigned to them, the employees, as well as the owners of the forests within the scope of the certificate, shall be provided with sufficient and up-to-date information, through training for continuous improvement of knowledge on sustainable forest management, as a precondition for all activities planned for implementation in the FMPI on the territory of MFU. (7.2.1 PEFC)</p> <p>Special attention is paid to new training and employment opportunities for the local population. (8.6.6 PEFC)</p> <p>Knowledge is acquired through participation in sustainable forest management training. This is a prerequisite for the proper planning and implementation of the forestry activities described in this document, as well as for their understanding by the local population.</p> <p>6.4.2. There shall be evidence of the professional competence and qualification of the performers of activities (external to MFU and employed by them), (of their workers, regarding education and qualification, including professional courses, etc.)</p> <p>The operators (of equipment, including harvesters, forwarders and other machines for Silvicultural works, etc.) engaged as FA contractors and the loggers working in the forest, must have the necessary qualifications for their work.</p> <p>Workers will be considered specialized personnel if they have completed the relevant job training or have several years of work experience.</p>
Note:	<i>The term "forestry operations" includes the following: logging, hauling, cultivation and afforestation.</i>
Related normative base	LF, LPET, LC, LHSW, LHE, REGULATION No. 1 of February 15, 2019 on the conditions and procedure for training candidates to acquire legal capacity to work with agricultural and forestry equipment and the conditions and procedure for issuing a certificate for registration of educational forms for their training
Source of information:	Documented procedure/handbook/instructions for planning and conducting trainings, list of trainees present, Certificates of acquired skills/qualifications, employment contracts, job descriptions, etc. documents.

Criterion: 6. Maintenance or appropriate enhancement of socio-economic functions and conditions

Indicator №	6.5
Name:	Health and safety
Full Text / Requirement:	When carrying out the activity on the territory of MFU, the workers shall be informed about the risks related to their work and the possible preventive actions, and they are provided with guidelines and training for safe work practices. (6.3.4.1, 6.3.4.2 PEFC)
Description:	<p>Working conditions must be safe and all persons carrying out forestry work have received training in health and safety working conditions.</p> <p>MFU complies with the procedure for ensuring health and safety at work, according to the current normative and sub-normative framework on the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria and the EU, and the conventions of the International Labor Organization (ILO), containing evaluation criteria and control measures.</p>

Verifiers:	<p>6.5.1. Forestry operations shall be planned, organized and conducted in such a way that health risks and accident hazards are identified and all reasonable measures can be taken to protect workers from risks related to their work, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the ones working in stands where timber extraction is carried out use personal protective clothing. b) bystanders / visitors in stands where timber extraction is carried out, use safety helmets and signal clothing (minimum signal vest). <p>Workers shall be informed about the risks associated with their work and possible preventive actions. (6.3.4.1 PEFC).</p> <p>The standard requires that working conditions shall be safe, and that everyone assigned a task in forestry operations shall be provided with guidance and training on safe work practices. Working hours and leave shall comply with national laws. (6.3.4.2 PEFC)</p>
Note:	<p>№1: <i>The requirements for the implementation of safe working conditions (safe working practices) by all those working in the forest are set and their compliance is controlled by MFU: Whether / to what extent, they are complied with by the contractors and their workers? The manager/owner of the MFU is jointly liable with the responsible person of the contractor.</i></p> <p>№2: <i>Guidance on setting national health and safety standards can be obtained in the ILO Code: "Guide to health and safety at work for essential forest management work".</i></p>
Related normative base	LHSW, LF, LC, Health Act, Labor Inspection Act; Regulations for health and safety working conditions in forests.
Source of information:	Documented procedure / handbook / instructions for Health and Safety at Work / , the Rules for Health and Safety at Work in Forest Territories of the Ministry of Health from 2019 and/or another equivalent document from the management system, Attendance sheet / list of trainees' names persons, certificates or other documents, Instruction sheet/book, Contracts for the assignment of activities in forests and others

Criterion: 6. Maintenance or appropriate enhancement of socio-economic functions and conditions

Indicator №	6.6
Name:	Rights of workers and employees
Full Text / Requirement:	The standard requires that forestry practices and operations shall comply with the requirements of the fundamental ILO conventions. (6.3.3.1. PEFC)
Description:	Workers and employees in MFU have the right to unite and participate in negotiations with their employer to negotiate working conditions, wages and others, according to Convention 87 and 98 of the ILO.
Verifiers:	<p>6.6.1. Forest management shall be complied with the fundamental conventions of the International Labor Organization.</p> <p>The standard requires that forestry practices and operations shall be conducted in accordance with 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, (6.3.2.2 PEFC)</p> <p>6.6.2. MFU shall be guarantees equal opportunities, non-discrimination and freedom from harassment at the workplace. Gender equality shall be encouraged. (6.3.4.4 PEFC)</p> <p>6.6.3. Compensation of employees, workers and seasonal/temporary forest workers, as well as contractors and other operators working in PEFC certified areas, shall be meet or exceed statutory minimum industry standards or, where applicable, collective agreements**. (6.3.4.3 PEFC)</p> <p>6.6.4. Forest management practices and activities shall be respect human rights as defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (OON 1948). (6.3.2.3 PEFC)</p>

Note:	№1:	<i>In the countries where the main ILO conventions have been ratified, they are applied in their entirety (6.3.3.1. PEFC) This is the case for Bulgaria.</i>
	№2:	<i>* In the Republic of Bulgaria, there is no separation/conditioning of the category "indigenous population". The entire population originating from the territory of the country is considered the local population.</i>
	№3:	<i>Where wages do not meet the minimum wage standard, measures are taken to achieve wage increases relative to the minimum wage over time, in addition to increases due to inflation</i>
	№4:	<i>** In the Republic of Bulgaria, for the state forest system, a branch collective labor agreement is signed for the branch "Forestry" / "Forest management".</i>
Related normative base	Main ILO Conventions, Convention on Human Rights, Code of Civil Procedure, Labor Inspection Act;	
Source of information:	Statutory protocols, Acts on established administrative violations, complaints, other correspondence, court decisions, received complaints and others, Accounting reports, statistical information, trade union information, publications and others.	

Criterion: 6. Maintenance or appropriate enhancement of socio-economic functions and conditions

Indicator №	6.7
Name:	Forestry Science and Innovation
Full Text / Requirement:	The standard requires that FMPI shall take into account the scientific results and research (6.2.6 PEFC), and that forest management shall contribute to research activities and data collection necessary for sustainable forest management, or supports relevant research activities carried out by other organizations, as appropriate. (8.6.7 PEFC)
Description:	FMPI reports, and the management of FU implements in the activity the scientific results and research in the field of forests and forestry , incl. and especially the ones related to the role of forests in maintaining the positive carbon balance. Forest management is also based on scientific research results. The MFU applies a scientific and innovative approach with a view to possibly increasing the multiple benefits of forests/forest ecosystem services.
Verifiers:	6.7.1. MFU shall monitor for innovations in science and practice , concerning its activities and enable research activities and data collection necessary to improve sustainable forest management, or support specialized research activities by other organizations.
Note for TFoFT::	<i>See in Annex 1: "Guidelines for the interpretation of the requirements for trees and forests (natural and artificial) outside the forest territories TFoFT (TOF)"</i>
Related normative base	LF, LHE, LPET
Source of information:	Publications, Documentation of MFU, e.g.: files, reports, Scientific reports and researches of the Forest University and Forest Institute, other institutes and organizations; publications, contracts with scientific and other units for joint research and/or implementation of scientific developments, complaints and others similar;

Criterion: 6. Maintenance or appropriate enhancement of socio-economic functions and conditions

Indicator №	6.8
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Name:	Resolution of disputes and complaints
Full Text / Requirement:	The standard requires the availability of appropriate dispute and complaint resolution mechanisms , related to forest management operations, land use rights and working conditions. 7.4.1 PEFC)
Description:	MFU reacts as quickly as possible to resolve disputes and complaints regarding forest management, rights of use and ownership, working conditions, social benefits, etc., according to the legally adopted procedures/mechanisms and deadlines
Note for TFoFT:	<i>See in Annex 1: "Guidelines for the interpretation of the requirements for trees and forests (natural and artificial) outside the forest territories TFoFT (TOF)"</i>
Verifiers:	6.8.1. In the event of dispute regarding the management of forests and forest territories, rights of use and possession, working conditions, social benefits etc., according to the adopted procedures / mechanisms, documented public procedures are applied and MFU shall be react according to competence.
Related normative base	Law on Property, Law on Settlement of Collective Labor Disputes, Standard PEFC BS ST 08 from the Balkan/accepted for Bulgarian certification system
Source of information:	Documented procedure / Guideline / Manual for resolving complaints and appeals; Letters and complaints, other correspondence, publications, etc

Criterion: 6. Maintenance or appropriate enhancement of socio-economic functions and conditions

Indicator №	6.9
Name:	Compliance with legislation and PEFC requirements
Full Text / Requirement:	The standard requires that MFU shall be comply with applicable international, national and local legislation and to sustainably manage forests according to the PEFC BG ST 1002 standard.
Description:	MFU complies with applicable international, national and local legislation and manages according to the PEFC standard for sustainable forest management (6.3.1 PEFC)

Verifiers:	<p>6.9.1. MFU shall identify and have access to legislation applicable to forest management and determine how these obligations are respected and implemented by the organization. (PEFC 6.3.1.1)</p> <p>6.9.2. MFU shall comply with applicable local, national and transposing international forest management documents, including but not limited to forest management practices; nature and environment protection, protected and endangered species; ownership, tenure and land use rights for the local population, local communities or other affected stakeholders; regulations related to health, work and safety; anti-corruption and payment of applicable fees and taxes. (PEFC 6.3.1.2)</p> <p>6.9.3. MFU must comply with anti-corruption legislation, as well as to take alternative anti-corruption measures corresponding to the corruption risk. (PEFC 6.3.1.3)</p> <p>6.9.4. MFU shall implement measures to protect the forest from unauthorized activities such as illegal logging, illegal land use, illegally started fires and other illegal activities. (PEFC 6.3.1.4)</p> <p>6.9.5. MFU shall provide a commitment to: (5.1 PEFC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) comply with the standard for sustainable forest management and other applicable requirements of the certification system; b) continuously improve the sustainable forest management system. <p>MFU shall make this engagement publicly available. (5.2 PEFC)</p> <p>MFU shall have clearly defined and assigned responsibilities for sustainable forest management. (5.3 PEFC)</p> <p>6.9.6. The forest manager must demonstrate commitment to the criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management under the PEFC system</p> <p>MFU is managed by competent persons directly involved in the implementation of a sustainable forest management model based on the Bulgarian forest standard PEFC BG ST 1002:</p> <p>6.9.7. The standard requires the owner/manager to indicate the label of the organization for materials / products specified in the sales and delivery documentation, namely the labels "x% PEFC certified" and "PEFC Controlled Sources" ("100% PEFC Certified" or "100% PEFC Origine"), acc. to item 3.27 of the CoC / Chain of Custody standard – PEFC ST 2002:2020, or other specific to the organization (label/stamp/trademark), as a statement to be used to communicate the origin of the products in an area covered by the standard, to customers with a PEFC chain of custody (PEFC 4.1.e);</p> <p>When the owner/manager of MFU sells products from areas other than those covered by the standard, only products from areas covered by the standard must be sold with the trademark (label) "100% PEFC-certified" or another system-specific trademark / label; (PEFC 4.1.f);</p> <p><i>Note 1:</i> To emphasize that a material is PEFC certified material, and it was never mixed with PEFC controlled sources, the organizations applying the method of physical separation, can use the label with the wording "100% PEFC Origin" instead of "100% PEFC certified" for PEFC certified material, which is supplied directly by the owner / manager of the forest, and the same is covered by a recognized PEFC forest management certificate with a "100% PEFC certified" label, or with another PEFC approved system label for PEFC certified material, which is already delivered with the "100% PEFC Origin" label. Organizations receiving materials with such a claim "100% PEFC Origin" and applying the percentage method or the credit method recognize this for PEFC label "100% PEFC certified"</p> <p><i>Note 2:</i> A list of accepted PEFC abbreviations and translations of PEFC labels is available on the PEFC website.</p> <p>6.9.8. The standard requires that the management system of the organization shall include documented information required by the standard and determined by the organization to be necessary for the effectiveness of the sustainable forest management system. (7.5.1 PEFC)</p> <p>The standard requires that documented information be relevant and updated as needed for the organization's activities. (7.5.2 PEFC)</p> <p>6.9.9. The standard requires that the organization shall define and ensure resources needed (personnel and financial) for the establishment, implementation, maintenance and continuous improvement of the sustainable forest management system (7.1.1 PEFC)</p>
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<p>Note:</p> <p>№1:</p> <p>№2:</p> <p>№3:</p> <p>№4:</p>	<p><i>Bulgaria has signed a Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) on FLEGT between the European Union and the producer country, the "legislation applicable to forest management" is defined by the VPA. The Customs Agency has issued a FLEGT - national procedure for the FLEGT Permitting Scheme for the import of timber into the European Union, available at:https://customs.bg/wps/portal/agency/home/info-business/customs-activities/prohibitions-restrictions/FLEGT</i></p> <p><i>System-specific claims of standards, PEFC-approved and PEFC Council-approved abbreviations of such claims and the claim "100% PEFC certified", as well as their translations in languages other than English, are published online on the PEFC website www.pefc.org</i></p> <p><i>Only the owner/operator of the MFU sets requirements regarding the information to be provided to a PEFC Chain of Custody PEFC 4.1.h certified customer</i></p> <p><i>For TFoFT, see in Annex 1: "Guidelines for interpreting the requirements for trees and forests (natural and artificial) outside forest territories TFoFT (TOF)"</i></p>
<p>Related normative base</p>	<p>All applicable, including: LC, Law on Accounting (LA) , LF, LBD, LPA , LOSD , LCPR, LEP, Law on protection of agricultural property (LPAP), LW, LS, CPC – Civil Procedure Code; PC - Penal Code; APC - Administrative-Procedural Code; PEFC BG ST 1002:xx; PEFC ST 2001:2020 (Trademarks Rules) and PEFC ST 2002:2020 (CoC); Other rules of PEFC - Bulgaria, published at: www.pefc.bg</p>
<p>Source of information:</p>	<p>Lists of regulatory documents, incl. European directives, regulations; Orders, Instructions of higher authorities, Internal Rules of Procedure, Findings Protocols, Register of established violations, attributions, other correspondence, received complaints and appeals, court decisions, publications, incl. in Internet; Management system, Declaration of the owner, declaration of commitment to the requirements for SFM, PEFC standards, Employment contracts together with attached evidence materials - CV, official references, employment record, others.</p>

9. Performance evaluation

The organization / MFU, forest managers, group managers, employees and forest owners shall be engaged as follows:

9.1 Monitoring, measurement, analysis and evaluation

The requirements are developed in more detail in relevant criteria, indicators and verifiers /requirements and guidelines/ for forest management in this standard in Section 8 "Guidelines for sustainable forest management".

Monitoring of forest resources and assessment of their management, including environmental, social and economic effects, shall be done periodically and results shall be fed back into the planning process (assess sustainable forest management and incorporate the results of this assessment into the planning process. **(9.1.1 PEFC)**

9.1.2 As part of forest health monitoring, inform relevant services (FPS and RDG /relevant field officers, RSPBZN, MVR, REWI, ROKOS, BD, etc.) of any unusual problems in terms of their nature or scale or the presence of pathogenic species or pests that pose a risk to **the health and vitality of forests**. 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. **(9.1.2 PEFC)**

9.1.3 When it is the responsibility of the forest owner/manager and is included in forest management, the use of non-timber forest products, including hunting and fishing, shall be regulated, monitored and controlled. **(9.1.3 PEFC)**

9.1.4 Working conditions shall be monitored regularly and adapted if necessary. **(9.1.4 PEFC)**

9.2 Internal audit

The requirements of section 9.2 must be met by organizations undergoing individual PEFC sustainable forest management certification. In the case of group / regional certification for sustainable forest management under PEFC, compliance with these requirements is the responsibility of the Group Certification Gateway Entity (EAC) in accordance with PEFC BS 06:2020 and not the participant.

9.2.1 The goal is to verify the reliability of information, compliance with laws and regulations, the effective and efficient use of resources, the achievement of operational objectives and the fulfillment of the requirements of the PEFC SFM standard by all forest operators in a specific forest area that have an impact on achieving compliance with the requirements.

9.2.2 The internal audit program at specified intervals must provide information on whether the management system:

- a) corresponds to:
 - the requirements of the participant to the adopted **management system**
 - the requirements of the **national standard for sustainable forest management**
- b) Is effectively implemented and maintained.

9.2.3 Organization

The organization shall commits to:

- a) carry out continuous control of the compliance with technological procedures and the quality of the work performed;
- b) plan, establish, implement and maintain one or more **audit programs**, including the frequency, methods, responsibilities, planning and reporting requirements, taking into account the importance of the processes involved and the results of previous audits;
- c) determine the criteria and scope of each audit;
- d) conduct an internal audit for compliance with the sustainable forest management standard at least once a year to the extent determined by the certificate holder (self-assessment - questionnaire);

- e) select auditors and conducts audits to ensure the objectivity and impartiality of the audit process;
- f) present the results of audits and self-assessment to the management of the organization (certificate holders);
- g) keep documented information as evidence of the implementation of the audit program and the results of the audit;

Note: For group / regional certification, compliance with these requirements is the responsibility of the Group Certification Gateway Entity (EAC) in accordance with PEFC BS 06:2020 and not the participant. For this purpose, the Group Entity chooses or appoints its representative (representative of the management) as a group manager of the processes related to maintaining the SFM certificate.

Verification method: documentation of the participant in the certification

9.3 Review of the management

The requirements of section 9.3 must be met by organizations undergoing individual PEFC sustainable forest management certification. In the case of group / regional certification for sustainable forest management according to PEFC, compliance with these requirements is **the responsibility of the Group Certification Gateway Entity (EAC)** in accordance with PEFC BS 06:2020 and not the participant.

At least once a year, the highest authority of the participant conducts a review of compliance with the standard for sustainable forest management in order to ensure the continued suitability, adequacy and effectiveness of forest management. The goal is to react in a timely and appropriate manner to the changes in the external and internal conditions characterizing MFU.

9.3.1 The annual review from management shall at least include:

- a) the status of the measures from previous management reviews;
- b) changes in relevant external and internal conditions relevant to the management system;
- c) information on the performance of the organization based on the results of the audit and the implementation of preventive and corrective actions, including the trends in the following areas:
 - non-conformities and corrective measures
 - monitoring and measurement results
 - the results of the audit
 - corrective measures taken by the certificate holder for the group
- d) opportunities for continuous improvement.

9.3.2 The results of the management review shall include decisions related to identified opportunities for continuous improvement and the need, if applicable, to change the **management system**.

9.3.3 The results from the management review shall be documented and stored as evidence of management review results.

Verification method: documentation of the participant in the certification

10. Improvement

The organization / MFU, forest managers, group managers, employees and forest owners, shall comply with the following requirements:

10.1 *Nonconformity and corrective action*

10.1.1 In case of nonconformity the organisation shall:

- a) Respond to the nonconformity by assessing the need to take action to eliminate the causes of the nonconformity by:
 - i. taking control and corrective action;
 - ii. dealing with the consequences;
- b) assessing the need for action to eliminate the causes of the nonconformity in order that it does not recur or occur again elsewhere, by:
 - i. nonconformity review;
 - ii. determining the reasons for the nonconformity;
 - iii. determining whether similar nonconformities exist or potentially could arise;
- c) implement all necessary actions appropriate to address the effects of the nonconformity, including immediate measures for its correction and control;
- d) review the effectiveness of any corrective measures taken and, if necessary, adapt the management system. Corrective measures must be proportionate to the effects of identified nonconformities;
- e) make changes to the **management system** as needed.

10.1.2 Corrective actions shall be appropriate to be able to affect the identified nonconformities.

10.1.3 Organisation shall retain documented information as evidence of:

- a) the nature of the nonconformities and the subsequent actions taken;
- b) the results of any corrective actions.

Verification method: documentation of the participant in the certification

10.2 *Continuous improvement*

10.2.1 The suitability, adequacy and effectiveness of the sustainable forest **management system** and sustainable management of the forest shall be continuously improved.

Verification method: documentation of the participant in the certification

10.3 *Complaints*

The organization shall be having appropriate procedures for resolving complaints and resolving

disputes regarding forest management, land use rights and working conditions.

The aim is to meet legal requirements to ensure compliance with sustainable forest management requirements in forests.

Requirements:

10.3.1 Complaints submitted by the complainant on paper or electronic media shall be registered and investigated.

10.3.2 Admissible complaints and disputes regarding forest management, land use rights and working conditions shall, if possible, be resolved by mutual agreement with the complainant.

10.3.3 The outcome of the investigation and settlement of the complaint shall be recorded.

Verification method: documentation of the participant in the certification

10.4 Documented information

The management system of the organization shall contain documented information required by the standard and determined by the organization to be necessary for the effectiveness of this forest management system, as well as lists, documented procedures, e.g. for conducting an internal audit, for a management review, a report on the state of the forestry, work instructions in relation to the implementation of the activity and/or others.

The goal is to develop, use and regularly update documentation and records related to the implementation of the criteria and indicators for the SFM.

Verification method: documentation of the participant in the certification

At a minimum, the documents and lists recommended by the CSFMCB are stored and maintained on the medium chosen by the organization.

Note: Additional records/documents are also required for the specific SFM indicators.

11. Guidelines/Manuals

Different already issued **handbooks/manuals /guides/** can be used, incl. from translation, in connection with the certification of forests in Bulgaria, or to develop new ones. In both cases, the *CSFMCB* / PEFC Bulgaria is the initiator. For this purpose, the already existing (selected by the Forest Certification College (FCC) and Key Working Group (KWG) or a new, purposefully built expert working group, work to adapt an existing document or develop a new one to facilitate users of the Forest Management Standard. These newly created documents (Guidelines / Manuals / Guides, etc.) are accepted by the FCC with a classified majority of its members, after which they can be distributed as appropriate.

The following **ANNEXES** have been developed as an integral part of the Standard:

Annex 1: Guidelines for interpreting the requirements for Trees and Forests (natural and artificial) outside the Forest Territories TfoFT (TOF)

Annex 2: List of abbreviations used

Annex 3: Terms and definitions

Annex 4: LIST OF DOCUMENTED INFORMATION for distribution of documents of the **Sustainable Forest Management System** under the Bulgarian PEFC Forest Certification System

Annex 5: Lists

Additional technical documents and Guidelines to this standard, based on the Bulgarian Forest Management Standard PEFC BG ST 1002: xx approved by the PEFC Council and PEFC International, can be developed, accepted and used in the order and conditions described above (after acceptance by FCC).

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- (1) **Pan-European criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management - PE C&I** (PEFC reference document) adopted by the Third Ministerial Conference on Forest Protection in Europe in Lisbon / Portugal in June 1998 as Annex 1 to Resolution L2 (Pan-European Criteria, Indicators and Operational Level Guidelines for Sustainable Forest Management (<http://www.mcpfe.org>))
 - (2) **Pan-European Operational Level Guidelines for Sustainable Forest Management - PEOLG** (PEFCC Reference Document B), adopted by the Third Ministerial Conference on Forest Protection in Europe in Lisbon / Portugal in June 1998 as Annex 2 to Resolution L2 - European Criteria, Indicators and Operational Level Guidelines for Sustainable Forest Management (<http://www.mcpfe.org>)
 - (3) **The basic conventions of the ILO** (PEFCC reference documents) adopted by the International Labor Organization (www.ilo.org). (4) **Safety and Health in Forestry: ILO Code of Good Practice**. Adopted by a meeting of experts held in Geneva from 23 to 30 September (published 1998, ILO, Geneva, International Labor Office, ISBN 92-2-110826-0).
 - (5) **Convention on Biological Diversity**, adopted on 5 June 1992 at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro (<http://www.biodiv.org/convention/articles.asp>)
 - (6) **The Kyoto Protocol and carbon sinks**, adopted at the third session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Kyoto, Japan on 11 December 1997 (<http://www.unfccc.int/>)
 - (7) **Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)**, adopted at a meeting of 80 countries in Washington, United States of America on March 3, 1973 and entered into force on July 1, 1975 (<http://www.cites.org/eng/disc/text.shtml>)
 - (8) **Biosafety Protocol**(Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety), adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity as an additional agreement to the Convention on 29 January 2000 (<http://www.biodiv.org/biosafety/protocol.asp>)
 - (9) **ATO / ITTO Principles, criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management in African natural rainforests**(<http://www.itto.or.jp>)
 - (10) **ITTO Guidelines on the Sustainable Management of Natural Tropical Forests**, adopted by the International Tropical Timber Organization in 1992 (<http://www.itto.or.jp>) Annex 3 10
 - (11) **The ITTO/IUCN Guidelines on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity in Tropical Timber Production Forests (2009)**, adopted by the International Tropical Timber Organization and the International Union for Conservation of Nature in 2009 (<http://www.itto.or.jp>)
 - (12) **The ITTO Guidelines for the Establishment and Sustainable Management of Planted Tropical Forests**, adopted by the International Tropical Timber Organization in 1993 (<http://www.itto.or.jp>)